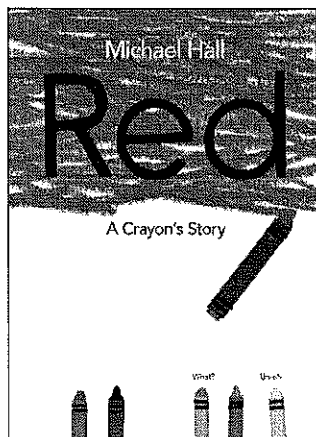


ABOUT THE BOOK



Red has a bright red label but he is, in fact, blue. His teacher tries to help him be red (let's draw strawberries!), his mother tries to help him be red by sending him out on a playdate with a yellow classmate (go draw a nice orange!), and the scissors try to help him be red by snipping his label so that he has room to breathe. But Red is miserable. He just can't be red, no matter how hard he tries! Finally, a brand-new friend offers a brand-new perspective, and Red discovers what readers have known all along. He's blue! Funny, insightful, layered, and colorful, this new picture book by Michael Hall is about being true to your inner self and following your own path.



ABOUT MICHAEL HALL

Michael Hall is an award-winning designer whose work has been widely recognized for its simple and engaging approach. He studied biochemistry and psychology at the University of Michigan and worked in biomedical research for several years before becoming a designer. He is the creator of the *New York Times*-bestselling *My Heart Is like a Zoo* and the acclaimed *Perfect Square*, *Cat Tale*, and *It's an Orange Aardvark!* He is also the creative director of the Hall Kelley design firm. He lives with his family in St. Paul, Minnesota. You can reach him online at www.michaelhallstudio.com.

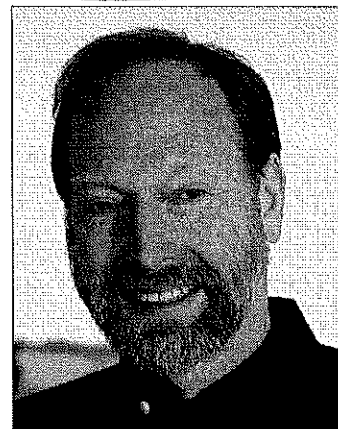


Photo by Debra Kelley



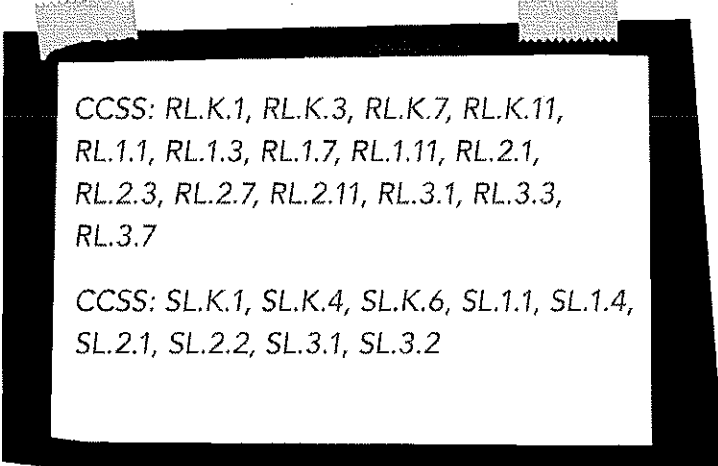
BEFORE READING

Take out a box of crayons and hold up one crayon. Ask the children what color crayon you are holding. How do they know it is that color? What would they draw with that particular color? Do this with several different crayons. Then begin reading the story.



