

# **The Black Book of Colours**

## **Lesson Plan**

### **K - Year 6**

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### Learning:

- how do our senses give us information?;
- how might it feel to be blind?
- how do you understand and describe colours if you have never seen them with your eyes?

### Before reading:

- what do you think this book will be about? What do you see that makes you think that?
- what do you think the title means?
- tell the children that this is a book about a little boy called Thomas who is blind;
- what does it mean to be blind?
- how do blind people figure out what something is like? (they use touch and other senses);
- if you were blind, how would you know what colours were? How would you know what red looked like?
- how would you read a book if you were blind?

### While reading:

- the children will probably notice the illustrations and the braille text. If not, call their attention to it and briefly discuss it;

### After reading:

- how does Thomas understand colours?
- how does he describe colours? (uses his other senses);
- how does he know a baby chick is yellow and that watermelon is red? (someone tells him and he links that information with the information his senses give him about the baby chick and about watermelon to figure out what the words 'yellow' and 'red' mean for him);
- what do you notice about how this book is written?
- tell younger children that sometimes we compare something (like a colour) to something else to describe it. We call this a **simile** (write the word on the class whiteboard);
- ask older children if they remember what it's called when we describe something by comparing it to something else (**simile**). Together, list on the class whiteboard some of the similes used in the book;

### Activities: K - Year 6

- have each child choose a small object to hold in their hand. They shouldn't show their object to anyone else;
- children work in pairs to describe their object to their partner who has their eyes blindfolded or closed;
- the child who is 'blind' is then invited to touch and hold the object;
- could the child who was 'blind' guess what the object was from their partner's description? Did touching the object help them work out what it was?

### Creative Writing Activity: K- Year 1

Model this activity on the classroom's whiteboard first:

- children think about something they like to touch, taste or smell and identify its colour;
- they draw a picture of the object, person or animal;
- they write a sentence using the format:

*Gold feels like my dog's (soft) ears.*

*Brown tastes like (melting) chocolate.*

*Purple smells like flowers (in my grandma's garden);*

- Encourage stronger writers to use adjectives and more descriptive elements;

### Creative Writing Activity: Years 2 - 6

Model this activity on the classroom's whiteboard first:

- children write and illustrate a poem, using a similar format to the pages in the book;
- this activity can be done as a whole class, in small groups or as an independent activity;
- children pick a colour and brainstorm things that are typically this colour;
- children think about and discuss how each of these things feels, smells, tastes and sounds, using adjectives and comparisons;
- children write and illustrate their own page, using the format and language structure used in the book;

## Learning About Louis Braille

### K - Year 1

- remind children that you can't read a normal book if you cannot see;
- tell children a French man called Louis Braille invented a system of writing that would allow blind people to read and write using their fingers and their sense of touch;
- tell children Louis Braille became blind after he had an accident as a child and that this made him want to invent a way for blind people to read and write;
- show children images on IWB of Louis Braille, his alphabet and child reading a Braille book and discuss as a class;
- children can write a sentence or two about Louis Braille and his invention;

### Years 2 - 3

- remind children that you can't read a normal book if you cannot see;
- tell children a French man called Louis Braille invented a system of writing that would allow blind people to read and write using their fingers and their sense of touch;
- tell children that Louis Braille became blind after he had an accident as a child and that this made him want to invent a way for blind people to read and write;
- show children images on IWB of Louis Braille, his alphabet and child reading a Braille book and discuss as a class;
- photocopy the Braille alphabet and give a copy to each child/pair/group. Also provide a few flashcards (paper or card) to each child;
- children experiment with writing their names in Braille;
- children write words in Braille on the flashcards and write the word in standard text on the back;
- children work in pairs to decode their partner's Braille;

### Years 4 - 6

- remind children that you can't read a normal book if you cannot see;
- ask children if they know how blind people read (a French man called Louis Braille invented a system of writing that would allow blind people to read and write using their fingers and their sense of touch);
- show children images on IWB of Louis Braille, his alphabet and child reading a Braille book and discuss as a class;
- photocopy the Braille alphabet and give a copy to each child/pair/group. Also provide a few flashcards (paper or card) to each child;
- children experiment with writing their names in Braille;
- children write words in Braille on the flashcards and write the word in standard text on the back;
- children work in pairs to decode their partner's Braille;

### Researching Louis Braille and writing a biography

#### Years 4 - 6

This is a good activity to do if your class has access to computers for research:

- teach or revise the main features of a biography, including headings, introduction, etc;
- children use the internet to research information about Louis Braille;
- children take notes (suggest using a graphic organiser);
- children write a biography using their notes;

#### Websites for Research:

<https://www.hwms.com.au/about-us/blog/7-surprising-facts-about-louis-braille/>

<https://www.royalblind.org/national-braille-week/about-braille/who-was-louis-braille>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Louis-Braille>

#### Notes: