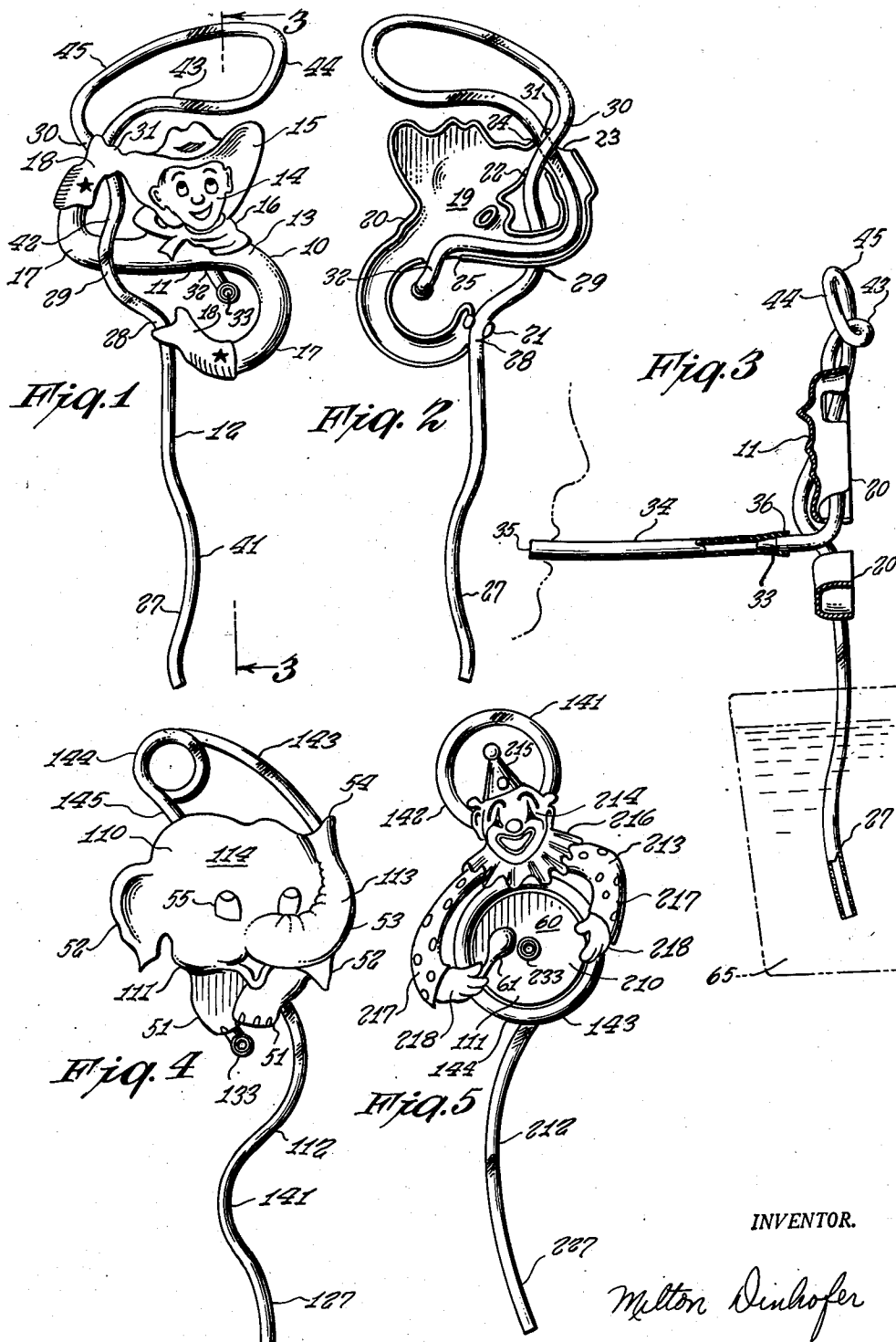


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TOY DRINKING TUBE
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TOY DRINKING TUBE

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1 Claim. (Cl. 46-116)

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This invention relates generally to toys, and more particularly to a toy which may be used in conjunction with the drinking of fluids from a glass or other vessel.

As is well known, infants and small children often refuse to drink such healthful foods as milk, or fruit juices without considerable coaxing or threats of punishment. Very often, the necessity of either may be obviated by the introduction of a novel method of drinking. Occasionally, for example, children will drink such liquids from a small glass, the same being transferred from a larger one. It is therefore among the principal objects of the present invention to provide a toy, by means of which such fluids as milk, fruit juices or the like may be made more inviting to the youthful user.

