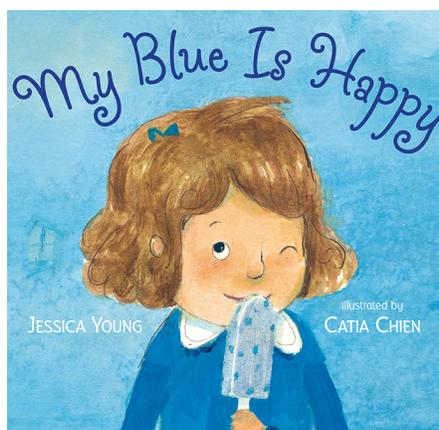


MY BLUE IS HAPPY

Teacher Guide & Activity Sheets

GRADES K-2



ABOUT THE BOOK:

*My sister says that blue is sad, like a lonely song,
But my blue is happy, like my favorite jeans
And a splash in the pool on a hot day.*

Follow one girl's journey through her neighborhood as she explores what colors mean to different people. Is red angry, like a dragon's burning breath? Or brave like a fire truck and a superhero cape? Is pink pretty or annoying? What about black or orange or green?

In her picture book debut, author and art teacher Jessica Young challenges common assumptions about colors and celebrates individual perspective. Brazilian-born artist Catia Chien provides her own interpretation in this ode to colors — and the unique ways we experience them.

AUTHOR BIO:

Jessica Young is an art teacher and debut picture book author. The same things make her happy now as when she was little: writing, reading, painting, dancing, music, picnics, and the color blue. About *My Blue Is Happy*, she says, "I remember being a kid and realizing that everyone didn't always share my point of view. For me, colors represent creativity, subjectivity, and the endless variations we find in nature and in one another." Originally from Canada, Jessica lives in Nashville, Tennessee, with her husband and two children. For more information, see the FAQs section of the author's website: www.jessicayoungbooks.com.

A Note to Teachers:

The activities in this teacher guide are designed to help students connect with MY BLUE IS HAPPY on a deeper level and explore important concepts related to language, reading, individuality, and the writing process. They are aligned with the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy* and are structured to help students exercise higher-order thinking skills and make connections between the text and their own life experiences.

Activities can be done in one session or over several class periods. Extension activities provide extra opportunities for students to engage with the material. ***There are too many activities to do them all! Pick and choose and modify the activities you like to best suit the needs of your students.*** I hope they're helpful, and that the book can be a springboard for learning.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

With warm wishes,

Jessica Young

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

CREATIVE WRITING/ELA:

1/ Writing Tools and Word Activities:

- *Discuss similes. (See Resources/Links.) Show examples from the text, and have students say them out loud. Have students think of other examples or find some in MY BLUE IS HAPPY.
- *Have students complete the “**Writing Tools**” activity sheet in small groups and volunteer to share their answers. For younger students, you can do this as a class and focus on similes.
- *Discuss antonyms. Give examples of adjectives from MY BLUE IS HAPPY, and have students think of their opposites. Then have students do the “**Antonyms**” worksheet, finding adjectives in the text and coming up with antonyms. Younger students can do this as a class.
- *Have students list unfamiliar words on the “**New Word**” activity sheet. Discuss them as a class and have them write in the meanings on the sheet. Younger students can raise hands when the teacher reads the text to indicate words they’re unsure of.
- *Discuss how the sound or meaning of some words can give the reader a feeling. Have students list “feeling” words on the “**Feeling Words**” activity sheet and discuss.

Common Core State Standards: RL.K.4, RL.1.4, RL.2.4, SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1, L.K.5, L.1.5, L.2.5

2/ The Story:

- *Ask students what type of book MY BLUE IS HAPPY is (picture book). Have them name the author and illustrator and discuss what an author does and what an illustrator does. Have them complete the “**Author/Illustrator**” activity sheet to compare and contrast what authors and illustrators do. Discuss as a class. For younger students, project the activity sheet onto the board and do it together.
- *Ask students how this story is like a poem or song, and how it’s different.
- *Ask students to re-tell MY BLUE IS HAPPY in their own words, making sure to include the beginning and the end. In small groups, have them come up with questions to ask another group about the story. (Discuss the questions: who, what, when, where, why, what if, and how.)
- *Ask them to identify a theme/message in the story and give specific examples that illustrate it.
- *Ask students to think about what they would do to improve this book. What might they add? Change? Take out?
- *What are some questions they might have for the author?
- *Ask students to make connections with another text, personal experience, or the world. Does anything in this book remind them of something else they’ve read or something they’ve experienced?
- *Extension activity: Make a bookmark with the title and author’s name on one side, and the student’s own color association (“My _____ is _____ like a _____.”) on the other.

