

Pop Culture Primer and Glossary

Dear Parent,

First of all, breathe. There is a lot going on in the world right now and you are playing a lot of different roles, including the role of a teacher. The material listed here uses popular culture references and you **don't need to know it all**. The guide below provides references about the characters that are discussed in the lesson plans.

Some possible questions to ask if you are unfamiliar with a particular character or concept your child mentions:

1. Can you tell me more about that?
2. How does it relate to this topic?
3. What are some of the ways that this character experiences distress or trauma, and how does this character cope with it?
4. What can we learn from this character?
5. If this character were here, what would they want us to know or understand?

Harry Potter

Harry Potter is a young wizard whose parents were murdered by an evil wizard, Lord Voldemort, when Harry was just 1 year old. Voldemort also tries to kill Harry but his death spell rebounds nearly killing Voldemort.

Harry is then sent to live with his abusive aunt, uncle, and cousin (The Dursleys), who try to suppress Harry's magical potential and bully him. When Harry turns 11, he finds out that he is a wizard and goes to study magic at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. There, Harry meets Ron and Hermione, who become his best friends, as well as Draco Malfoy, a racist spoiled boy who bullies Harry and his friends.

When Voldemort returns to power, it is up to Harry, his friends, as well as his mentor, Professor Dumbledore, to stop him. In his racist strive for power, Voldemort tries to kill all non-magical people (Muggles) and Muggle-borns. Harry and his friends have to risk their lives and make numerous sacrifices on multiple occasions but are able to defeat Voldemort and his evil supporters, the Death Eaters, in the end.

Star Wars TERMS:

Jedi. The Jedi Knights are able to use the Force (an invisible magical energy that binds the universe together). The Jedi follow a strict code of ethics to protect the galaxy and are said to be on the **Light Side** of the Force. Most notorious Jedi are

Yoda, Obi Wan Kenobi, Luke Skywalker, and Anakin Skywalker (who later becomes Darth Vader).

Sith. The Sith are the villains of the *Star Wars* universe. They use the Force for personal gain and are said to be on the **Dark Side**. The most notorious Sith are *Darth Vader* (formerly Anakin Skywalker and Luke's and Leia's father), as well as *Darth Sidious* (also known as Emperor Palpatine).

The Force. Both the Jedi and Sith are able to use the Force. People who are strong with the Force have certain superpowers, such as the ability to levitate objects, mind control, long-distance communication via mind connection, etc.

The Droids. The droids are robots. The droids are sentient and loyal, some of them having human-like emotions. The most notorious droids are C3PO and R2D2.

Light Saber. Energy/Force-driven sword, which can cut, burn, and melt nearly everything. Both Jedi and the Sith use lightsabers. The Jedi usually use green or blue lightsabers. The Sith usually use red ones.

FILM SUMMARIES:

Original *Star Wars*. The original films tell the story of twin siblings, *Luke Skywalker* and *Princess Leia Organa*, who were separated when their mom, Padma Amidala, dies at their birth. The movies begin with a war between the evil Empire, led by the corrupt and power-hungry *Emperor Palpatine* and the Rebel Alliance, who are trying to bring back freedom to the galaxy.

Emperor Palpatine's right hand enforcer, *Darth Vader*, is torturing Leia for information about the location of the Rebel Alliance.

Leia manages to sneak a secret message to Obi Wan Kenobi, an old Jedi Knight. Luke Skywalker finds Leia's message and the two go to a cantina, where they meet a smuggler, *Han Solo*, who agrees to fly them on his ship, the *Millenium Falcon*. Although Vader kills Obi Wan, Luke and Han manage to find Leia and the three of them manage to escape.

Over the next couple of films, Luke and Leia learn that they are brother and sister, and Luke learns that *Darth Vader* did not kill his father, but rather, *Darth Vader* is his father. Vader tries to convince Luke to join the Dark Side and when Luke refuses, Vader cuts off his right hand.