Another object of the present invention herein lies in the provision of a toy of the class described which may take a wide variety of forms, whereby when the infant or child tires or becomes bored with any one form, another may be substituted, thus renewing the interest of the child in the toy.

Another object of the present invention herein lies in the provision of a toy of the class described in which the entire device may be submerged in water for placing the same in a sanitary condition between uses.

Still another object of the present invention herein lies in the provision of a toy of the class described in which the cost of fabrication may be of a relatively low order, with consequent wide sale, distribution and use.

A further object of the present invention herein lies in the provision of a toy of the class described in which it is necessary for the user to drink a fluid in order that the same may become operative.

A feature of the device lies in the fact that the same may be disassembled for storage in a substantially planar condition.

These objects and features, as well as other incidental ends and advantages, will become more fully apparent during the course of the following disclosure, and be pointed out in the appended claim.

On the drawing, to which reference will be made in the specification, similar reference characters have been employed to designate corresponding parts throughout the several views of each embodiment.

Figure 1 is a front elevational view of a first embodiment of the invention.

Figure 2 is a rear elevational view of the first embodiment.

Figure 3 is a vertical sectional view as seen from the plane 3-3 on Figure 1.

Figure 4 is a front elevational view of a second embodiment of the invention.

Figure 5 is a front elevational view of a third embodiment of the invention.

In accordance with the invention, the device generally indicated by reference character 10, includes broadly a main body element 11, and a

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liquid carrier element 12. Said elements are representations of complementary objects.

The main body element 11 is preferably molded from a suitable material such as synthetic resin to form a representation of a first object. In the case of the first embodiment, for example, the likeness is that of a cowboy. The element 11 is of a hollow configuration, for reasons of lightness and economy, and in addition, as will be more clearly seen, the hollowed portion provides means for mounting the liquid carrier element 12.

Accordingly, the main body element 11 has a front, outer or convex surface 13 which has a size, shape and arrangement to form the likeness of the toy figure. Thus, in the case of the first embodiment, the outer surface 13 includes a facial portion 14, a hat portion 15, a neckerchief portion 16, arm portions 17, and gloved hands 18.

The inner surface 19 of the main body element 11, as has been mentioned, is of generally concave configuration, and meets the outer surface 13 at the peripheral edges 20, which in the interests of sturdiness and safety are dull rather than sharp. At pre-determined intervals along the peripheral edges 20 there is provided a number of support portions 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25; which serve to provide for the entrance and exit of the liquid carrier element, as well as to provide means for supporting the carrier element with respect to the main body element. These portions are formed by the cutting away of parts of the peripheral edges 20, or, preferably, may be formed at the time the main body element 11 is molded to shape.

The liquid carrier element 12 is preferably in the form of a transparent or translucent hollow tube, having a cross sectional area approximately equal to that of a conventional drinking straw. It is preferably formed from suitable synthetic resin, as is the case of the main body element 11. Since the liquid carrier element 12 will be subjected to considerable abuse by the average child, it is preferably formed from a material having a relatively high degree of elasticity, so as to enable it to be bent either accidentally or intentionally, without destroying its initial shape.

As is the case with the main body element 11, the liquid carrier element 12 is also bent to form the likeness of some object. In the case of the first embodiment, the liquid carrier element is in the form of a lasso being twirled by the cowboy represented by the main body element. It is therefore of irregular shape, and includes an introductory portion, a plurality of main body element engaging portions 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32; and a tapered mouthpiece engaging portion 33.

Aside from the body element engaging portions of the liquid carrier element 12, there are provided a plurality of object forming portions 41, 42, 43, 44 and 45. These portions are visible when the outer surface 13 is facing the user. The exact configuration of the object forming portions 41-45 will, of course, depend upon the object which it is desired to represent. Thus, in the case of the first embodiment the object forming

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portions are such as to convey the representation of a rope which forms the lasso. It will be understood that the exact form of the object forming portions is exemplary, since other forms may be employed which complement the main body portion without departing from the scope of the invention.

