

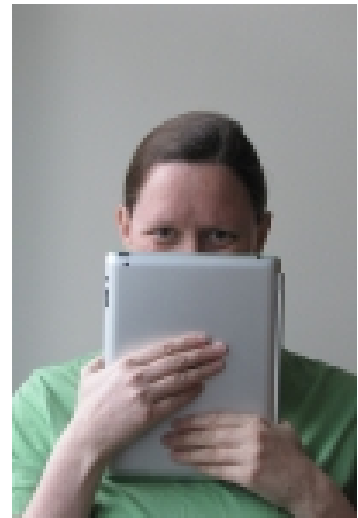
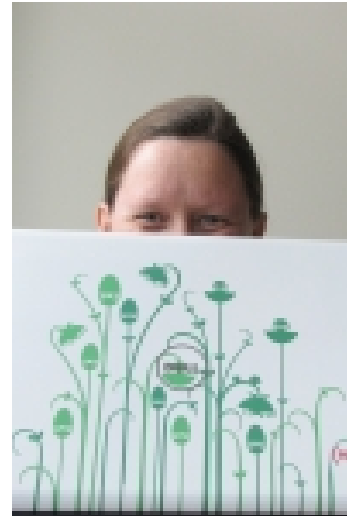
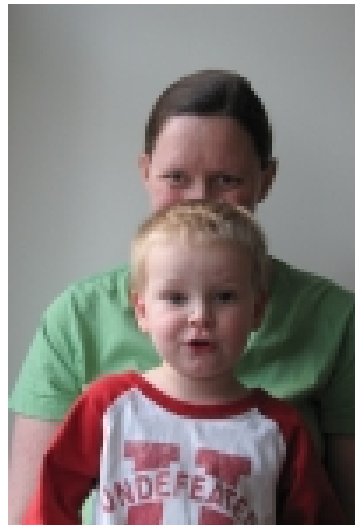
# What's "App"ening?

The World of Mobile Apps for  
Children

Francesca de Freitas  
BCLA, 2012



# Hello!



# Plan for today

- What are apps?
- Let's look at lots of shiny things!
- Discussion: How do we feel about the shiny things?
- What challenges do parents face?
- Discussion: What can we do to help?
- Example: Richmond Public Library
- Areas of interest we haven't covered
- How do we keep informed?

# **Whose needs are we considering?**

Preschool children and their parents and caregivers

Also keep in mind:

- School age children
- Teens
- Families with special language needs
- Families with special accessibility needs

