

Air Soft Bbs.

*It's no secret that boys of a certain age like guns, even if they are *make-believe. I remember that before my boys ever had any plastic weapons, they would use other toys, or even sticks, and pretend that they were guns. Perhaps they were influenced by something that they had seen on television, or maybe in a book. Who knows? Even at snack time, they would hold up their carrots at each other and pretend to shoot. Well, now that my boys are older, we have found a happy medium between play and reality. Air soft. These guns are fashioned to look exactly like the real thing, but often smaller in size. And what they shoot is harmless: bb's. These are small, plastic balls that come in various colors. We have white, orange, and fluorescent yellow ones. The boys *take their weapons quite seriously. They have already had a proper air soft battle with friends up in the forest where they camped out for the night. It was supervised, of course, by parents. Eye protection is a must, and nobody is allowed to play unless their eyes are covered. The extent to which you cover yourself in clothing is up to you. Some people don't want to risk getting hit with a bb because it stings a little. As long as you wear long sleeves, long pants, and cover your face and neck, you are completely sting-free. Air soft is the sort of hobby that grows on you. Some adults are devoted to it. You-tube is full of video clips about the air soft weapons, and battles among friends in lots of different countries. When my two sons had their air soft camp-out, they came back with stories of all the cool stuff that people had. There are heavy duty combat suits that you can use that not only completely cover you, but also are camouflaged. Some of the air soft guns are CO2 powered (carbon dioxide), so the bb's fly hard and fast at their target. What's really fun, is having a make-believe battle in our back garden as the sun is going down. We use the glow-in-the-dark bb's, so we can see when someone is shooting at us, and duck. Our kids absolutely love it; it's intense and exciting. The only trouble is, there are bb's everywhere. If you pick any room in my house, even after it's been cleaned, you will find bb's somewhere. Even the driveway has bright yellow bb's glowing against the black asphalt, and from underneath bushes and plants. Those little plastic balls started out in a factory in China, made their way by boat to the U.S., were transported by train to Washington, and then by truck to our local store. And now, those tiny things will be turning up for months in my house and entryway.

Grammar notes.

Related vocabulary and expressions: it's no secret, make-believe, to take something seriously, glow-in-the-dark.

1. It's no secret that their money influences local politicians.
2. My daughter's unicorn lives in our backyard; it's make-believe, of course.
3. She takes her cake baking very seriously; don't disturb her when she is making them.
4. My Halloween costume was a glow-in-the-dark skeleton costume.