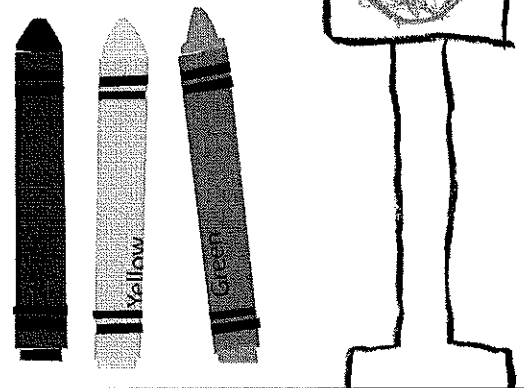
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Read the first page of the story (“He was red”) and ask children what they notice.
- Why did everyone expect Red to draw red things? Does it surprise you that no one noticed what he was really like?
- Pause after the page on which yellow and red try to make an orange that shows up green instead. Ask children why this happened.
- On the next page, Red’s grandparents speak. Ask children why they think Hall portrayed the grandparents as small silver and gray crayons.
- Pause after reading the opinions under “Everyone seemed to have something to say.” Do you agree with everyone’s comments? Why or why not?
- Read the pages about art supplies. How do you think the different art supplies can/should help Red?
- After reading “One day, he met a new friend,” ask children how Berry is different from everyone else.
- What does Berry help the others understand? Why is this so important?
- Until he meets Berry, Red cannot be himself because everyone believes he is different than he actually is. Do you make judgments about people based on their appearances? Do people make assumptions about you?



CCSS: *RL.K.1, RL.K.3, RL.K.7, RL.K.11, RL.1.1, RL.1.3, RL.1.7, RL.1.11, RL.2.1, RL.2.3, RL.2.7, RL.2.11, RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.7*

CCSS: *SL.K.1, SL.K.4, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.4, SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.3.1, SL.3.2*





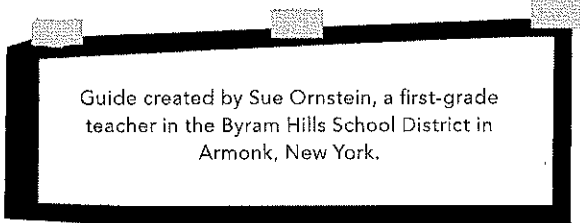
GROUP ACTIVITIES

- **Creative Colors.** Make a color chart listing different shades of each color. For example, under "red," you can also write "scarlet" and "vermillion"; under "green," you can include "olive" and "jade"; and under "purple," you can write "violet" and "magenta." Children will likely learn some new color words. Then ask children to write a story or a poem in which they use some of the color words listed on the chart. For younger kids, list the names of basic colors and have kids make drawings using each of the colors on the chart. *CCSS: W.K.11, W.1.11, W.2.11, W.3.11, SL.K.1, SL.K.5, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.5, SL.2.1, SL.3.1*
- **Color Concentration.** Using the list of colors from the above activity, have the group create a color concentration (or memory) game. Assign pairs of children a color and give them two index cards; one partner writes the name of the color on his/her card, while the other draws the color on his/her card. When the cards are ready, mix them together into a deck and have kids place them face down in rows of 5 or 6 cards. If there are more than 24 cards, you might split the cards in half and play two separate games. To play, children take turns flipping over cards, trying to find matches (the color and the name of the color). If the cards match, the child keeps the cards. If the cards don't match, the child turns them back over. All players must "concentrate" to remember where the cards are. At the end of the game, the person with the most matches wins. For younger children, the group leader can prepare the cards for the game using basic colors. *CCSS: W.K.11, W.1.11, W.2.11, W.3.11, SL.K.6*
- **Fruitful Fun.** Divide the group into small teams and assign each team a color. Have each team create a poster depicting fruits and vegetables of that color. Children might need to do some research to complete this task. They should label each item on their poster. Display the posters and have the group choose their favorite fruits and vegetables from each poster. As an extension, ask the children and their families to cut and prepare at home one fruit or vegetable to bring, so that the group can make a fruit salad and/or vegetable salad. For younger children, bring in fruits or vegetables (or use photographs) and have kids sort the items by color. *CCSS: W.K.11, W.1.11, W.2.11, W.3.11*
- **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.** Have children use the internet to research how to recycle crayons. If you have access to an oven, gather the necessary materials (ovenproof molds, old crayons) and recycle the crayons to make new multicolored, shaped crayons. Then have children create an art project using the new recycled crayons. *CCSS: W.K.11, W.1.11, W.2.11, W.3.11*
- **Somewhere Over the Rainbow.** Have children choose one color from the rainbow and list as many things as they can of that color. Then ask them to design a crayon drawing of a world that contains things of only that color. Children should also write a narrative about living in this world. What would it be like? How would you live? What would you have in that world, and what would you need that you didn't already have? How could you solve those problems with the items you have? Younger kids can simply choose or be assigned one color with which to create their picture. *CCSS: W.K.3, W.K.11, W.1.11, W.2.11, W.3.3, W.3.4, W.3.11*