# What are we talking about?

- Picturebook eBooks
- Rich eBooks
- Online eBooks



## **eBook**

a book that can be read on an electronic device

- eBook Apps
- Picturebook Apps
- Games



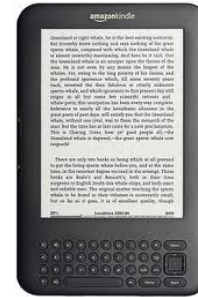
## **App**

an application that runs on a mobile device

# Electronic Devices



Computers



eReaders



Laptops



Smart  
Phones



Netbooks

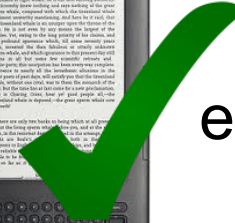


Tablets

# eBooks



Computers



eReaders



Laptops



Smart  
Phones



Netbooks

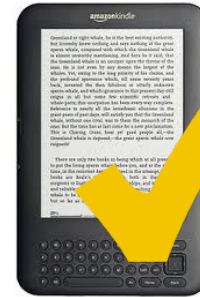


Tablets

# Apps



Computers



eReaders



Laptops



Smart  
Phones



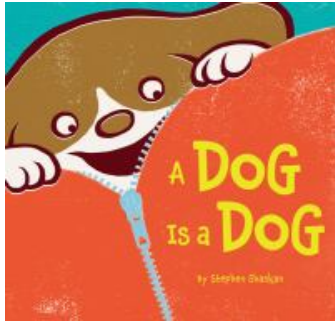
Netbooks



Tablets

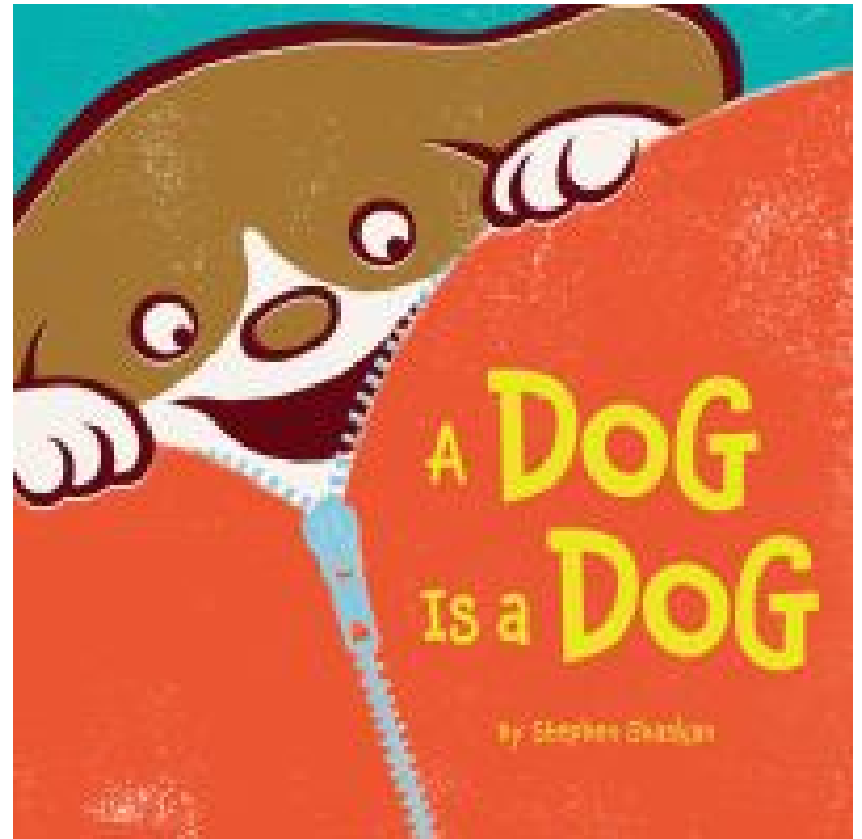


# Shiny (and not so shiny) things!



# A Dog is a Dog - Free through library

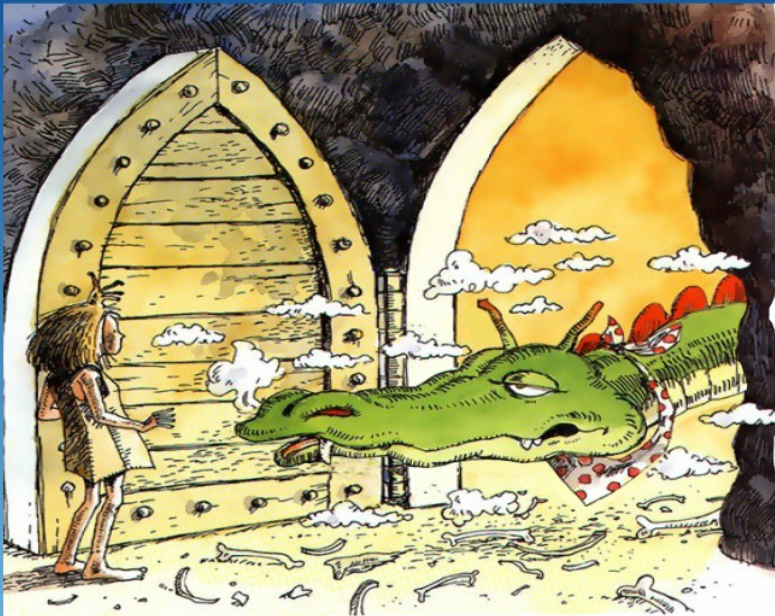
- Picture book converted to an ebook
- Not designed for electronic use
- Formatted differently on different devices



# Tumblebooks - Free through library

- Optional narration
- Word highlighting
- Some animations
- Word selection

## TUMBLEPAD



She came to a big cave. The cave had a big door, in the middle of the door was a big knocker.

