A backpack and toy combination includes a backpack having an exterior surface, at least one toy character, at least one support on the exterior of the backpack for releasably engaging the at least one toy character. A story book is preferably disposed inside the backpack, the story book including at least one illustration of the toy character. The story book preferably also in a reference to an item, such as a magnifying glass or binoculars, that secured in a pocket or pouch in the backpack. The backpack preferably has a front panel and a back panel hingedly connected along one edge, and further has releasable fasteners along the other edges, to releasably engage the other edges of the front and back panels, and define an interior space therebetween. At least one, and preferably two panels are hingedly mounted between the front and back panels, and can pivot to any open position in which the panels overlie the front and back panels, in side by side relationship, forming a smooth work surface.
BACKPACK, TOY, AND BOOK COMBINATION

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

0001 This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/577,251, filed on Jun. 4, 2004. The disclosure of the above application is incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

0002 This invention relates to backpacks for children, and in particular to backpack integrated with toys and storybook.

0003 A wide variety of bags and backpacks have been developed for storing and transporting articles. Backpacks or tote bags may ordinarily be used to transport these items. A backpack or tote bag traditionally includes a front panel, a back panel, at least one side panel, at least one strap, and a closure. These elements of the back pack or tote bag are connected together to form a compartment which may be carried on the shoulders of the wearer.

0004 Several backpacks have been specifically developed for children, including those disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,874,340, 5,975,392, and 6,510,974 B2, the disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

0005 A backpack and toy combination includes a backpack having an exterior surface, at least one toy character, at least one support on the exterior of the backpack for releasably engaging the at least one toy character. A story book is preferably disposed inside the backpack, the story book including at least one illustration of the toy character. The story book preferably also in a reference to an item, such as a magnifying glass or binoculars, that secured in a pocket or pouch in the backpack.

0006 The backpack preferably has a front panel and a back panel hingedly connected along one edge, and further has releasable fasteners along the other edges, to releasably engage the other edges of the front and back panels, and define an interior space therebetween.

0007 At least one and preferably two panels are hingedly mounted between the front and back panels. The panels can pivot relative to each other and relative to the front and back panels to an open position in which the panels overlie the front and back panels, in side by side relationship, forming a smooth work surface. Various receptacles and pockets can be disposed on the inside faces of the front and back panel and on the faces of the interior panels facing the front and back panels, for holding various items.

0008 The backpack preferably has a cushioned back panel for the comfort of the user and so that the backpack can be used like a pillow. The back pack has arm loops which preferably can be opened when not in use to reduce risk of choking. These and other features and advantages will be in part apparent and in part pointed out hereinafter.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

0009 FIG. 1 is a front elevation view of the preferred embodiment;

0010 FIG. 2 is a rear elevation view thereof;

0011 FIG. 3 is a top plan view thereof;

0012 FIG. 4 is a bottom plan view thereof;

0013 FIG. 5 is a left side elevation view thereof;

0014 FIG. 6 is a right side elevation view thereof;

0015 FIG. 7 is an elevation view of the opened back pack;

0016 FIG. 8 is an elevation view of the opened back pack;

0017 FIG. 8A is an elevation view of an alternate construction of the opened back pack;

0018 FIG. 9 is an elevation view of the opened back pack;

0019 FIG. 10 is a top plan view of the opened back pack;

0020 FIG. 11 is a front elevation view of the back pack with the doll removed;

0021 FIG. 12 is a front elevation view of the back pack with the doll removed and the doll holder folded down.

0022 Corresponding reference numerals indicate corresponding parts throughout the several views of the drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

0023 Referring to FIGS. 1 and 2, the preferred embodiment, indicated generally at 62, is constructed of a front panel 64, a binding side panel 66, and at least one other side panel 68. Each of the panels of the preferred embodiment is made preferably out of a flexible, durable, cloth material. The front panel 64 is preferably constructed with decorative quilted cushioning. However, each of the panels may be constructed from various materials such as nylon, vinyl, plastic, or metal.

0024 As shown, the preferred embodiment also includes a back panel 70, a handle 72 having a left end 74 and a right end 76, and at least one shoulder strap 78. The back panel has an inside surface 80 (shown in FIG. 9), and outside surface 82, and an edge 84. Although the back panel is preferably constructed using a cushioned material so as to provide comfort when being carried on the back of the wearer, it may be constructed using plastic, vinyl, nylon, uncushioned cloth, or other materials. The left end of the handle 74 is secured to the left portion of the top edge of the back panel. The right end of the handle 76 is secured to the right portion of the top edge of the back panel. The handle 72 is preferably secured by sewn stitches but may be secured using any attaching device such as snaps, buttons, ties, glue, clips, or some other device.

