

Have you ever thought about why some characters from the Saturday morning cartoons are able to transition out into the greater public? It seems like every once in a while there will be a character that becomes so popular that you begin to see them everywhere. Not only are they on television but they begin showing up on the kids menu in fast food restaurants, on board games designed for children, on kids clothing and for some in full length feature films. There are many Saturday morning characters that come and go, so what makes these chosen few so special? I think it is the way they appeal to adults.

Through the years there have been many characters that no matter what your age you are able to identify them. There are enough advertisements, merchandise and references that even if you do not have children you know who the character is. One of the more recent hit characters is Dora the explorer. This is a favorite with young girls; however there are enough supporting characters that go along with her that boys also are interested in her. Late last autumn my husband and I went to visit friends of ours that have moved to an adjoining state. It is a seven hour drive to get from our house to theirs. The man had been the best man in our wedding. He and my husband have been friends for thirty years. Our friend did not get married until he was forty five years old. He and his wife have a little girl that had just turned four at the time of our visit. She was excited to show us the Dora the explorer items that she received as birthday presents. She had received a Dora the explorer board game as well as a pair of pajamas with Dora on. She has had a very difficult time getting into a bedtime routine so her mom was hoping that the Dora the explorer pajamas would help with this. We arrived a few days after the birthday party but there were still pieces of the ice cream birthday cake left. Of course Dora the explorer had been airbrushed onto the cake with food coloring.

The day after we got there my friend's wife and I decided to go shopping. The guys were going to stay home and watch college football. The four year old opted to stay home. We were gone for several hours, enjoying our shopping and catching up with each other. When we arrived home we found my husband babysitting the four year old. Our friend was called into work on an emergency. My husband said that he had played several games of Dora the explorer while we were gone. He was disappointed that the four year old would never let him be Dora.