Elizabeth took a hold of the knocker and went 'BONG, BONG, BONG, BONG'.

The dragon opened up the door, 'CCCRREEKKK' stuck out its enormous big head and said, "Go away. I have already eaten one first grade, two second grades, three third grades and a day-care centre;

Come back, I will eat you tomorrow".

Help  
Off

Word  
Help



Auto



Manual



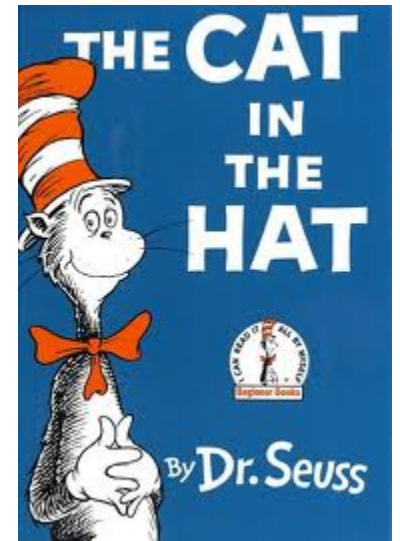
# Five Little Pumpkins - \$5.99

- Narration
- Word highlighting
- Animations
- Zoom in and out
- Interactivity



# The Cat in the Hat - \$3.99

- Read to me
- Read it myself
- Autoplay
- Optional narration
- Word highlighting
- Word and object selection

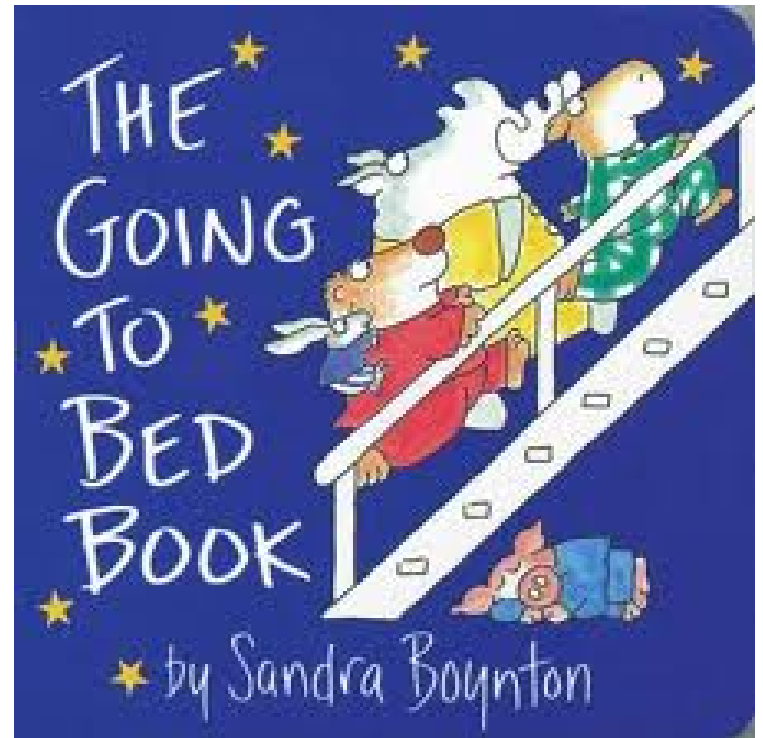




# The Going to Bed Book - \$3.99

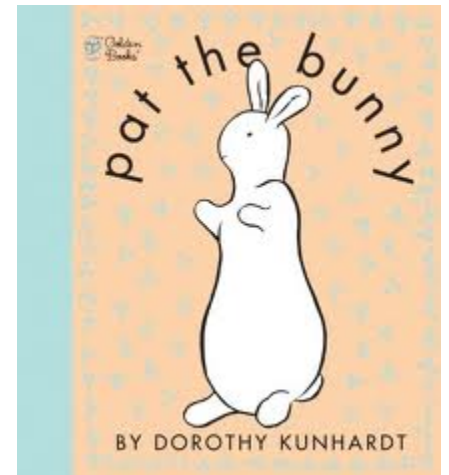


- Read to me
- Read it myself
- Optional narration
- Word highlighting
- Word selection
- Interactivity



