

**Title:** The Colors of Us  
**Author:** Karen Katz  
**Illustrator:** Karen Katz  
**Publisher:** Square Fish  
**Date published:** 2002

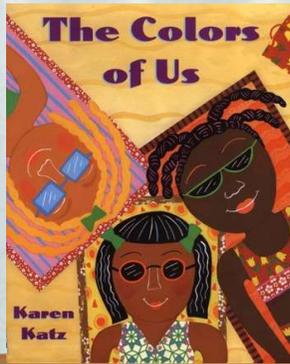
# The Colors of Us

The Colors of Us is a story about a young girl who wants to draw a picture of herself, using brown paint to match her skin. When she goes for a walk with her mother, she discovers that there are all different shades of brown, allowing her to see her world in a new way. This book celebrates how people are different, similar and special.

<b>Pyramid Model Skill or concept(s)</b>	Cultural awareness, Identity, Self-esteem, Friendship
<b>Goal/Objective:</b>	To acknowledge that a person's skin comes in many different color tones and that these colors can be combined to create a unique shade. To recognize similarities and differences in people; making them unique and special.
<b>Emotional Vocabulary:</b>	Unique, Self-assured, Pride, Excited, Content, Acceptance
<b>Story Time: (Show and Tell It)</b>	
<b>Name of Activity:</b>	The Perfect Shade
<b>Supplies needed:</b>	The book <u>The Colors of Us</u> , samples of cinnamon, nut butter (check for allergies), honey, ginger, chili powder, a banana, paint (red, yellow, black, white), paper, camera
<b>Ideas of what to say or do.</b>	<b>Warm up:</b> Show the children the samples of items (cinnamon, nut butter (if no allergies), honey, ginger, chili powder, and banana) that you have collected. Explain that they will be exploring each item, with a friend, to see which item is the closest color to their skin tones. As an example, share the item that matches closest to your own skin color. Pair children up with a fellow student and have them work together to explore the samples. Remind them to choose which sample is the closest in color to each of their skin tones. Bring the children back to the large group and have the children report out what items each of them chose. Graph their results as they are shared out.

New York State

# BOOK NOOKS



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### Ideas of what to say or do. (continued)

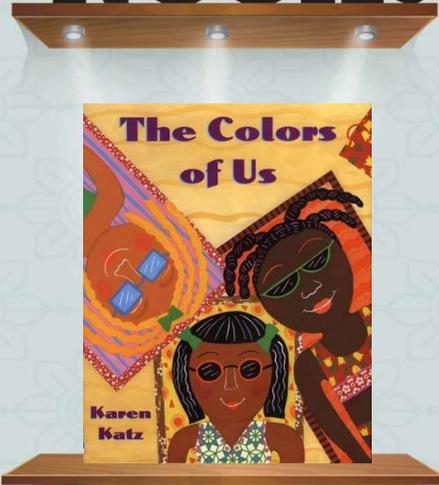
Once all children have shared their answers, tell the children there are many different shades of the same color (refer back to the sample of items) and that their friends all have different color shades of their skin; some alike and some different. Have the children stand next to the friend and take their picture.

Let the children know that you will be hanging the pictures up on a wall to show “the colors of us”.

**Main Activity:** Show the children the cover of the book. Ask children to tell you what they think the book is about. Once children are done answering, read the story. As you are reading, hold up each sample item that is mentioned in the text. Tell the children that Lena’s mother is an artist and that she tells Lena that she can mix colors together to make the perfect color to match her skin. Ask the children what colors they think could be mixed to find the shade of Lena’s skin. Continue to read the story and show the items that are referenced.

Once you are done reading the story, show the children the colors of paints you have. Ask them what colors they think they need to mix to match the color of their skin. Once all children have shared, tell the children that they will now be mixing colors to try and create the color of their skin tone. Have the children use the paint and mix the colors to create a color that matches their skin tone. They can create a self-portrait using this unique color blend.

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**Ideas of what to say or do. (continued)**

Bring the children back to a large group. Tell the children that “We are alike and different. Skin tone is just one way that makes us similar or different from each other. There are other things that make us special too.”

Ask the children to tell everyone one thing that makes them special. Help the children understand that singing, dancing, jumping up and down, counting to 10, knowing colors, etc. can make someone special. Once everyone has shared (if they can’t think of something, be sure to let them know what you think makes them special), ask them to share with a friend about something they think makes their friend special. Remind the children that everyone has similarities and differences that make each of us special.

After the activities are completed, hang the photographs you took of the children with their friends, the graph, and the children’s paintings on a bulleting board or wall with a title that says, “The Colors of Us”. You can also record the special things that was said about each child and add that to the display.

**What Pyramid Model skill or concept is covered?**

Cultural Awareness, Identity, Self-esteem, Friendship