Luke begins his Jedi training with *Yoda*, the oldest living Jedi Knight and becomes a Jedi. Luke confronts Vader again. Although Vader tries to convince Luke to join the Dark Side, Luke reminds his father that he still has some good in him. When Palpatine tries to kill Luke, Vader kills Palpatine, saving his son's life. Darth Vader dies in his son's arms, having redeemed himself. Leia and Han Solo become a couple. Luke cremates Vader and the Rebels defeat the Empire, destroying the *Death Star* (The Empire's military space station, capable of destroying entire planets).

Modern Trilogy. Thirty years after the last Star Wars film (The Return of the Jedi), the new trilogy shows a grim world in which the Empire has risen to power again. The Empire are called *The New Order* and their regime is reminiscent of the Nazis. Luke Skywalker had a Jedi training academy, but after his nephew (Leia and Han's son), Kylo Ren, turns to the Dark Side, Luke hides away vowing never to train anyone again.

Kylo Ren quickly rises to become the evil ruthless villain, trying to live up to his grandfather's name (Darth Vader). In trying to embrace his Dark Side, Kylo Ren kills his father (Han Solo).

In the meantime, we meet Finn. Taken from his family at birth, raised to become a Storm Trooper (an Empire Soldier), Finn believes that Storm Troopers are the good guys. That is until he witnesses them kill innocent villagers and is ordered to participate in the massacre. Finn risks his life to run away from the Storm Troopers and eventually joins the Rebel Alliance.

We also meet Rey, a young woman whose parents abandoned her when she was a small child. Rey has had to support herself ever since. Rey appears to be very strong with the Force. She and Finn eventually join the Rebel Alliance to stand up to Kylo Ren, as Rey trains to be a Jedi under Luke Skywalker.

Rogue One. This film takes place immediately before the initial Star Wars trilogy. *Jyn Erso*, the daughter of a scientist who designed the *Death Star* and other rebels give up their lives to obtain plans to destroy the Death Star. They die obtaining the plans and passing them to Princess Leia, one of the leaders of the Rebel Alliance. The theme of this film is sacrifice in the name of a bigger picture, as well as finding hope even when there doesn't seem to be any.

MARVEL UNIVERSE

The Marvel universe includes fictional superheroes, such as Spider-Man, the Avengers, the X-Men, Scarlet Witch, and many others.

The Avengers are a group of superheroes that band together to protect the world from various threats, such as alien invasions. The most commonly known Avengers superheroes are *Iron Man*, *Captain America*, *Black Widow*, *The Hulk*, *Thor*, *Black Panther*, *Ant Man*, *Spider-Man*, *Captain Marvel*, *Doctor Strange*, and many others.

All Avengers have certain superpowers or special abilities. Over the years, the Avengers save the planet from numerous invasions. In one of the Avengers films, (*Avengers: Infinity War*) a villain, Thanos, destroys half of the universe, including half of the Avengers, such as Spider-Man, Doctor Strange, and Black Panther. In the last Avengers film, (*The Endgame*), the Avengers are able to defeat Thanos, restoring the half of the universe that he destroyed, but with Iron Man and Black Widow dying in the process.

Main Themes of the Avengers films – standing up for what is right (even if the Avengers did not agree with the government's decisions or rules), risking and sacrificing for what the Avengers believe in (protecting others).

The Avengers include the following:

Iron Man (real name – Tony Stark) was a billionaire playboy/scientist who specialized in weapons manufacturing. When he is injured in a war zone, he creates a mechanical suit, which keeps his heart functioning, allowing him to fly, shoot, and otherwise save people. After he nearly dies after the first Earth invasion in the first Avengers film, Tony goes through posttraumatic stress disorder and begins drinking heavily. His symptoms become so severe, that he leaves home and ostracizes himself from others. He later meets a little boy who reminds Tony about what Iron Man stands for – helping people. Thanks to the little boy, Tony is able to become Iron Man again. Tony mentors Spider-Man and sees him as a son. When Spider-Man disappears after Thanos destroys the universe, Tony is heartbroken. He later joins the Avengers again to restore the universe and is able to bring back Spider-Man but dies in the process (in *Avengers: The Endgame*).