In the embodiment shown, the liquid carrier element 12 is provided with a detachable mouthpiece 34 frictionally engageable with the mouthpiece engaging portion 33. This permits the complete device 10 to be stored in a substantially planar condition. If storage space or packaging dimensions are not of great importance, the mouthpiece 34 may be made integrally with the liquid carrier element 12, and as such it will extend substantially perpendicular to the plane of the other portions of the device, as shown on Figure 3. The provision of detachable mouthpieces, however, is desirable when there are several children who at some time may use any one particular device. When such is the case, the mouthpiece 34 may be detached for sterilizing purposes, thus preventing the transfer of contagion which may be present, from the mouth of one child to that of another. Furthermore the mouthpiece may be replaced if damaged. The mouthpiece is of elongated size so that the child does not have to excessively cross his eyes to view the complete object.

Turning now to the second embodiment of the invention, to avoid needless repetition, certain of the parts corresponding to those of the first embodiment have been designated by corresponding reference characters with the additional prefix "1." The second embodiment, as shown by Figure 4, differs from the first embodiment principally in the representation which the outer surface 113 of the main body element 111 portrays, and in the configuration of the liquid carrier element 112. In the second embodiment there is a representation of a baby elephant washing itself by directing a stream of liquid over its head. Thus the facial portion 114 has depending therefrom front legs 51, ears 52, eyes 55 and a trunk 53, having the end thereof 54 upwardly directed. Above the end 54 the liquid carrier element forms the spray from the trunk.

Turning now to the third embodiment of the invention, as shown on Figure 5, here again to avoid needless repetition certain of the parts corresponding to those of the first embodiment have been designated by similar reference characters with the additional prefix "2." The third embodiment of the invention differs from the first and second embodiments principally in the representation displayed by the main body element 211 and the shape of the liquid carrier element 212. In the case of the third embodiment the figure is that of a circus clown beating a drum 60 by means of a drumstick 61. The liquid carrier element is generally in the form of a musical clef, and serves to outline the drum 60 as well as to form a halo about the head of the clown. The mouthpiece engaging portion 233 extends through a hole in the center of the drum, while the introductory portion 227 extends behind the main body element 211 to create an entertaining effect.

Operation

From what has been said, it will be apparent that the device is employed in a manner similar to that used when drinking through a conventional drinking straw. The introductory portion

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27 is inserted beneath the surface of a liquid 65 prior to the exertion of suction upon the mouthpiece 34 at the terminal portion 35. When a colored fluid such as milk, fruit juice, or the like is drawn through the liquid carrier element, an appearance and feeling of motion is imparted to the entire device and thus action is obtained when the liquid is going to the user's mouth, and when suction is stopped a return syphoning action gives movement during the latter phase. Air bubbles in the liquid produce an enchanted effect. As may be seen on Figure 2, all sections of the liquid carrier element which do not contribute to the effect are concealed against the inner surface 19 of the liquid carrier element, so that the illusion created is that of some animate object performing a well known task or operation. Similarly the device may represent some other toy or the like in which the main body may appear to be relatively stationary while some moving part or parts are represented by the liquid carrier element.

It may thus be seen that I have disclosed novel and highly useful improvements in toy structure, in which there is provided means for inducing small children to drink healthful liquids. The device may be fabricated at low cost from sanitary materials, may be made in a wide variety of forms, thus enabling the child to have a relatively large number of the same, with consequent increased play value. The device may be partially disassembled for cleaning or sterilizing, and may thus be maintained in a sanitary condition at all times. The composite device is formed in such a manner that all portions of the liquid carrier element which do not contribute to the desired effect of the device are concealed within a portion or portions of the main body element, so that the illusion created appears realistic to a small child.

I wish it to be understood that I do not consider the invention limited to the exact details of structure set forth and described in the specification and shown on the drawing, for obvious modifications will occur to those skilled in the art to which the present invention pertains.

I claim:

A toy device for use by a child for drinking liquids comprising a main body element presenting a representation of an incomplete object and a convoluted transparent liquid carrier including a depending portion insertable in the liquid, and an overlapping convoluted portion mounted on said body and formed to represent the completion of said incomplete object and a mouthpiece portion extending in a direction substantially perpendicular to the plane of said convoluted portion, said overlapping convoluted portion including successive overlapping convolutions in different planes relative to the longitudinal extent of the mouthpiece portion to provide a tortuous intertwining path for the flow of the drinking liquid, whereby the liquid as it passes through the liquid carrier is readily visible to the child.

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