Common Core State Standards: RL.K.1, RL.1.1, RL.2.1, RL.K.2, RL.1.2, RL.2.2, RL.K.5, RL.2.5,

RL.K.6, RL.2.5, RL.K.7, RL.1.7, RL.2.7, SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1, SL.K.2, SL.1.2, SL.2.2, SL.K.6, SL.1.6, SL.2.6

3/ Character Voices/Reader's Theatre:

*Have students pair up and read the different characters' voices in MY BLUE IS HAPPY, with one student as the main character and the other reading the secondary characters. Or do the activity as a class, assigning character roles to students and having them read from the book.

*Have students write the following symbols on post-it notes:

- *heart = a part I like a lot
- *exclamation mark = a part with a strong feeling
- *smiley face = I agree
- *hmm = interesting, made me think

Read the book aloud and ask them to hold up their post-its with symbols as you go, using one or more at a time to comment on their reactions to the text.

Common Core State Standards: RL.2.6, RL.K.10, RL.1.10, SL.K.6, SL.1.6, SL.2.6

4/ Colorful Stories Activity:

*Ask students what other books they can think of that have to do with color. Or read some from the list below.

*Have students compare and contrast them to MY BLUE IS HAPPY. How are they similar? Do any deal with color in a different way? Use the “**Compare and Contrast**” activity sheet to record answers in Venn diagram format if desired. (Project it on the board to do as a class, or have them fill it out individually as you discuss.)

Suggested Picture Books:

THE BIG ORANGE SPLOT, Daniel Pinkwater
 RED SINGS FROM TREETOPS, Joyce Sidman
 SKY COLOR, Peter H. Reynolds
 MATHILDA AND THE ORANGE BALLOON, Randall de Seve
 A COLOR OF HIS OWN, Leo Lionni
 MOUSE PAINT, Ellen Stoll Walsh
 MY MANY COLORED DAYS, Dr. Seuss
 LITTLE BLUE AND LITTLE YELLOW, Lio Lionni
 BLUE CHICKEN Deborah Freedman
 THE DAY THE CRAYONS QUIT, Drew Daywalt

Common Core State Standards: W.K.7, W.1.7, W.2.7, W.K.8, W.1.8, W.2.8, SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1

5/ Show Your Colors Activity:

*Have students identify a color association (a color and something it reminds them of) and construct a simile using that color, following the steps on the “**Show Your Colors**” activity sheet. Discuss in small groups, or as a class. Younger students can do this as a class, with the activity sheet projected onto the white board.

*Have students build their similes in steps:

1/ First think of a color,

2/ Then things that are usually that color,

3/ Then feelings or other adjectives that describe both #1 and #2.

*Extension activity: Assign students a color, or let them pick one, and have them bring in items from home that are that color.

*Extension activity: Pass out crayons (not ones with color names already on them, like Crayola), and have students think about color associations and name each of their colors. Give Crayola color names as examples, if needed.

*Extension activity: Have students cut out photos from magazines and make a collage of things that are their chosen color.

*Extension activity: In small groups or partners, have students use pre-cut strips of colored index cards to brainstorm as many color associations as they can. Have them write as many things as they can think of that are a given color on the appropriate colored index card strips, one thing per strip. They should end up with a pile of colored strips. Challenge them to see which team can come up with the most.

*Extension activity: Have students pick a color and close their eyes and visualize things that are that color, or things it reminds them of. Ask what pictures come into their minds when they think of that color. What would that color taste like? Sound like? Smell like? Feel like? When students open their eyes, have them write down their ideas. Have volunteers share with the class.

Common Core State Standards: SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1

6/ Colors Game Activity:

* Have students use their completed “**Color Wheel**” activity sheets as game spinners by attaching a spinner arrow or using a spinner mounted on transparent plastic on top of their color wheels (see Materials section for sources). In small groups, have them take turns spinning the arrow. When the arrow lands on a color, the student must come up with a color association. They can also choose colors by reaching into a bag of multi-colored poker chips or printed color names and pulling one out. Younger students can do this activity as a class or just brainstorm the many things a color reminds them of instead of constructing the similes.