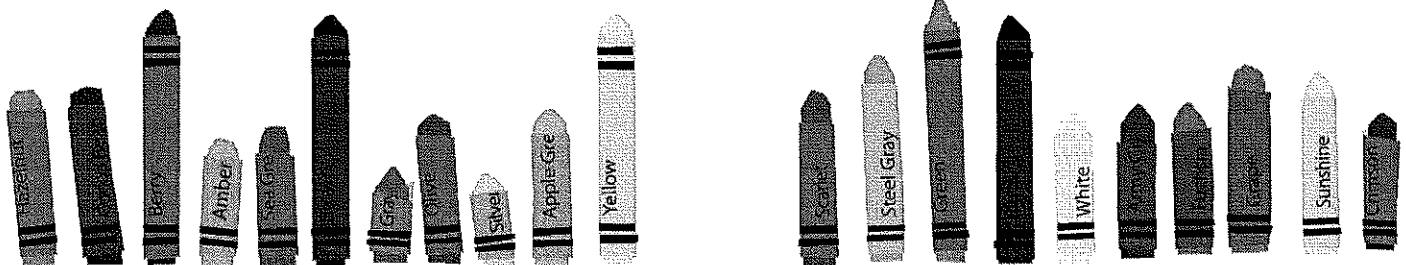


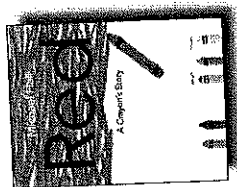
GROUP ACTIVITIES

- **Getting to Know You.** Pair children and have them prepare to interview each other. Children should write down questions to ask their partners, aiming to learn something about their partners that they may not have known before. After the interviews, during which they should record the answers, each child should write an article describing his/her partner. These articles can be collated into a class newspaper. Younger children can complete this activity by taking turns asking and answering questions, and then they can share with the entire group something new that they learned about their partner. *CCSS: W.K.2, W.K.8, W.K.11, W.1.2, W.1.8, W.1.11, W.2.2, W.2.8, W.2.11, W.3.2, W.3.11, SL.K.1, SL.K.3, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.3, SL.2.1, SL.2.3, SL.3.1, SL.3.3*
- **Be Who You Are.** Even though everyone thought Red would excel at drawing red things, he was actually best at drawing blue things. Ask kids to think about their own abilities and talents. What are they able to do well? What are their unique talents? What do they want to learn to do better? Have kids turn and talk with a partner. Then have them write a narrative about their strengths and interests. Younger children can draw a picture that shows them demonstrating their ability or talent. *CCSS: W.K.11, W.1.11, W.2.11, W.3.11, SL.K.1, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.1.5, SL.2.1, SL.3.1*
- **What's My Group?** Reread the spread that begins "All the art supplies wanted to help." Have children name the supplies they see (tape, crayons, scissors, pencil) and suggest other items that belong in the category of art supplies (e.g., paint, markers, glitter, glue). Then say or write a list of items (e.g., plane, car, bus, boat) and ask kids to name the category to which all these items belong (transportation). Then you or the children can come up with more groups of items for the class to categorize. For younger kids, use concrete objects for this activity. *CCSS: SL.K.1, SL.K.6, SL.1.1, SL.2.1, SL.3.1*
- **Mix and Match.** Reread the pages "His mother thought he needed to mix with other colors" and "But they made a big greenish one." Then provide children with primary-colored finger paints (red, blue, and yellow) and large glossy paper. Have kids create pictures or designs by mixing paints and creating new colors as they work. Older children can write about their paintings when they are completed. *CCSS: W.K.11, W.1.11, W.2.11, W.3.11*



Guide created by Sue Ornstein, a first-grade teacher in the Byram Hills School District in Armonk, New York.





