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Tomy Dance With Me Teletubby Po

Dancing queen?

by Chris Hall published on 13 December 2008

Teletubbies have a habit of being the most sought-after toys at Christmas, as parents look to buy a little Christmas Day respite. But can the latest animated kids' character from Tomy compete with the likes of Elmo Live?

Secured with the normal plastic ties, this is definitely one toy you'll be fighting to get out of the packaging. The Po version stands about 30cm high, so this is no diminutive model and instantly grabbed the attention of our 2-year-old tester.

Strokeably soft, the little Po looks instantly cuddly, but the hard plastic face and working innards make this one Teletubby you wouldn't want to sleep with. The Dance With Me Teletubby takes four AA batteries, which do come supplied. We found that the provided batteries only lasted a day, perhaps due to being poor quality, or from too much time being played with before it arrived at our test centre...

When it comes to the dancing, a squeeze of the hand sets Po a-jiggling, with each hand launching into a different song, but the same dance. The left-hand resulted in the Teletubby soundtrack, with accompanying giggling from Po, and the right hand led to one of the other common maniacal songs often heard whilst the Teletubbies run around their insane little world. This is also the notional musical statues mode, where Po will pause, making it into more of a game than straight dancing.

The dancing is rather basic, a rocking from side-to-side, with accompanying arm waving - it doesn't go to the same extremes as the Elmo Live, so there are no striking poses. Just that wiggling and an occasional, rather creepy, half-closing of the eyes. Don't get me wrong, Po is cute enough, but sometimes you get the feeling he is watching you.



...cont.

Teletubbies love to fall over, and Dance With Me Po is no different. Push him over and he'll land on his behind with a honk and a giggle. Thanks to an accelerometer in his belly, this also stops the dancing, so you can't get him to lie down and writhe around, but he does half close his eyes and stare at the ceiling, rather like a Christmas-party drunk.

Help him back onto his feet and he emits a jubilant, somewhat sardonic, "weeeee". Creepy. We also question the laughs which sometimes tail off rather sarcastically. Perhaps this is to give the parents something to talk about.

Unfortunately the noises across the board are a little too shrill and the volume fairly high, certainly high enough to irritate the adults and even our tester hunted out the switch on the bottom of the foot for a little peace and quiet. That's not to say that Po didn't hold her attention. In fact, our 2-year-old tester carried Po around for some time, stopping for the occasional dance.

One problem with this is that holding the hand of a dancing Teletubby only leads to the grinding of motors from inside. Asking your toddler to sit and watch is difficult, when the instinct is to touch and feel. So the falling over and picking up does add a level of interactivity.

VERDICT

But does the Dance With Me Teletubby have a lifespan that will last longer than just Christmas Day? For some children certainly, but for our chief tester, 15 minutes was enough, before something else grabbed her attention. One particularly amusing incident was her shouting "Stop singing that song!" at Po. Smarter than you think these kids...

For Teletubby fans it's bound to be a hit, but it lacks the finesse of Elmo Live, being rather limited in its overall offering. It does come in cheaper though, but seems expensive for what it is.

At a glance

What is it?

Dancing Teletubby

Good

Some degree of interactivity

Bad

Volume, lacks variety, creepy

Verdict

For Teletubby fans it's bound to be a hit, but it lacks the finesse of Elmo Live, being rather limited in its overall offering. It does come in cheaper though, but seems expensive for what it is

Price £34.99

Our score

7/10

Your score

?/10