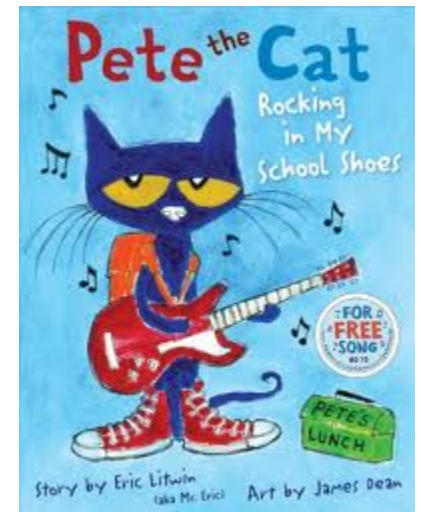
# Pat the Bunny - \$4.99

- A few pages replicate the book
- Significant new material
- Painting mode
- Seasonal updates



# Pete the Cat: School Jam - \$0.99

- Game rather than story
- Features characters from the books
- Attempt to interact with physical books





# The Wheels on the Bus HD - \$1.99

- Follows song verses
- Multiple languages
- Record your own voice



# 3 Little Pigs - \$5.99

- Linear narrative
- Multiple child voices narrate
- Story requires child to further the action
- Read by Myself option is difficult



# Nighty Night! - \$2.99 + \$0.99

- Multiple languages
- Different versions for different devices
- Additional animals added



# Elmo Loves ABCs - \$4.99 + \$0.99

- Clear literacy goals
- Simple explanations for children to follow
- Reports for parents
- Ability to lock purchase buttons



# Squiggles! - Free

- Storytelling through art
- eBooks secondary to drawing



# Talking Tom Cat - Free (+ \$0.00 +\$∞ )



- Ads
- Sends emails to random people
- Ads
- Can charge your credit card for Man United away strip
- Ads
- Mean to cats

# Crappy apps

"Designing Children's game and apps for Tablets is a lot like when Celebrities write Children's books. You don't need a lot of skill to do it, but it makes you feel like you contributed."  
Rudee66, 2011

# Benefits

- Engaging - kids enjoy them
- Cheap - between \$0 - \$6
- Easy to obtain once you have the mobile device
- Transportable
- Multiple languages
- Voice recording
- Expose kids to key literacy concepts



# Concerns

- Used as babysitters
- Excess screen time for young children
- Electronic experiences replacing physical reading experiences
- Quality content hard to define and to find
- Entertainment instead of education
- Imaginations aren't necessary
- Don't provoke emotional responses

# Storytellers

"I dislike all e-readers but I particularly loathe so-called picture books on e-readers. They are not books. They are low class entertainment that will dumb down kids and wreck their futures as clever, imaginative, empathetic, psychologically secure, focussed human beings. I will not let

my grandchild near them, nor will I allow apps to be based on any of my books, in spite of pleadings from companies around the world. How can bells and whistles claim to replace emotional responses to words? It's all garbage. Just because it's the latest thing doesn't mean it's the best. It's the worst."

Mem Fox, 2012

# Storytellers

"I still love print books. I love the weight of the book in my hand and the paper. I just started my next book, and I try to do at least two books a year. The whole “e-book thing” is coming, but it’s not here yet. But I look at the talk about the superiority of printed books to books on screens as almost a fetish. When Gutenberg came along, people probably said the same thing about scrolls. Or even earlier: “I just miss the weight of that clay tablet in my lap!” Storytelling has been given a new form, and someone in my position is going to be excited about that."

Dan Yaccarino, 2012

# Discussion

Do we rejoice in a new way of reading, or do we cringe at children's diminishing contact with physical books?