0025 Referring to FIGS. 2 and 5, the shoulder strap 78 has a shoulder harness 86 having an upper end 88 and a lower end 90, at least one adjuster 92, at least two strands 94 and 96 of strapping. The strand 94 has a first end 98 secured to the shoulder harness 86, and at least one releasable fastener 106 having an upper slit 108 and a lower slit 110. The upper end of the shoulder harness 88 is secured to the top edge of the back panel 84. The lower end of the shoulder harness 90 is secured to first end of the first strand of strapping 98. The shoulder harness 86 is preferably made out
of a cushioned, flexible, and durable material but may be constructed from more rigid materials. The first strand of strapping 94 is threaded through the adjuster 92 and upper slit of the releasable fastener 108. The second strand of strapping 96 is threaded through the lower slit of the releasable fastener 110. Both the first and the second ends of the second strand of strapping 96 are attached to the bottom edge of the back panel 84. The preferred embodiment 62 preferably includes two shoulder straps sized and placed such that a person may place their arms through the loops created from the shoulder straps and wear the preferred embodiment comfortably on the person’s back. However, the embodiment may include only one strap to be worn over one shoulder or several straps that can be worn over the shoulders, around the torso, around the waist, or held in the user’s hand.

As shown in FIGS. 6 and 8, the binding side panel 66 has an outer surface 112, an inside surface 114, and at least one edge 116. The edge of the binding side panel 116 is secured to the front panel 64, another side panel 68, and the back panel 70 so as to form a compartment having an interior 118. The seams where the panels are secured are preferably reinforced with a stiff material so as to enhance the durability and give the preferred embodiment a shape.

FIGS. 4, 5, and 6, display the other side panel 68 and a fastening closure 122 which are further included in the preferred embodiment 62. The fastening closure 122 is secured to the side panel 68 so that when it is unfastened the preferred embodiment may be unfolded and the front and back panels may be rotated around the binding side panel to lie in the same plane. The fastening closure 122 is preferably a zipper but any closure device known to those skilled in the art may be used such as Velcro, snaps, buttons, ties, clips, elastic, or drawstrings.

The inside of the preferred embodiment includes at least one divider and a means for attaching a book. The Figures show an inside surface 124, an outside surface 126, and an edge 128 of the front panel, a first divider 130 having a front surface 132, a rear surface 134, and an edge 136, a book 138 having attachable binding 140, and a second divider 142 having a front surface 144, a rear surface 146, and an edge 148. The edge of the first divider 136, the edge of the second divider 146, and the attachable binding of the book 140 are each attached to the inside surface of the binding side panel 114 so that they may be rotated at least 180° around the binding side panel. Various methods of attaching the edges of the dividers and the attachable binding of the book to the inside of the binding side panel are available. The preferred method is stitching but riveting, gluing, spiral binding, clips or any other method of binding may be used.

The preferred embodiment 62 may also include several storage compartments. The storage compartments may be sized to fit the accessories that correspond to the story book or theme of the preferred embodiment. Accessories may include writing and coloring tools, rulers, folders, clip boards, note pads, paper, pictures, calculators, binoculars, magnifying glasses, toy phones, books, toy food items, wallets, stuffed animals, dolls, toy cars, figurines, or any other toy or accessory. The material used to construct the storage compartments may include canvas, mesh, nylon, vinyl, plastic, metal, or some other material. The storage compartment may have an opening with no closure, a partial closure, or a full closure. The closure devices may include snaps, zippers, pins, buttons, drawstrings, elastic, Velcro, or any other closure devices known to those skilled in the art. Additionally, various sub-compartments may be included to provide added organization.

FIG. 7 depicts a first storage compartment 150. The first compartment has an edge 152 which is attached to the inside surface of the front panel 124 so as to leave an opening. The edge of the first compartment which defines the dimension of the opening 154 includes an elastic closure 156. The first compartment is made of a mesh material and sized to accommodate a book 158.

FIG. 7 shows a second 160, third 162, fourth 164, and fifth 166 storage compartment. The second compartments have an edge 168 which is attached to the front surface of the first divider 132 so as to leave an opening. The edge of the second compartment which defines the dimension of the opening 170 includes an elastic closure 171. The second compartment is made of a mesh material and sized to accommodate a package of markers 172. The third compartment 162 has an edge 174 which is attached to the front surface of the first divider 132. A closure device 176 runs along the third compartment 162 providing an opening. The third compartment 162 is made of a denim material and a zipper is used for the closure device 176. The fourth compartment 164 is folded and has an edge 178 which is attached to the front surface of the first divider 132 to form a pocket with an opening. Divisions 180 are sewn on the pocket so that pencils or pens 182 may be inserted between the sewn divisions in the pocket. The fifth compartment 166 has a pouch 184 with edges 186 and a drawstring 188. The edges of the pouch 186 are attached to the front of the first divider 132 so that accessories may be stored inside the pouch.