Captain America (real name – Steve Rogers) is a superhero, an Army Veteran who fought in WWII. He was initially not physically fit to join the Army but an experimental drug gave him superpowers, including super strength and longer lifespan. He uses his indestructible shield as a weapon, sometimes throwing it as a projective object.

Black Widow (real name – Natasha Romanoff) – is a Russian spy who later joins the Avengers. She was previously experimented on and now has certain super abilities, such as long lifespan. She is also an exceptional fighter. Like Iron Man, she too died in *Avengers: The Endgame*.

The Hulk (real name – Bruce Banner) – a scientist who was exposed to gamma radiation. As a result of this exposure, when Banner is angry, he morphs into a green giant with super strength. In his green Hulk form, the Hulk smashes and destroys nearly everything around him but eventually learns to manage his anger. A popular phrase he uses is “Hulk smash” (when he is angry and is about to smash things).

Thor is a Norse god from planet Asgard. He is the god of thunder and the wielder of the Mjölner [Myolnir] hammer. He is the only one strong enough to pick up the hammer (except Captain America). Thor and his brother Loki have a long- standing rivalry. Over the course of the Avengers films, Thor loses both of his parents, his brother, and most of Asgard. After Thanos destroys half of the universe, Thor appears to be going through severe depression and begins abusing alcohol. When he is invited to rejoin the Avengers to save the universe that Thanos destroyed, he enthusiastically returns to save his friends.

Black Panther (real name T'Challa) inherits his superpowers after his father, T'Chaka, the King of Wakanda (an African fictional Kingdom), is killed. T'Challa becomes the King of Wakanda. Wakanda is a highly advanced nation with top of the line technology.

T'Challa's sister, Shuri is an engineer and a genius. Important to the *Black Panther* universe, are the **Dora Milaje** – the special forces of women who protect the nation of Wakanda. Among the Dora Milaje are Okoye, who is a highly skilled warrior. Another important character from *Black Panther* is Nakia, who works under cover to protect women and other captives from trafficking. Nakia is also T'Challa's romantic partner.

In the *Black Panther* film, T'Chaka (T'Challa's father) executes his brother, N'Jobu, for arms dealing and selling Wakanda's secret metal, vibranium. This occurred when T'Challa was a small child. Years later, after T'Chaka is killed and T'Challa becomes king, N'Jobu's son Erik (Killmonger) challenges T'Challa for the throne. Killmonger was a black ops soldier and kills multiple people. Having grown up in the US, in poverty, Killmonger believes that vibranium should be shared with other people, but he goes about securing it by threatening and killing those who do not agree with him. When T'Challa ends up winning the throne back, he gives a speech to the United Nations, offering to share Wakandan resources with the world.

T'Challa was one of the people who was taken when the villain Thanos destroyed half of the universe (in *Avengers: Infinity War*) and was brought back in the *Avengers: Endgame* film.

Spider-Man (real name Peter Parker). Peter Parker is a **teenage boy** from Queens, NY. He is an orphan who lives with his Aunt May and Uncle Ben. When he is **bitten by a radioactive spider**, Peter gains special super-abilities, which allow him to have **spider-like senses** (*spider senses* - including heightened hearing, sound, and intuition), spew spider webs from his wrists, as well as have increased strength and agility. Peter struggles with anxiety, especially in social situations. (He worries about people judging him or not liking him.) When his uncle (Uncle Ben) gets killed by a random mugger, Peter decides to become a superhero to help people in his neighborhood. He later joins the Avengers, mentored by Tony Stark (Iron Man). A popular saying in Spider-Man is one his uncle said to him before he died, "With great power comes great responsibility."

