



Activities for *The Colors of Us*

The Colors of Us
by Karen Katz

“My name is Lena and I am seven. I am the color of cinnamon. Mom says she could eat me up.”

Karen Katz created this book for her daughter, Lena, whom she and her husband adopted from Guatemala.

Procedure:

1. Give the children multicultural crayons
2. Have them draw pictures of themselves or give them die cut multicultural heads (Available from shapes 1.800. 888.6580.)
Have them decorate them and hang up all the different shades of brown and white. Discuss everyone's beautiful skin color.
3. Ask the children to name things they think are the color of their skin such as oatmeal or sand.
4. Write the words on construction paper and tape it all around the room.
Discuss the beautiful differences in people's colors.
5. Ask children to bring in items that match their skin color. Make a collage. (Leaves, oatmeal, sand, cumin, etc.). Talk about nature and variations colors.
6. Have each child choose a head from the 3x3" multicultural die cut packs. (Use the small ones, or precut them yourself).
Decorate with yarn and various materials.
7. Make a large map of the world on brown butcher paper. Draw the equator. Paste each child's head on the part of the world from where their ancestors originated. Write the child's name.
8. Have the children notice people born closer to the equator usually have darker skin. Tell them how darker skin is a protection from the sun and people born far from the equator usually have paler skin. Discuss how color is an indication of where you come from and not what you are like as a person

From an art perspective:

1. Have the children bring in wrapping paper, old paintings, boxes or shopping bags with pattern on them etc. Cut out shapes of clothing from the art materials and have them make collages of themselves. Make pictures using the found papers. Cut them into leaves or tables or anything!

2. Write poems using the different names for skin color.
3. Provide paint color chips in different shades of tan brown and cream.
Collect all the different names and have them write poems using the color names.
There are some pretty great colors such as “caramel cream” “autumn beige” and “acorn tan”, “rich suede”, “hazel cream”.

Let's help kids celebrate the color they are!

Here are some more colors:

wheat
marzipan
gingerbread
glazed doughnut
butter cake
lemon ice
vanilla taffy
coffee with milk
cafe-o- lait
coyote fur
chestnut
black-as-night

Additional suggestions:

- The book mentions many kid-friendly foods such as cupcakes, butterscotch, toffee and pizza, some of these foods may work well as snacks during the discussion.
- Children could go on a tour of the library or school and locate various items that reflect different skin colors.
- Mix paint. Show how the paint is the same, only a darker or lighter hue.
- Make clay in variations of colors. Several copyrighted recipes may be found on the Internet, using the search term: edible clay.