Common Core State Standards: SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1

7/ Make a Case for Color Activity:

*For older students, have students work in small groups and use the “**Make a Case for Color**” activity sheet to write a persuasive piece about why one color is better than another. (They can use their spinners or draw plastic color chips or color names from a bag at the beginning of class to pick their colors.) Have them present their cases to the class.

*Put two colors at opposite ends of the room. Have students stand under the one they like the best. (If they have trouble choosing, have them stand in the middle.) Have them justify why they picked one color over the other, then complete the “**Make a Case for Color**” activity sheet. Discuss their different perceptions, and how all of their answers are “right.” You can also do this with examples from the story, ie. – “The main character felt that red was brave. Agree or disagree?” Then have students go stand under taped-up “Agree” or “Disagree” signs and be able to explain their decision. Give several colors as examples.

*Extension activity for older students: Working in small groups, have students write and perform a brief, persuasive commercial that sells a color using a jingle or slogan, ie. – “Gray is the new black.”

Common Core State Standards: W.K.1, W.1.1, W.2.1, SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1, SL.K.6, SL.1.6, SL.2.6

8/ What’s Your Story? Activity:

*Using the “**What’s Your Story?**” activity sheet, have students make up a story about how a character’s view of a particular color was changed by an experience they had.

* Or have students make up a story about a character and a colored object. (Read MATHILDA AND THE ORANGE BALLOON as a starter if desired.) You can also have students sit in a circle and take turns adding to a cumulative story, with each student adding one or two sentences at a time.

*Younger students can tell a make-believe story or a real story about themselves and a colored object that they find, then illustrate their story, or use the “**What’s Your Story**” activity sheet with assistance if needed.

*Have students share their stories with the class and have a Q&A opportunity after each one.

*Extension activity: Record students reading their stories on video.

Common Core State Standards: W.K.3, W.1.3, W.2.3, SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1, SL.K.4, SL.1.4, SL.2.4, SL.K.5, SL.1.5, SL.K.6, SL.1.6, SL.2.6, SL.2.5

9/ Writing Process Activity:

*Tell students that the author revised MY BLUE IS HAPPY eighty-nine times to get to the final book. (Although not every story is revised that much!)

*The author’s writing process looks something like:

- 1/ Thinking of ideas/brainstorming,
- 2/ Writing first draft,
- 3/ Revising/changing big things, then littler things,
- 4/ Letting the story sit and revising again, or going right to step #5,
- 5/ Getting help from writing friends,
- 6/ Repeating from steps #3-5 as many times as needed,
- 7/ Sending to agent/editor for comments, and
- 8/ Revising again.

*Picture books are usually thirty-two pages long, so the author couldn't include every color idea. Some colors that didn't make it into the final book: white, teal, purple, silver, and gold. Ask students if they can think of similes for these colors, and write them on the board.

*The first ideas the author had for a color weren't always the ones that were used in the end. Share some of the following similes that *didn't* make it into the book:

"My white is exciting like lightning, and the first snowfall of winter."

"My white is boring like vanilla with no sprinkles."

"My silver is fancy like a table set for tea."

"My silver is useful like a hammer and nails, and my brand new bicycle bell."

"My silver is worried like a fish caught in a net, and a lost key."

"My silver is hopeful like a morning mist, and the fluff of a seed carried on the wind."

"My orange is dangerous like hot lava."

"My black is mysterious like a ninja in the night."

"My purple is clumsy like the bruise on my knee, and the grape juice stain on my shirt."

"My brown is comfortable like an old pair of shoes, or a rock that fits just right in my hand."

"My green is growing like a caterpillar lunching on leftover leaves."

"My green is gross like slippery slime."

"My yellow is brave like a flashlight in the night."

*Have students break into small groups and assign each group a color. Have them follow the "Writing Process" step #1 (above) of brainstorming ideas for associations for that color, then go through the rest of the steps in order to come up with one simile they want to share with the class. Put all of these together into a class book and publish/bind it.

*Extension activity: Have students write their color association on a sign and create a short audio/video piece as a class that shows individual students or groups holding up their signs and stating their color association and/or showing close-ups of illustrations for it.

*For younger students, guide this activity as a group and go through the process together, writing and revising your work on the white board.

Common Core State Standards: W.K.5, W.1.5, W.2.5, W.K.6, W.1.6, W.2.6, SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1

10/ Character/Setting Activity:

*Have students circle traits on the "**Character-istics**" activity sheet that describe the main character, then have them compare sheets. Ask students what they know about the main character of the book. Ask them to support their ideas, citing examples from the text. Examples could be that the character has her own way of looking at the world ("But my blue is happy."); that she is persistent/stubborn (after encountering so many ideas that don't match hers, she still struggles to understand and still maintains her own point of view); etc.