Do apps remove the need for imagination, or provide a new way to experience stories?

Do we compare apps to storybooks or to games?

# **Suck it up!**

"Your feelings about devices aside, there are parents who are giving their children access to them, regardless of whether they should or not. And there are companies that are providing content for these devices for children to interact with, regardless of whether that's a good idea or not."

Jeremy Greenfield, Digital Book World, 2012

# Help!



Parents, [Login here](#) or  
[Sign up now!](#)



[How It Works](#)

[Apps](#)

[About Us](#)

[Developers](#)

Parents want a safe, fun, educational mobile experience for their children.

I want to know  
how my kid is learning on my  
mobile phone!



I want the best learning  
apps for my child!

I want my kid  
to have fun!



# What challenges do parents face?

- Apps are not curated
- No common rating system
- Categories are strange
- Confusing educational claims
- Bad apps
- Dodgy review sites
- Apps can be difficult to identify
- Risks (bandwidth, credit card charges, wifi)
- Hidden costs (internal purchases, multiple devices)

# Discussion

What roles or responsibilities do libraries have to support parents and kids in this new technology?



# What can we do to help?

- Make mobile devices and apps available in the library
- Establish criteria for evaluating apps
  - Developmental appropriateness
  - Balance
  - Sustainability
  - Parental involvement

(Source: Cynthia Chiong, A Matter of App)

- Maintain lists of recommended apps
- Talking to parents about how to use apps to promote literacy, learning, and creativity
- Digital storytimes

# **Richmond Public Library's iPad pilot**

- Started early March, 2012
- 8 iPads into their main branch's Kid's Place
- 79 apps, cost from \$0-\$5 each
- Replaced aging desktop computers

# Richmond Public Library's 79 apps

## Educational

1. Farm Animals by Photo Touch
2. iWriteWords
3. Bats Flurry Fliers of the Night
4. Presto Bingo Shapes
5. Ultimate Dinopedia
6. Fantastic World of Dinosaurs
7. elias MATCH
8. Drawing for Kids
9. Coloring with Pocoyo and Friends
10. Interactive Alphabet
11. Fish School HD
12. My First Puzzle: Aliens
13. Monkey Preschool Lunchbox

## Games

14. Creationary (Lego)
15. Where's Waldo?
16. Bumpy Road
17. Pirate Scribblebeard's Treasure with Oscar & Josephine

18. Create a Car
19. My Playhome
20. Snakes and Ladders
21. Mole Mash (Max & Ruby)
22. Pigeon!
23. Super Why!
24. Roxie's Amazing Vacation adventure
25. Cars in sandbox
26. Trafficville HD
27. Rail Maze Pro HD
28. Puffle Launch
29. Sprinkle: Water

## Music

30. Musical Me
31. Dr. Seuss Band
32. LEGO Duplo Jams

## Book Tie-ins

33. Olivia the Great
34. Elmo Loves ABCs
35. Another Monster at the End of This Book

36. Toy Story 3 Read Along
37. Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed
38. Cinderella by Nosy Crow
39. The Three Little Pigs by Nosy Crow
40. Bizzy Bear on the Farm
41. Moo Baa La La La
42. Barnyard Dance
43. Thomas and Friends: Day of the Diesels
44. Thomas and Friends: Misty Island Rescue
45. Cars 2 World Grand Prix Read and Race
46. Bunny Fun: Head, Shoulder...
47. Pat the Bunny
48. Go Away Big Green Monster
49. The Poky Little Puppy
50. Harold and the Purple Crayon
51. Roxie's Door
52. Pop out the tale of Peter Rabbit
56. - 79. Dr Seuss Titles

# Richmond Public Library's results

- Public reaction very positive
- Easier for kids, parents, and staff to use
- Cheaper to purchase
- Easier to maintain and keep current
- More relevant for parents
- Staff excited to see public reaction and to learn
- Fulfilling a role the library can play in changing times - the community looks to the library to advise them

Plan to purchase 10-12 devices for the branches, then look at school-age and YA stations.

