

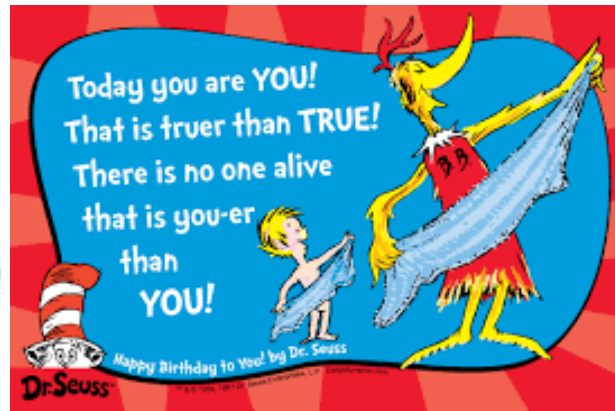
# The Place of Popular Culture in ECE

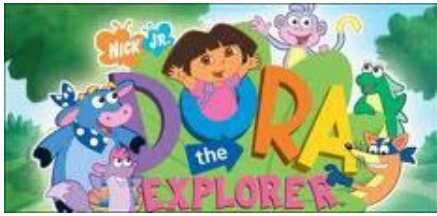
Mary Jane Shuker



# “They get enough of that at home”

- What are your thoughts of popular culture in an early childhood setting?





# Investigation

(Dickie & Shuker, 2014)



- To explore children's strengths in situated literacies related to popular culture
- To enable early childhood and primary teachers to tap into children's expertise in these



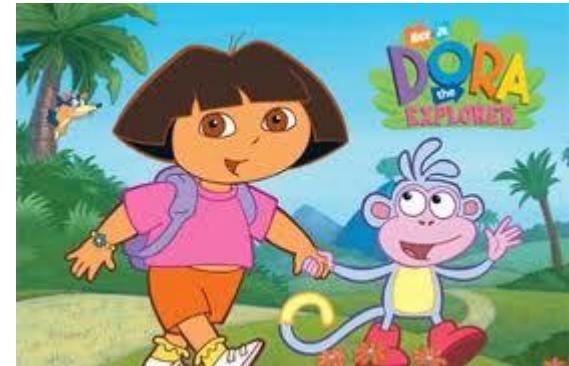
*Ben Tennyson*





# Modern interpretations of literacy

- More than reading and writing skills
- Situated in home and community



- Need to make effective links to children's social and cultural backgrounds
- Growing diversity of the child population we teach





# Popular culture



- Music, sport, computer software, books, magazines, television, film, video games
- May be related to toys, games, comics, cards, clothing, sports accessories and food and drink.



# Two features of the project

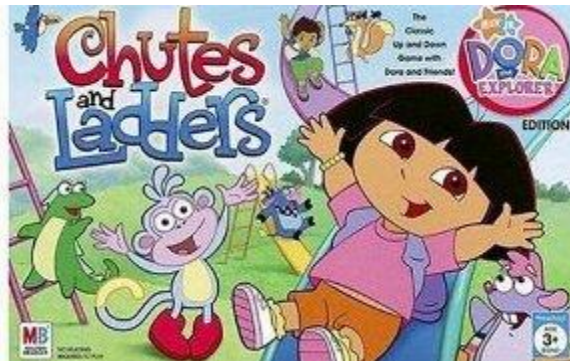
- Explores children's own expertise in popular culture literacies
- Includes children from 12 months to 8 years





# Method: Phase one - Survey

- Sent to 319 early childhood centres and 154 primary schools with year 1 to 3 children
- 38 early childhood/42 primary returned
- Greater Wellington area





# Popular Culture Audit

- Discuss: what popular media characters are evident in your early childhood setting?



# Specific Questions from *Te Whāriki*

- There are 15 kaiako capabilities listed in the revised curriculum (Ministry of Education (MoE), 2017, p. 59). They are aligned to the Graduating Teacher Standards.
- In this session we will use the following to see how they identify strengths and weaknesses of local early learning provision in relation to popular culture.
- **Firstly**, “able to support the cultural and linguistic diversity to all children as part of promoting an inclusive environment” (p. 59). Discuss in small groups.



