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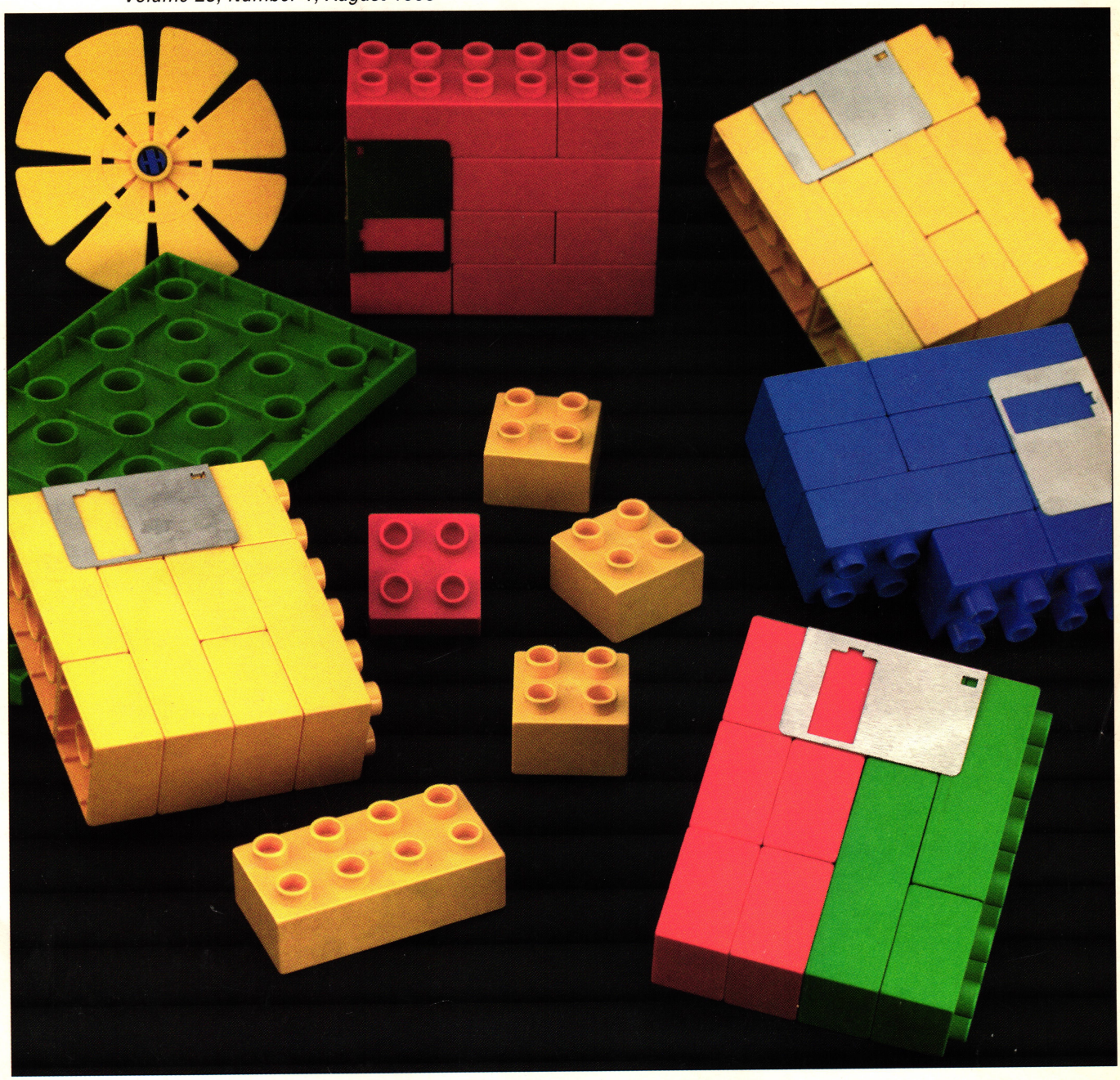

Software & Courseware

THE JOURNAL
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"Drop Tower" Enables Microgravity Research

The Reduced-Gravity Demonstrator lets instructors demonstrate the effects of microgravity on physical and chemical phenomena.

It consists of four essential parts: an experiment platform; a drop structure to hoist the platform to the top and then release it into a free-fall; and deceleration system at the bottom to catch the experiment; and a VCR to record events.

The unit applies Einstein's Theory of General Relativity: an object in free-fall will experience the same microgravity conditions as an object in a weak gravitational field. NASA scientists commonly utilize large drop towers, aircraft and spacecraft for microgravity experiments in fluid physics, material science, biotechnology, life science and more.

In a school lab, students may, among other things, study the behavior of fluids, flames and mechanical systems in microgravity. For example, a candle flame experiment illustrates the effect of buoyant convection and its absence on combustion phenomena. *NASA Lewis Research Center, Cleveland, OH, (216) 433-2017.*

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LCD Projectors Fit in Airline Overhead Bins

The nFINITY Series are two self-contained LCD projectors measuring 15" x 12" x 6" and just 19 lbs.

Proprietary electronics deliver a palette of 14.5 million colors at 640 x 480 resolution. The projector and its accessories fit into a hard-shell carrying case so compact that it meets FAA regulations for overhead bin storage on airlines.

Two models are offered: the P110 for computer data only and the P115, which also handles full-motion video. Both include a built-in control panel, 410-watt halogen lamp and infrared remote control. *nVIEW, Newport News, VA, (800) 736-8439.*

Write 351 on Inquiry Card

Upgrades for Old PS/2s Lets Them Run Windows

Genesis\PC Replacement Motherboards fit inside older non-standard computers allowing them to run Windows, OS/2 Warp, NetWare and virtually all other modern software, without replacing existing memory or peripherals.

The first three motherboards support IBM PS/2 Models 25, 25-286 and 30-286 computers, found in thousands of schools nationwide. Upgrading them costs one-fourth as much as purchasing a new system to run Windows applications.

Each motherboard is the same shape and size as the one it replaces, with all mounting holes and connectors properly aligned. It includes a 50MHz 486SXL2 chip, a math co-processor, sockets for 128K of cache and two banks for up to 32MB of RAM.

They also provides two 16550 UART-compatible serial ports, an Enhanced Parallel Port, game port, PS/2 keyboard connector, PS/2 mouse connector and a PS/2 headphones jack. *PC Enterprises, Wall, NJ, (800) 922-7257.*

Write 316 on Inquiry Card

Portable OHP Sports Motorized 1.6X Zoom

The CX-500 is the first compact portable overhead projector with a built-in motorized zoom to magnify small print and detailed images.

Previously available only in desktop projectors, the zoom lens enlarges images up to 1.6 times. Focus-hold keeps the picture sharp when zooming. When power is switched off, the lens automatically retracts for storage protection.

Other highlights are a large working stage (11.2" x 11.2"), a bar magnet for securing acetate and a quiet cooling fan. The CX-500 quickly folds up into a rugged carrying case. Laser pointers and other accessories are available. *PLUS Corp. of America, Allendale, NJ, (201) 818-2700.*

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