*Ask students what they know about the setting of this story. Where does it take place? How do we know the setting without it being described in words?

*Have students re-tell the story in their own words.

Common Core State Standards: RL.K.3, RL.1.3, RL.2.3, SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1, SL.K.6, SL.1.6,

*SL.2.6***11/ Color Circle:**

*Have students use multicolored yarn to do a web activity. Have them stand in a circle and pass the yarn across and around the circle, from one person to the next. When a student gets the yarn, have her/him state one color found on the yarn and one thing that color reminds her/him of, then pass the yarn to another person in the circle. Keep going until all students have gone at least once, and the yarn makes a “web” in the middle of the circle.

*Have students talk about what was said and compare and contrast their color associations.

Common Core State Standards: SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1, SL.K.6, SL.1.6, SL.2.6

STUDIO ART/ART HISTORY:**1/ Color Mixing Activities:**

Color mixing vocabulary: primary colors, secondary colors, tint, shade

*Discuss how so many color variations can be mixed with the primary colors, black, and white. Have students mix secondary colors, tints (color + white), and shades (color + black).

*Provide students with limited palettes of primary colors, black, and white, and have them create their own signature colors and name them. (Give examples of names from Crayola crayons or make up a couple of examples.)

*Project a color wheel onto the white board. (See Resources/Links.) Have students complete the “**Color Mixing Equations**” activity sheets using tempera or watercolor paint, crayons, colored pencils, or markers.

*Have students create their own color wheels using the printable “**Color Wheel**” activity sheets. Older students can use them in the “Colors” game if desired.

*Have students identify a personal color association (something a color reminds them of) and create an additional page for MY BLUE IS HAPPY using that color. Give an example, following the structure: “My _____ is _____ like a _____.” Use the corresponding “**Show Your Colors**” activity sheet as a prompt. Younger students may need to do this as a group. (Project this activity sheet on the white board and have volunteers come up to fill in the blanks with a dry erase marker).

*After students have completed their activity sheets, have them volunteer to share their work, comparing and contrasting various student color associations.

Common Core State Standards: SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1, SL.K.6, SL.1.6, SL.2.6

2/ Group Composition Activity:

*Have students use their previously-mixed signature colors to paint one large group canvas. (They can do this one or two at a time as a “center” activity.)

*Alternatively, have them each paint a separate mini canvas, then mount them all together as one large modern “color quilt.” Have students rearrange the mini canvases into several compositions (dark values to light, cool colors to warm, etc.) before choosing a final composition for display during open house or book fair. (Canvases can be glued with white glue onto one larger canvas or masonite/plywood board for display.)

*Host a special reception to share the students’ work, and have parents and other guests fill out their own “**Show Your Colors**” activity sheets, or do some color mixing activities.

3/ Colorful Artists:

*Discuss how various artists use color in different ways. Show specific works and have students discuss the following as a class or in small groups:

What types of colors did the artist use?

Why do you think the artist chose those colors?

Compare and contrast two pieces. Are the colors lighter/darker? Warmer/cooler?

Realistic/abstract?

Which colors do you like better? Why?

Common Core State Standards: SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1, SL.K.6, SL.1.6, SL.2.6

SOCIAL STUDIES:

1/ Color Across Cultures Activity:

*Introduce that colors can be symbolic, and that colors are viewed differently from one culture to another. Give examples. (See Resources/Links.) Ask students if they know of anything that particular colors are used for in their own cultural backgrounds or in our culture/society (ie. – traffic lights and signs, weddings, funerals, etc.).

Common Core State Standards: SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1, SL.K.6, SL.1.6, SL.2.6

SCIENCE:

1/ Seeing in Color Activity:

*What makes us “see” color? How do people see color differently from one another? What does it mean to be colorblind? Discuss color perception and how our eyes and brains work together so we can “see” colors. (See Resources/Links.)

*Pass out paint color chips (cut up from the paint store), and have students discuss them in small groups/centers and make up their own names for each color, using color associations or things the colors remind them of (ie. – “Bubble Gum Pink”). Have them take notes on the “**Seeing in Color**” activity sheet or write all of the brainstormed colors on the back of the paint chip and the final one they choose on the front of it. Have them present to the class about differences in color perception in the group (ie. – Did a color look “Bubble Gum Pink” to one person and “Sunburn Pink” to another?). For younger students this activity can be done as a class.