Doctor Strange (real name Dr. Steven Strange) – Dr. Steven Strange is a world-renowned neurosurgeon, who is initially driven by greed and selfishness. He thinks highly of himself and poorly of others. When he gets into a horrific car accident, he loses the ability to use his hands, losing everything he's ever worked for. When traditional Western medicine cannot restore his hand functioning, he turns to Eastern healing, learning about *Tamar-Taj*, a Tibetan healing sanctuary. There, he trains in mindfulness, meditation, as well as sorcery. He learns to wield magical powers, which allow him to manipulate time and travel through time. He can travel into the future and the past, and he is the keeper of one of the *Infinity Stones** (the Time Stone).

Captain Marvel (real name Carol Danvers) is the most powerful superhero in the Marvel Universe. She sometimes fights alongside the Avengers and often on her own. Initially born on Earth, Danvers joined the Air Force serving under the leadership of Captain Wendy Lawson (real name Mar-Vell, *i.e.*, *Marvel*). Mar-Vell was actually an alien of the **Kree** race. The Kree are technologically advanced, many of them, violent. Despite being Kree-born, Mar-Vell did not agree with the Kree ways and intended to help the other civilizations that were victimized by the Kree (*i.e.*, the Scrulls). When Mar-Vell and Carol Danvers are attacked by Kree forces, Mar-Vell is killed in a plane crash, and Carol Danvers is doused in Tesseract* energy coming from Mar-Vell's plane engine. The Tesseract energy causes her to obtain Kree powers. This, along with her receiving blood transfusion from a Kree warrior causes Carol Danvers to obtain great superpowers, making her the most powerful superhero of the Marvel Universe. She names herself Marvel (after her mentor, Mar- Vell) and later becomes known as Captain Marvel.

***Tesseract** (also known as "The Cube") is an alien crystalline cube, which contains the Space Stone (one of the *Infinity Stones**). The Tesseract can be used to create portals to travel across the universe. The fictional Nazi group, Hydra, also used the Tesseract to create alien weapons.

Guardians of the Galaxy – Earth-born, Peter Quill, loses his mother at a young age and is then abducted by alien thieves. He is raised among them, their leader, Yondu, becoming Quill's adoptive dad. Later, as an adult, Quill, who later adopts a nickname **Star Lord**, steals a mysterious orb containing the *Power Infinity Stone** from a **Kree** (militant alien race) radical, **Ronan**, without knowing what it is. **Gamora**, an alien assassin is sent to capture/kill Quill and retrieve the orb. Bounty hunters, **Rocket** (a genetically-modified raccoon who can talk) and **Groot** (a sentient tree-like wise being, who can only say one phrase, "I am Groot") are also sent to capture Quill. When the group realizes that Ronan intends to use the Infinity Stone to destroy the galaxy, they band together to form the Guardians of the Galaxy. In the future films, the Guardians of the Galaxy join the Avengers to stop **Gamora's** adoptive father, **Thanos**, from destroying half of the universe.

***The Infinity Stones** – precious magical gems, which allow their owner to have special abilities and powers. When all stones are gathered, the user of the six Infinity Stones can possess god-like abilities, including creating or destroying universes.

The Infinity Stones are:

- 1. Soul Stone - controls living and dead souls**
- 2. Time Stone - allows for manipulation of time and time travel**
- 3. Space Stone - allows the user to teleport anywhere or teleport objects anywhere in the universe**
- 4. Mind Stone - allows the user to enhance their mental abilities and to access the subconscious of others, bringing their dreams/thoughts/visions to reality**
- 5. Reality Stone - allows the user to break the laws of reality to fulfill their wishes, including creating alternate universes**
- 6. Power Stone - allows the user to have superpowers and to manipulate all forms of energy**

Other Marvel Universe characters:

Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. – a group of CIA-like secret agents, who specialize in protecting the world from alien invasions and supernatural threats. S.H.I.E.L.D. stands for Strategic Homeland Intervention Enforcement and Logistics Division. They often work with the Avengers to stop an evil Nazi organization (Hydra) and Kree (a militant alien race) from invading the Earth. Notorious Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. include the Director of S.H.I.E.L.D., Nick Fury, Agent Phil Coulson (seen in most of the Avengers films, who later becomes the director of SHIELD), and Agent Daisy Johnson (AKA Skye, AKA Quake). Quake has superpowers to cause vibrations and earthquakes.