Total cost for pilot: \$9,000

# **See RPL's apps in action**

Richmond Public Library invites you to take a tour of their Brighthouse branch, including the iPad stations in the Kid's Zone.

Tours are Saturday, May 12, 9-10:30, meet at the Sheraton Lobby, register at the BCLA registration desk.

# **Areas of interest we haven't covered**

- Apps as assistive technology
- App gap
- Preparing kids to use apps at school
- Teens and mobile devices

# Resources for keeping informed

App reviews, and general information:

- School Library Journal - Touch and Go Blog  
<http://blog.schoollibraryjournal.com/touchandgo>
- A Matter of App  
<http://childrensappreview.blogspot.ca/>
- Wired.com - GeekDad blog <http://www.wired.com/geekdad/>
- Common Sense Media, community reviews  
<http://www.common Sense Media.org/mobile-app-lists>

# Resources for keeping informed

## Research

- Joan Ganz Cooney Center (Sesame Workshop)  
<http://www.joanganzcooneycenter.org/>
- Fred Rogers Center  
<http://www.fredrogerscenter.org/>

## Apps in libraries

- ALSC Blog, Technology Category  
<http://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/category/technology/>



# Thank you to:

- Sara Amon - Vancouver Public Library
- Tess Prendergast - Vancouver Public Library
- Kelly Clark - Vancouver Public Library
- Susan Walters - Richmond Public Library
- Virginia McCreedy - Richmond Public Library
- Liam Ghesquiere - User experience tester  
(and toddler)

# Credits

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YogiPlay. <http://www.yogiplay.com/>

# Credits

## Images

Green, yellow checks, red X: Public Domain images from [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page)

Device images: Google Images public domain image search

Book cover images from Amazon.com

App icon images from AppleStore

## **Richmond Public Library – Preschool iPad Stations**

**For further information on the iPad stations, please contact Richmond Public Library:**

**<http://www.yourlibrary.ca/content.cfm?lev1=131>**

### **LIST OF APPS INSTALLED (May 8, 2012)**

\$0.00 - \$4.99, with most in the lower price range

#### **Educational**

1. Farm Animals by Photo Touch
2. iWriteWords
3. Bats Flurry Fliers of the Night
4. Presto Bingo Shapes
5. Ultimate Dinopedia
6. Fantastic World of Dinosaurs
7. elias MATCH
8. Drawing for Kids
9. Coloring with Pocoyo and Friends
10. Interactive Alphabet
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13. Monkey Preschool Lunchbox

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18. Create a Car
19. My Playhome
20. Snakes and Ladders
21. Mole Mash (Max & Ruby)
22. Pigeon!
23. Super Why!
24. Roxie's Amazing Vacation adventure
25. Cars in sandbox

## **Richmond Public Library – Preschool iPad Stations**

- 26. Trafficville HD
- 27. Rail Maze Pro HD
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- 29. Sprinkle: Water

### **Music**

- 30. Musical Me
- 31. Dr. Seuss Band
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### **Book Tie-ins**

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- 48. Go Away Big Green Monster
- 49. The Poky Little Puppy
- 50. Harold and the Purple Crayon
- 51. Roxie's Door
- 52. Pop out the tale of Peter Rabbit

### **Dr. Seuss**

- 53. The Big Brag

## **Richmond Public Library – Preschool iPad Stations**

54. The Bippolo Seeds
55. Dr. Seuss's ABC
56. Green Eggs and Ham
57. The Cat in the Hat
58. The Cat Comes Back
59. The Foot Book
60. Fox in Socks
61. Gertrude McFuzz
62. Green Eggs and Hams
63. Happy Birthday to
64. Hop on Pop
65. Horton Hears a
66. I Can Read with my eyes closed
67. If I ran the zoo
68. The Lorax
69. Mr. Brown
70. Oh Say Can You
71. Oh, the Places You Can Be
72. Oh, The Thinks You Can Think
73. One Fish Two Fish
74. The Sneetches
75. There is no place like
76. There's a Wocket in my pocket
77. You're Only Old Once
78. What Was I Scared of
79. Yertle the Turtle