Red: A Crayon's Story
Michael Hall

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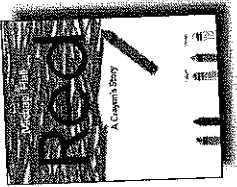
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- Being True to Yourself
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 - Friendship
- b) Classroom Questions and Activities (Linked with Themes)
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 - Visual Arts Project: Exploring Colour

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Red: A Crayon's Story
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Introduction

Red is a crayon. He has a bright red label but he is, in fact, blue. Red's teacher tries to help him be red (let's draw strawberries!), his mother tries to help him be red by sending him out on a playdate with a yellow classmate (go and draw a nice orange!), and the scissors try to help him be red by snipping his label so that he has room to breathe. But Red is miserable. He just can't be red, no matter how hard he tries! Finally, a brand-new friend (in the form of a berry crayon) offers a brand-new perspective, and Red discovers what readers have known all along. He's blue!

This story is appropriate for pre-school aged groups but could also be used in Primary School rooms and the activities have been designed with this in mind. You may wish to modify them for your own group.

About the Author – Illustrator

Michael Hall is the creator of the New York Times-bestselling picture book *My Heart is Like a Zoo*, the acclaimed *Perfect Square, Cat Tale* and *It's an Orange Aardvark!* Michael is also an award-winning graphic designer whose work has been widely recognised for its simple and engaging approach. Michael lives in Minnesota with his wife, two daughters and a pig named

Petunia. He loves art supplies, especially pencils, crayons, scissors and tape.

Students and teachers can visit Michael's website for examples of his work and read more about his other books: <http://www.michaelhallstudio.com/>

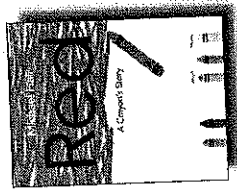
Teachers can also access a fantastic interview with Michael here: <http://www.mackinvia.comnext.com/2014/07/09/michael-hall/>

Study notes on Themes and Curriculum Areas

a) Themes and Key Discussion Points

Being True to Yourself

Red is a crayon. He is labelled 'red' but he is actually blue inside. He can't draw a red line no matter how hard he tries, and he tries VERY hard. Trying to be red is making him miserable, until one day a new friend suggests that maybe he could draw something blue: the ocean. Being blue comes naturally to Red and he celebrates by drawing everything blue: bluebells, a blue whale, a blue sky ... he is so happy to finally just be himself!



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This story is about being true to your inner-self and following your own path.

Key discussion points:

- Red tries to practise drawing the red strawberries with his teacher, Scarlet (pages 6-7). *It's good to practise doing things but can everything be practised? Can we practise being something that we are not? What are some things we can practise?* (e.g. a sports game, a language, mathematics.) *What are some things we can't practise?* (e.g. being taller, having green eyes)
- Red has been 'labelled' as red but he is actually blue inside. People can be given labels too. Labelling someone means describing them in a single word (e.g. greedy, lazy, a thief, a clown). *What is the problem with giving someone a 'label'? Would you like to be given a label?*

- *Have you ever felt like you needed to pretend to be something that you are not? Or pretended to feel a certain way about something when you didn't? If you did, why did you do it and how did it make you feel afterwards?*

Appreciating Difference

There are lots of different coloured crayons in this story and they are each able to draw different things; they all have something to

offer. Being different can be hard sometimes but it is important to be brave and celebrate yourself for who you are and what you have to offer. Also, success in today's world (and tomorrow's) depends on being able to understand, appreciate, and work with others who are different from us. This story reminds us to appreciate difference.

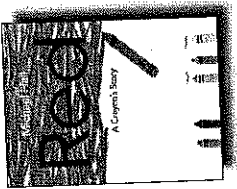
Key discussion points:

- Red's mother, Olive, suggests (pages 8-9) that he 'mix' with the other colours. She asks him to mix with the colour yellow to draw 'a big orange'. *Why is it important to mix with other kinds of people? Would you learn as much about the world if you only mixed with people like yourself?*

- When Red draws the blue sea (pages 30-31) he is surprised and happy because 'it was easy! It is important to remember that different people are good at different things. You might be good at something that a friend needs more to practise at, or vice versa. *What comes naturally to you without even trying? Can you think of a time when your special skill was particularly useful?*

Friendship

When Red makes a new friend (Berry) everything changes. Berry helps Red discover



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his special skill; he can draw perfect blue lines! This story reminds us that sometimes a special friend might see something in us that no-one else knew was there.

