



RED: A CRAYON'S STORY

AUTHOR: MICHAEL HALL

ILLUSTRATOR: MICHAEL HALL

See a video of the book read aloud here: [Red: A Crayon's Story](#)

**** REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! ****

OVERVIEW

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! This funny, heartwarming, colorful picture book about finding the courage to be true to your inner self can be read on multiple levels, and it offers something for everyone. ([amazon.com](#))

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

Michael Hall is the author/illustrator of children's picture books. Before becoming a children's author, Michael was an award-winning graphic designer whose work has been widely recognized for its simple and engaging approach. Michael lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

THE READ ALOUD

BEFORE READING

Use these before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- (cover) What do you notice about the red crayon on the cover? How about the other crayons on the cover?
- (cover) Do we have an author and an illustrator, or an author/illustrator in one person?
- (title page) What does "As told by me!" mean? Who wrote that?
- (title page) What's this in the lower right corner of the page and what is it doing?

DURING THE STORY

Use these while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content:

- (p. 1) That's an interesting first sentence. Who was red?
- (p. 2) What color is red making?
- (p. 7) What color are Red's strawberries?

RED: A CRAYON'S STORY

TOPICS & THEMES:

- Colors
- Identity
- Crayons

Tips for every book!

POWER PHRASES:

I WONDER...

I NOTICE...

TELL ME MORE...

DIGGING DEEPER:

"Tell me more, why do you think that?"

"How do you know that?"

"Why do you think they feel like that?"

"Interesting, did you notice anything else?"

- (p. 8) Mother’s name is Olive. What color is Olive like?
- (p. 13) Notice that Red’s grandparents are named Silver and Gray. I can’t always tell the difference. They’re very similar to me. Can you see any difference?
- (p. 14) Colors at the bottom of this page are Crimson and Violet. What other color might you call Crimson and Violet?
- (p. 15) What color is Red’s picture?
- (p. 19) Red what? Red ant! Red ants can bite!
- (p. 21) What’s happening in the illustration of the pencil and Red?
- (p. 24) What is this supposed to be an illustration of?
- (p. 25) How is Red feeling? How does the illustration let us know this?
- (p. 31) What made it so easy?

AFTER READING

Use these after reading the story to help students understand what they just read:

- How do you think a blue crayon got a red wrapper?
- Is this fiction (made up) or non-fiction (true story)? Why do you think that?

BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

- (p. 5) The crayon next to red is called scarlet. Scarlet is another kind of red. If you think it looks different than Red, put your hand on your head. If you think it looks the same as Red, put your finger on your nose.
- (p. 16-17) There are so many colors at the bottom of these two pages. When I point to one of the colors tell me what you think it is, and then I will tell you what each is called in this story. We can do this on other pages of the book too.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

- (p. 22-23) Let’s go down the page and say what we see. Be sure to start with the word “red.” Are they really red?
- (p. 32-33) Let’s go down the page again and say what we see. This time start with the word “blue.”

SMALL-GROUP IDEAS

1. DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

- We’re going to look at the illustrations in this book and talk about what’s happening on each page.
- Look at the color names. Do you know what some of them mean or where they might have come from? What does the name say about the color, if anything?
- (p. 16-17) How do you think Red feels with all these colors saying things about him?
- (p. 19) How does the ant feel? Why do you think so?
- (p. 34-35) The colors are talking about him again. How do you think Blue feels this time?

Suggested Optional Activity:

- Bring in an extra-large box of crayons, put them in a basket, and have students look through the crayons to see if they can find any with the same names as in the story.

2. WRITING ACTIVITY

- List three things that the color green (or another color) would draw. Then draw and color the things on your list.

3. EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Give each student a small glass with water in it. Using red, yellow, and blue food coloring, combine the colors to make orange, green and purple. See what happens if you put all colors in one glass.

COMMON CORE LINKS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1, K.2, K.3, K.6, K.7, K.10