X-Men – group of Marvel superheroes/mutants, all of whom have a genetic mutation, which grants them certain superpowers. For example, Logan (known as Wolverine) has a super ability of rapid healing, as well as retractable claws in his hands. Storm (real name Ororo Munroe) has the ability to control the weather. And the X-Men leader, Charles Xavier is a powerful telepath. Most of the X-Men have a history of being bullied, alienated, and hunted down for their abilities. Like the Jewish people in WWII, they had to register as mutants after the Mutant Registration Act is passed.

The mutants often feel misunderstood and want to find acceptance. Hence, Charles Xavier opens the Xavier Institute for the Gifted. There, mutants learn how to harness their powers and find a new sense of family and belonging. The mutants often feel alone; they often experience bullying, and want to fit in. The Xavier Institute allows them that safe space.

The usual villain on the show is Magneto, who is also a mutant. Magneto is so fed up with the way that the mutants are treated that he wants to kill all non- mutants, so that the mutants don't ever have to be discriminated against. Magneto and Charles Xavier used to be close friends.

Some of the themes of the X-Men include standing up for what's right, as well as being different being equated to being special.

Miles Morales is Spider-Man from the *Into the Spideverse* animated film. Part African American, part Puerto Rican, he is from Brooklyn, NY. Like Peter Parker, Miles was also bitten by a radioactive spider and then became Spider-Man. In some comics, Miles Morales took over as Spider-Man after Peter Parker died. In the film, Miles Morales and Peter Parker (along with Gwen Stacy, and others) are Spider-Men from alternate dimensions, brought together to stop an evil villain, Wilson Fisk, from destroying New York City.

Ms. Marvel (not to be confused with Captain Marvel; real name: Kamala Khan) is a teenage Marvel Muslim superhero from New Jersey. Kamala discovers that she has superpowers, such as being able to change her shape by being able to lengthen her arms and legs. Being a big fan of Captain Marvel, Kamala decides to become Ms. Marvel, as a tribute to her favorite superhero. She faces not only external villains but also internal struggles, including family conflicts and trying to find her sense of identity as an American Muslim teenage girl.

DC Comics and Justice League

Justice League: akin to Marvel's Avengers, the Justice League is a team of superheroes who band together to protect the world from supervillains (such as the Joker) and alien invasions. The Justice League includes DC superheroes such as Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman, Flash, Arrow, Aquaman, and many others.

Batman (real name Bruce Wayne) is a billionaire from Gotham City (a fictional city based on New York). As a small child, Bruce went to a theatre with his parents when a mugger stopped them in an alleyway. The mugger killed Bruce's parents in front of little Bruce and ran off. Bruce was devastated. He was raised by his butler, Alfred, and as an adult, decided to use his money to become a superhero. Bruce does not have any supernatural superpowers. He uses technology and science to build weapons and devices to help him fight crime. He uses his overwhelming phobia of bats (a fear he's had since childhood) as a symbol of facing his fears, becoming the Batman.

To the citizens of Gotham City and to the reporters, he pretends to be a spoiled billionaire playboy, but it is not his true identity. He is Batman, the protector of Gotham City, who risks his life every night to make sure that no citizen has to suffer from criminal attacks or super-villainous activities again. He works closely with the police, especially Commissioner Gordon, helping them solve crimes. Traditionally, Batman does not believe in killing or unnecessary force, and normally knocks out his enemies, leaving them for the police.