The material used to construct the first divider 130 includes a material that is rigid and smooth in order to provide a writing surface for the user. The surface may be constructed for use other than writing such as playing with toys. It may be designed with pictures related to the story of the book 158, 138 or other included accessories or themes.

FIG. 9 shows a sixth compartment 190 which is also included in the preferred embodiment 62. The sixth compartment 190 has an edge 192 which is attached to the edge of the second divider 148 leaving an opening. The edge defining the opening 194 includes an elastic closure 196. The sixth compartment is made of a mesh material and may hold various accessories such as a package of markers 198.

FIG. 9 shows that the preferred embodiment 62 further includes a seventh 200, eighth 202, and ninth 204 compartment. The seventh compartment 200 has a surface 206 and edge 208 which is attached to the edge of the back panel 84 leaving a side opening. The eighth compartment 202 includes a pouch 210 having a zipper closure 212 and an edge 214. The edge is attached to the surface of the seventh compartment 206. The eighth compartment is sized to fit an accessory such as binoculars 216. The ninth compartment 204 is folded and has an edge 217 which is attached to the surface of the seventh compartment 206 to form a pocket with an opening. The ninth compartment may be sized to fit an accessory such as a magnifying glass 218.

The preferred embodiment also includes a doll 220, shown in FIG. 1. The doll shown has legs 222, arms 224, a
torso 226, and a head 228. However, the doll is not limited by these elements. The doll may be any toy having a shape that may fit in a harness 230, which is also included in the preferred embodiment 62 and pictured in FIGS. 1, 10, and 11.

[0036] Referring to FIGS. 11 and 12, the harness for the doll 230 has a front surface 232, a back surface 234, and at least two vertices 236 and 238. The harness is preferably in the general shape of a triangle but various shapes may be used. The preferred embodiment 62 also includes at least two loops 240 and 242 and at least two fasteners 244 which are used to attach the doll harness 230. The first vertex of the doll harness 236 is threaded through the first loop 240 and attached to the back surface of the harness 234. Similarly, the second vertex of the doll harness 238 is threaded through the second loop 242 and attached to the back surface of the harness 234. The vertices may be attached using Velcro, snaps, pins, buttons, ties, zippers, stitching, glue, or any other means of attachment. Preferably the fasteners 244 have a front surface 246, a back surface 248, a first end 250, and a second end 252. However, any type of fastener may be used such as Velcro, ties, stitching, pins, or any other means for attaching the loops to the outside surface of the front panel 126. The first end of the back surface of the fasteners is secured to the outside surface of the front panel 126. The fasteners are then threaded through the loops, folded over, and the front surface of the first end of the fasteners are attached to the front surface of the second end of the fastener in order to connect the loop to the front surface of the front panel 126.

[0037] The preferred embodiment may include any number of additional toy accessories 254. The toy accessory has a connector 256 which is used to connect the accessory to the doll harness 230. Any type of connecting device may be used such as string, buttons, Velcro, snaps, or an extension or shape of the toy accessory 256.

What is claimed is:

1. A backpack and toy combination comprising a backpack having an exterior surface, at least one toy character, at least one support on the exterior of the backpack for releasably engaging the at least one toy character; at least one story book disposed inside the backpack, the story book including at least one illustration of the toy character.

2. The backpack and toy combination according to claim 1 wherein the story book includes a reference to an item, and wherein the backpack includes a receptacle, and the item disposed in the receptacle.

3. The backpack according to claim 2 wherein the item is a magnifying glass.

4. The backpack according to claim 2 wherein the item is a pair of binoculars.

5. The backpack according to claim wherein the backpack comprises a front panel and a back panel hingedly connected along one edge, and further comprises releasable fasteners along the other edges, to releasably engage the other edges of the front and back panels, and define an interior space therebetween.

6. The backpack according to claim 1 further comprising first and second inner panels hingedly secured between the front and back panels, which can overly the inside of the front panel and back panel respectively, when the releasable fasteners are disengaged, the opposing faces of the first and second panels being smooth and rigid and forming a writing surface over the front and back panels.

7. The backpack according to claim 6 further comprising at least one pocket on the face of the first panel facing the inside of the front panel.

8. The backpack according to claim 6 further comprising at least one pocket on the face of the second panel facing the inside of the back panel.

9. The backpack according to claim 1 wherein the back panel is cushioned.

10. The backpack according to claim 1 further comprises arm loops at opposite sides of the back panel for receiving the wearer’s arms so that the backpack can be worn on a user’s back, each arm loop comprising first and second straps releasably attached together so that the loop can be opened to reduce the risk of choking.