Common Core State Standards: SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1

CHARACTER EDUCATION:

1/ Same and Different Activity:

*Discuss how we have different points of view, just like we have different ideas about colors. Why is it good that we're all different? What makes this hard sometimes?

*Explain that some things are common to all people, or "universal." Ask students to think about things we share as human beings (needs, wants, human abilities and limitations, etc.). Have them use the "**Same and Different**" activity sheet to brainstorm ways they are different and the same. (Older students can do this in small groups. Younger students can brainstorm as a class and record answers on the white board.) You can also have them use the "**Compare and Contrast**" activity sheet to record how the student and a friend are different and the same.

Common Core State Standards: SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1

2/ Feeling Faces:

*In MY BLUE IS HAPPY, the main character associates colors with feelings. Explain how feelings are one thing we all share. Have students come up with all kinds of feelings (not just the usual ones like "sad" and "happy"), and write them on the board. Examples to use if students need them: worried, nervous, exasperated, elated, ecstatic, furious, frustrated, ashamed, thoughtful, tired, exhausted, alarmed, shocked, troubled, bored, excited, hopeful, etc. (You can also Google "feeling faces" and get tons of free images and charts.)

*Have students use the "**Feeling Faces**" activity sheet to list feelings and draw what some of them look like. They can even work in pairs and have one partner model the facial expression while the other draws it. Make it a friendly competition by challenging them to see which pair of partners can come up with the greatest number of feelings. Discuss as a class.

Common Core State Standards: SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1

MATH:

1/ Color Survey and Graph/Chart:

* Take a survey of students' favorite colors. Older students can do this on their own; younger students can do it as a class. Take recorded answers and have students represent them using a bar graph or pie chart. Using the graph, have students answer questions about how many people like different colors, etc.

Common Core State Standards: 1.MD.C.4, 2.MD.D.10

RESOURCES/LINKS & MATERIALS

COLOR MIXING & COLOR VOCABULARY:

<http://www.colormatters.com/fun-color-facts>

<http://www.columbus.k12.nc.us/echsart/COLOR%20VOCABULARY.pdf>

http://www.colorwithleo.com/art_colorwheel.php

<http://www.d.umn.edu/~mharvey/th1501color.html>

<http://www.omsu.edu/tech/colormix.php>

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/Colormixing.shtml>

Google “color mixing” and get free images explaining additive and subtractive color mixing.

COLOR & CULTURE:

<http://www.colormatters.com/color-symbolism/the-meanings-of-colors>

COLOR & ART:

<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/50.188>

http://www.artyfactory.com/art_appreciation/art_movements/fauvism.htm

http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/classroom_resources/curricula/impressionism/lesson01.html

http://www.artyfactory.com/art_appreciation/art_movements/impressionism.htm

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/abex/hd_abex.htm

<http://artsy.net/gene/color-field-painting>

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=87871332>

COLOR & FASHION:

<http://www.petercalvin.com/data/web/ud/colortrends.html>

<http://www.colormatters.com/color-and-marketing/quirks-of-the-color-quest>

COLOR BLINDNESS:

<http://www.colormatters.com/color-and-vision/what-is-color-blindness>

http://kidshealth.org/kid/talk/qa/color_blind.html

SYNESTHESIA:

<http://www.colormatters.com/color-and-the-body/how-color-affects-taste-and-smell>

METAPHORS, SIMILES & ALLITERATION:

<http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/resources/litdevices/>

<http://www.soundonsound.com/sos/apr01/articles/lyric.asp>

<http://popdust.com/2012/10/12/taylor-swift-red-lyrics-breakdown-so-many-colors-so-many-similes/>

Examples of songs with literary devices (including similes, metaphors, and personification):

“April Come She Will” by Simon & Garfunkel

“Circle Game” by Joni Mitchell

“Cold As Ice” by Foreigner

“Kathy’s Song” by Simon & Garfunkel

“Love is Like a Butterfly” by Dolly Parton
“The Rose” by Bette Midler

OTHER COLOR RESOURCES:

<http://www.colormatters.com/color-resources/bibliography>

MATERIALS:

Sources for canvases, mini-canvases, crayons, markers, and paints:

<http://www.dickblick.com>

<http://www.saxarts.com>

Sources for spinner arrows for “Colors” game:

http://www.boardgamedesign.com/pages/go_shopping_2012/arrows.htm

http://catalog.parentteacherstoreusa.com/transparent_spinners_set_of_5-p-118166.html#.UVj1jkLXe0t