Key discussion points:

- When Berry asks Red to try and draw the blue ocean he sees Red for who he really is - a blue crayon. *Do you have a special friend who you feel comfortable just 'being yourself' around? What are some of the things you like to do together? How do you feel when you spend time together?*

Key Learning Outcomes:

- Identification with key ideas in the novel.
- Ability to discuss and argue key concepts.

b) Classroom questions and activities (linked with themes)

During reading: questions for discussion

These questions can be discussed after the story has been read through once, or upon a second reading. They are designed to support students' engagement with the text and develop their visual literacy and comprehension skills.

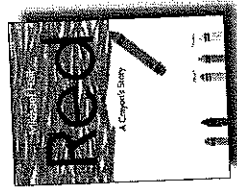
- *What is funny about the very first page of the story (page 1)? Why does the pencil assume Red is the colour red?*

- *What is Red drawing on pages 2-3? What clues tell us it is a fire engine?*
- Red tries hard to draw the strawberries but he just cannot do it. *Have you ever felt like you just cannot do something? When? Why?*

- On pages 10-11 Yellow and Red decide to make a big orange 'orange' but they end up with a big green one. *What do you think that big green 'orange' would smell like and/or taste like?*
- Look at the different text types (fonts) that Michael Hall uses for the narrator (the pencil) and the other characters (the crayons) as well as the way the type is arranged on the page. *Why do you think he has made these choices?*

- Look at pages 7 and 8. Older people (like teachers and parents) are usually taller than us. Not always, but **usually**. *Think about the life of a crayon. Why would Michael Hall draw Red's teacher Scarlet as shorter than Red? Why are his grandparents (pages 12-13) shorter than Scarlet? Could you apply this rule of 'ageing' to pencils and rubbers too?*

- On pages 16-17 all the other crayons 'seemed to have something to say'. *Why isn't it nice to talk about someone behind their back? How might Red feel if he heard that he was 'lazy' or wasn't 'applying' himself? How would you feel if you overheard something like that about yourself? What about when you have said something mean? How did it make you feel afterwards?*

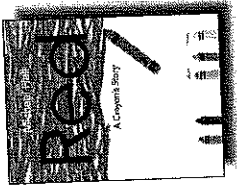


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- On pages 22–23 Red is still wearing the masking tape. *What does the tape look like? Does it make you feel a certain way about him?*
- Berry convinces Red to try and draw the ocean (pages 26–31). *When have you surprised yourself by trying something new and finding it is not so difficult after all?*

After reading: oral language activities

- Each student's name needs to be written on a paddle-pop stick and collected in a cup. Students are then selected at random to retell the story in sequence, including as much detail as possible and using an expressive speaking voice.
- Ask students to sit in a circle. Show them pages 32–33 (the moment Red realises he is blue inside and creates a series of beautiful blue drawings). Go around the circle and in turn, name a person, place or thing that is blue. Keep going around the circle until all the ideas are exhausted and someone is 'out'. Repeat with the colours yellow, red, purple, brown, orange and green. Anyone who cannot think of something is also 'out' until a winner (or small group of winners) remains.
- On page 35 Red's teacher remarks that he is 'really reaching for the sky'. Explore this



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- Explain where the opposite (contrasting) colours are on the wheel. Have students look for contrasting colours in the classroom. Take a repeating colouring pattern (download template from http://www.indigoimage.com/freesbies/repeat_pattern_indigo_image.pdf) and choose two contrasting colours to colour it in with. Discuss how the contrasting colours create visual interest.

- On pages 12–13 Red's grandparents suggest that maybe he has trouble drawing red lines because he isn't 'warm enough'. Ask students to explain why a scarf won't help Red become a 'warm' colour! Have students draw a little red scarf over the 'warm' colours on the wheel. They might also like to draw them some winter mittens and a log fire! Choose some 'cool' items to draw over the cool colours.