Superman (Birth name: Kal-El; Earth name: Clark Kent) is a *Kryptonian* alien from planet Krypton. When he was a baby, his birth parents sent him to Earth in a spaceship moments before Krypton was destroyed. He was found and adopted by an Earth couple, Jonathan and Martha Kent, who raised him as their own child. As he grows up, Clark begins to discover that he possesses superhuman powers, such as super-strength, super-speed, the ability to fly, laser vision, etc. He is almost invincible, with the exception of being weakened by *kryptonite*, a green crystalline substance from his home planet. In small quantities, kryptonite can weaken his powers, in large quantities, kryptonite can kill him.

Clark Kent takes a job as a reporter for a fictional newspaper, *The Daily Planet*, where he meets his love interest, Lois Lane, also a reporter. Like Batman, Clark's public identity as Clark Kent is his mask. His true identity is that of Superman – a caped superhero, who saves people. Kent keeps his real identity a secret, using a disguise (glasses) when he is being Clark Kent. As Superman, the giant letter "S" on his chest represents a symbol of *hope* (based on Kryptonian culture). When affected by kryptonite or otherwise overwhelmed, Superman retreats to his *Fortress of Solitude* – a secret cave in the frozen tundra. There, he meditates and allows his body to heal and recover.

Wonder Woman (civilian name: Diana Prince). Diana was born an Amazonian Princess. She was born in a women-only society. In the comics, her father was the Greek God, Zeus, and her mother was the Amazonian Queen Hippolyta, thus, Diana was a demigoddess. She has superpowers, including super strength. She is a warrior with indestructible bracelets (often used to stop bullets), a tiara, which often serves as a projective weapon, and the Lasso of Truth, which forces a person caught in it to tell the truth. Wonder Woman does not age: she has fought in WWII and against other villains, including Ares, the god of war. She has stated across the comics that one of her greatest powers is her sense of compassion. She genuinely cares about people and wants to help and protect everyone.

The Flash (real name: Barry Allen) saw his mother being killed by a supernatural killer when he was a small child. His father was accused of his mother's murder and sent to jail, as Barry is sent to live with Detective Joe West and his daughter, Iris West. Barry grows up to become a crime scene investigator. When a scientist, Dr. Harrison Wells, creates a device, a particle accelerator, the device malfunctions during a thunderstorm. Barry is among the people struck by the lightning, and when he wakes up from a coma, he discovers that he can move at a superhuman speed. Dr. Wells, who was paralyzed in the lightning/particle accelerator accident, trains Barry to use his superpowers to run/move/read super-fast, as well as to time travel by moving faster than the speed of light, adopting his superhero name, *The Flash*. In addition to his own show, the Flash is often seen in cross-over episodes on other DC shows, such as *The Arrow* and *Supergirl*. Because all of these shows take place in the same universe, the characters from these shows often appear in each other's shows and sometimes join forces.

Arrow (real name: Oliver Queen) was born a rich, spoiled billionaire/playboy. When he and his father are shipwrecked, Oliver believes himself to be the only survivor and spends five years living on an island before he is able to return home. On the island, he learns to fight and speak several languages. When he returns, Oliver adopts the name *Arrow* (*Green Arrow* in comics) to fight crime. Arrow is a vigilante: he initially goes after the city's worst criminals, killing them in vengeance for having "*failed this city*." He later joins forces with other superheroes, such as The Flash, Supergirl, and Atom to fight crime.

Other DC Characters:

Supergirl (real name: Kara Zor-El), Kara is Kal-El's (Superman's) cousin. She was sent to Earth at the same time as Kal-El. She was 13 and he was a baby, but her spacecraft was knocked off course, and by the time she arrives to Earth, she is 24 years old. While dealing with acclimating to her new life and her newfound superpowers, Kara has to deal with overwhelming self-doubt and struggles to find her sense of identity. However, with the help of her friends, she is able to find a new sense of purpose – becoming a protector of her city and joining forces with other superheroes to protect her city and the planet from invasions and threats.