# Secondly discuss:

- “Knowledgeable about play-based curriculum and pedagogy and able to conceptualise, plan and enact curriculum that is motivating, enjoyable and accessible for all children” (MoE, 2017,p. 59).



# Parents and whānau engaged in their child's learning

- Parents and whanau are 'funds of knowledge'
- Parent and whānau aspirations for their children inform curriculum planning
- Kaiako have regular dialogue with parents and whānau about what their children are learning at the service and at home (MoE, 2017)

How can the above be linked to popular culture?





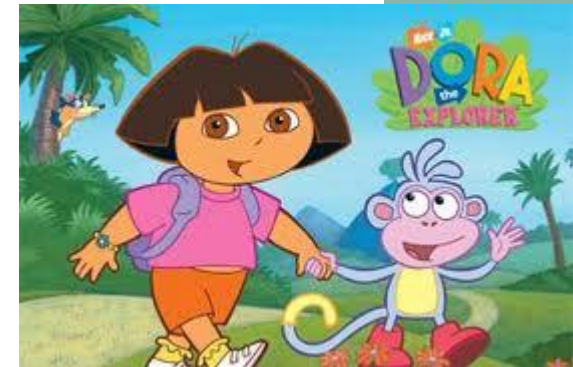
# Māori myths and shadow puppets

- [http://www.elp.co.nz/ecartnz\\_e\\_magazine.cfm](http://www.elp.co.nz/ecartnz_e_magazine.cfm) (Issue 12)

# Data from Phase One of our study

## Early Childhood Links to Literacy: Role Playing

- Dora the Explorer
- Barbie Movies/Barbie Princesses
- Princesses
- Superheroes – Spiderman, Superman, Batman, Ironman
- Ben 10
- Thomas the Tank Engine
- Toy Story characters



# Responses linked to writing

- “Boys dramatic playing out of Ben 10 & Bob the Builder often leads to pictures with dictated stories”



# Drawing (ECE)

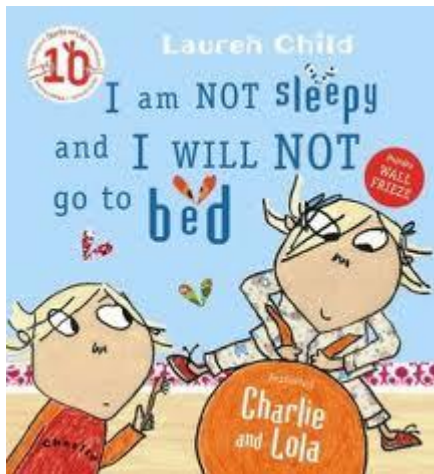
- Ben 10
- Buzz Lightyear
- “Recently a small group of boys have been including Ben 10 & Toy Story characters in their pretend play, drawing, painting and writing activities. They include symbols (such as the Ben 10 watch) and can be quite detailed drawings – e.g. matching our available crayon colours to the colour of the Buzz’s buttons and clothing”.





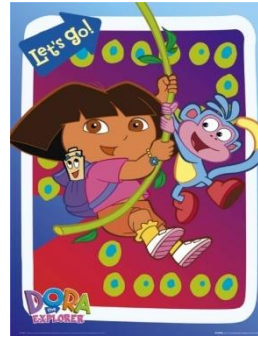
# Reading

- We watch books on DVD, e.g. Charlie and Lola
- Nitro bikes
- Ben 10
- Buzz Lightyear
- Harry Maclary soft toys, books
- Cars & Nemo



# Gender Preferences (ECE)

- Girls – fairies, Bratz, Dora the Explorer, Barbie, princesses



- Boys – most of the superhero play is male dominated, Ben 10, Spiderman, Batman, wrestling figures, Transformers



# Drawing

- Characters with spiky hair (e.g. Ben 10 characters)
- Superman symbols
- Superheroes
- Pokemon signs
- Logos, icons



# Conclusion

- Majority of teachers in our survey reported that they incorporated aspects of popular culture as they taught and assessed literacy
- Literacy learning and teaching can maintain a sociocultural perspective and all the teaching of the required skills and knowledge by making links to children's out-of-school/centre knowledge and interest in popular culture (Dickie & Shuker, 2014).





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