- Red's teacher is named Scarlet (page 5). Ask students if they have heard of the colour scarlet or of 'berry', the colour of Red's new friend? Ask students to decide where all the colours in the book belong on their colour wheel and to draw them in the correct spot. Crayons they should draw are: Amber, Berry, Fuchsia, Grape, Army Green, Steel Grey, Sunshine and Teal (pages 16–17), Olive (page 8), Scarlet (page 7), and Crimson and Violet (page 14). The book should be available for students to reference.

expression with the students – explaining that the expression (idiom) means to 'aim high'. Encourage students to suggest some other conversations and situations where this expression could be used.

Visual Arts Project: Exploring Colour

Build and explore a colour wheel

Students should follow step-by-step directions to create their own accurate colour wheel (download the printable template from http://www.artfactory.com/color_theory/the_color_wheel.htm). This wheel should be made using crayon, to strengthen the connections with the book. Connected colour activities are listed below and can be explored over a number of different lessons. (Once the wheel is completed, students should attach it to a larger, white piece of cardboard so the remaining activities can be completed around it.)

- Explain what 'warm' and 'cool' colours are. Look at a series of landscapes online and practise naming each as 'warm' or 'cool' (a Google image search of 'desert+landscapes', 'antarctic+landscapes', 'tropical rainforest' and 'coral reefs' will provide you with some excellent examples. Students should then clearly label the warm and cool colours around the outside of the colour wheel.

Colour palette self-portraits.

On pages 14–15 all the crayons draw self-portraits. Ask students to draw their own self-portrait with oil pastels (which blend beautifully) but explain that they can only choose one colour that represents them best. Encourage them to think carefully about the colour wheel and experiment with blending shades of that colour. Once the drawings are finished, place them all on black display cardboard and (like the story) use pieces of brown masking tape to hold them together. Display these around the classroom.

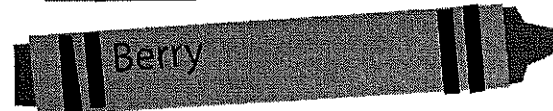
Colour blend lizard.

Students can create the green lizard that Yellow wants to draw with Red (page 35). They should begin by using yellow and blue crayons only, before adding small torn up pieces of yellow and blue paper (the smaller the better, like a mosaic). Encourage them to step back to see the effect of these two colours mixing together. Display these around the classroom.

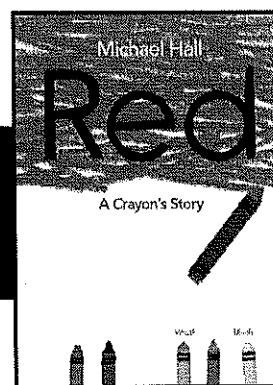
Find the Colors!

Red has lots of different-colored friends and family members that try to help him be red. How many color words can you find in the puzzle below? Circle each word in the puzzle, then cross it off the list. (Hint: Words can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal!)

S G B E R R Y A R
C E F E D N P Y E
A R S C B M V T D
R O L I V E I P W
L I Z Q L H O L G
E N R F W V L L E
T W K Z Y N E U Q
E V L R S I T R F
C R I M S O N V X



Find even more fun in Michael Hall's *Red*, available wherever books are sold.