Legends of Tomorrow – Group of DC superheroes, similar to DC's *Justice League* and Marvel's *Avengers*. The Legends of Tomorrow include many of the superheroes who have been the supporting heroes on DC's other shows, such as *The Flash*, *Arrow*, and *Supergirl*. The superheroes on the *Legends of Tomorrow* include Atom (real name: Ray Palmer, a character from *Arrow*), White Canary (real name: Sara Lance, a character from *Arrow*), as well as Firestorm, Captain Cold, Hawkgirl, Heat Wave, and other superheroes.

Teen Titans – Like DC's Justice League, Teen Titans are a group of DC Superheroes, all of whom are teenagers. Their leader is **Robin**, who previously served as Batman's sidekick.

Lord of the Rings – In order to stop an evil villain, Sauron, from destroying the world, young **Bilbo Baggins**, a hobbit (a fictional human race, most of whom are about half of average human height) has to destroy a magical object – **The One Ring**. The One Ring is a cursed ring, which allows its wearer to possess certain powers but eventually may cause their demise. If Sauron obtains this ring, he will return to power and destroy the world. To stop him, **Bilbo** and his friends must travel to the end of the world, Mordor, and drop the ring into the lava of Mordor. That is the only way The One Ring can be destroyed. Throughout the journey, Bilbo is exhausted, wounded, and also tempted by the ring. His best friend, **Samwise Gangee** (or Sam, for short) stays by his side, risking his life to protect his friend.

The Hunger Games is a book and movie series featuring a female protagonist, **Katniss Everdeen**. The premise of the series takes place in a dystopian future in which North America (called Panem in the series) is divided into twelve districts. Each year, each district has to select one boy and one girl to compete in the Hunger Games - a competition in which children (ages 12-18) have to fight to the death in a televised public arena. Katniss's younger sister was initially chosen for the Hunger Games but to spare her sister's life, Katniss volunteers to go as "tribute" in her place.

She and another boy from her district, Peeta, win but refuse to kill one another. They later join forces with other past tributes of the Hunger Games and join the rebellion against the government (The Capitol) and its injustices.

MEET THE DOCTOR

Dr. Janina Scarlet is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist, author, and a full-time geek. A Ukrainian-born refugee, she survived Chernobyl radiation and persecution.

She immigrated to the United States at the age of 12 with her family and later, inspired by the X-Men, developed Superhero Therapy to help patients with anxiety, depression, and PTSD. Superhero Therapy refers to incorporating popular culture examples into evidence-based therapy to help the client to become the hero of their own journey. Dr. Scarlet is the recipient of the Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award by the United Nations Association for her work on Superhero Therapy.

Dr. Scarlet's work has been featured on *Yahoo, BBC, NPR, Sunday Times, CNN, CW, ABC, Huffington Post, The New York Times, Forbes, the Nerdist, BuzzFeed, Bleeding Cool, CNET, Mugglenet, LADbible*, and many other outlets. She currently works at the Center for Stress and Anxiety Management in San Diego and has authored Superhero Therapy, Harry Potter Therapy, Therapy Quest, Dark Agents, Super-Women, as well as numerous contributions to *Star Wars Psychology, Star Trek Psychology, Wonder Woman Psychology, Supernatural Psychology* and many other books.

A yellow circular logo with the text "POP CULTURE HERO COALITION" in black, bold, sans-serif capital letters, arranged in four lines.

POP
CULTURE
HERO
COALITION

Founded in 2013, *SuperheroIRL* is a project of Pop Culture Hero Coalition, the first 501c-3 non-profit to use relatable stories from TV, comics, and film, to develop tools for living, including conflict resolution, resilience, empathy, and other crucial mental health skills. Created by pop-culture-fluent clinical psychologists and educators, our work is in schools, comic cons, children's hospitals – and homes in the age of COVID-19.

For info and requests, please email info@PopCultureHero.org

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