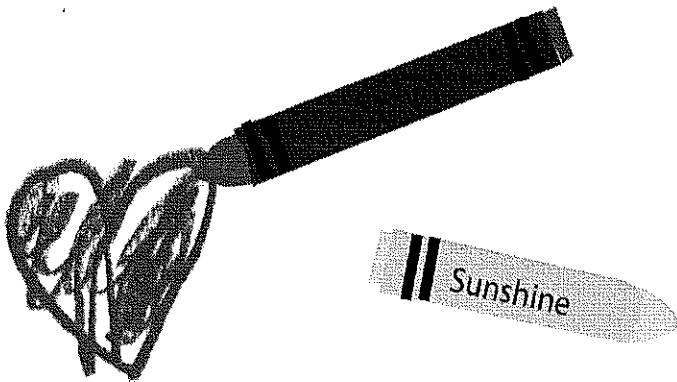


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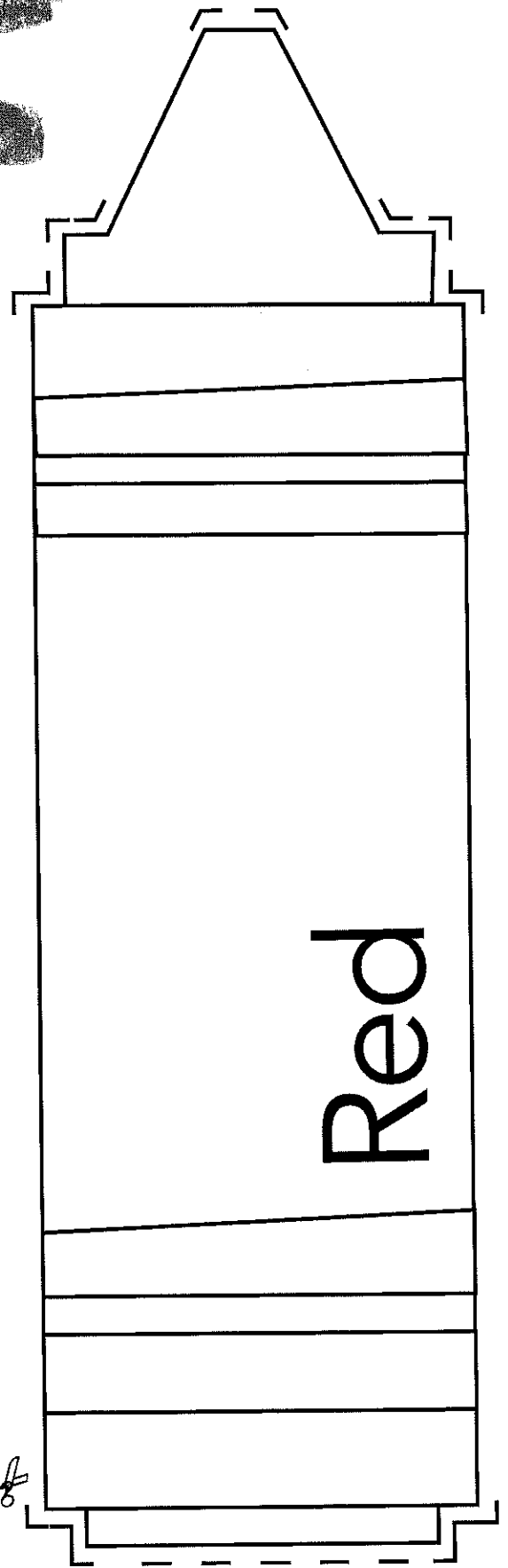
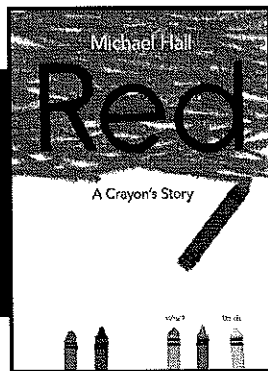
www.harpercollinschildrens.com

Let Your Blue Shine Through!

Color in the crayon on this bookmark whatever color you think he or she should be (remember, not everyone has to be exactly what their label says!). Then cut out the bookmark and use it or give it to someone who's having a blue day and needs a smile.



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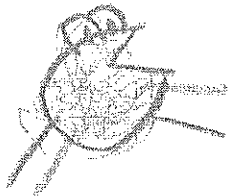
www.harpercollinschildrens.com

What color is your frog?

Fill in the blanks by writing the color word that usually goes with these phrases.



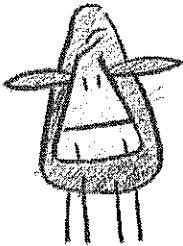
 R STRAWBERRY



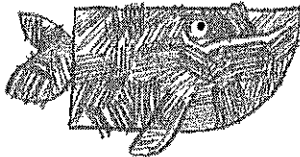
 G FROG



 B SHEEP

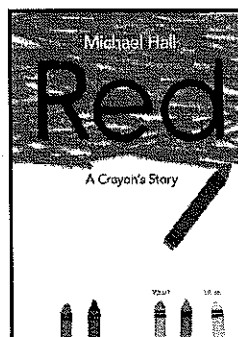


 B COW



 B WHALE

Then, use your imagination and color in the pictures, using any colors you want! (Just because many frogs are green doesn't mean that all frogs have to be green, right?)



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