



Introduction

The following is a version of a well-known folk story linked to the colours of the rainbow. This version is for use with large numbers and a certain amount of controlled audience participation. Apologies to whoever wrote the original - we would be glad to credit you with the idea if you get in touch.

Preparation

The story explores the themes of working together, appreciating other people's talents and using what we have for the glory of God.

You may want to use coloured flags to wave each time a colour is mentioned. The audience can also join in by doing actions or sounds each time a colour is mentioned as indicated at the start of the story below. I've also included in italics an extra thread of plot that could be used if you want a slightly longer story - but this crocodile thread can be missed out if you need something simpler.

Development

When I say'
red = fist in the air
orange = make a big round O shape with your hands
yellow = wavy hands like sunbursts
green = a pop with finger in mouth
blue = V sign with your fingers like hippies
purple = bow low

God rubbed his hands in glee. The terrible Flood was over! There were the animals coming out of the ark - trotting, wobbling, slithering, flying or trundling down onto the mountaintop! There was Noah and his family building the altar to say thank you for their rescue! And God had a lovely surprise ready for them. Something that would finish off their adventure with a beautiful ending that would be remembered for thousands of years to come. *But he would have to get a move on. The animals were really hungry.*

'Oh, colours!' called God. 'It's your big moment!'
The gorgeous colours appeared around God's throne. But God could see something wasn't right. Orange was scowling. Red was grumpy. Blue was kicking the floor. Green was in a strop. Yellow had turned his back on everyone else and Purple seemed about to burst into tears.

'What in heaven is going on?' demanded God, *looking worriedly down at the animals below. The crocodiles were looking at Noah in a way God didn't much like. 'I've got a brilliant job for you to do and you all look like the dog's breakfast. What's the matter?'*

The first colour to speak was Red.



'You said you want to put a bow in the sky,' she said. 'Well I think it should be red. Just red. Nothing but red. Don't mess about with this bunch of losers. Make it red.'

'Why?' asked God, *looking down at the crocodiles who had started creeping through the crowd of animals towards Noah.*

'Red is the boss of the colours. People really notice red. Red is hot and bright - the colour for fire and blood and traffic signs. If you want this bow to be noticed, you need it to be red.'

'I see,' murmured God.

'No! No! No! No!' squeaked Yellow. 'Your bow should be a beautiful yellow colour, Lord! Make it as yellow as the sunshine! As yellow as bananas! Make it bright and cheerful and shiny as me! Make it just yellow!'

'You are very beautiful,' agreed God, *watching the crocodiles hide behind the elephants whenever Noah glanced their way.*

'But you're not as important as me!' Purple said pompously. 'Look! It's obvious your bow should be purple. Purple is the colour of emperors and kings. Purple is the sign of the most important. If you want power, pick pure purple.'

God saw the crocodiles picking up speed.

'I do like purple,' he said.

'But you don't want a silly purple bow!' shouted Green. 'Wheee! Look at me! Imagine a green bow in the sky! Now that would be really wow! Green is so zingy! So fizzy! So fresh! Like a bottle of green limeade sprayed across the sky. Don't mix me up with these other dull colours - make your bow green!'

'Oh please,' called Orange. 'It's so obvious that Orange is the colour you want. Orange like the sunrise. Orange is fruity and juicy and ripe! Make your bow orange, Lord!'

God saw the two crocodiles dodging round the kangaroos as they lumbered on towards Noah.

'You are so, like, unhip, man,' said Blue. 'It is so like, obvious that God's bow should be blue. Blue as the sea and sky, blue like rhythm 'n' blues. Blue like Sonic the Hedgehog blue. Blue is like the coolest colour in your box, Lord. I just know you're going to make your bow blue blue blue.'

Instantly all the colours started shouting at each other.

'Blue is boring!'

'Red is rubbish!'

'Purple's pathetic!'

'Yellow is so last year!'

'Green is gross!'

'Orange sucks!'

'Make your bow red! Blue! Yellow! Orange! Green! Purple!'

Down below on the mountain, the crocodiles tiptoed up behind Noah and opened their mouths ready for breakfast. God knew there was no time to lose. God raised one hand and spoke in a voice that no-



one could disobey. 'Be quiet.'

When the colours had settled down, trembling, God smiled at them.

'You are all just what I want you to be. Each of you does a different job. Without you, I couldn't do this most important job of all. I need to give my people a sign of my promise. I need them to know it is a perfect promise that will never be broken. I need them to know that it is for all people of all ages from all countries for all times. And so, my dear dear colours, I need you all. Please, just for a moment, look at each other through my eyes.'

The colours looked at each other and, now they looked through God's eyes, saw how beautiful each of the others was. With a big smile, they stood together and together counted 3 2 1. Down below, Noah and all the animals *even the crocodiles* looked up in amazement. For there, between heaven and earth shone a radiant multi-coloured rainbow. Red, orange, yellow. green, blue, purple - all the colours, all different, altogether.

And Noah turned to Mrs Noah. 'How about crocodile steaks for tea tonight, dear? Make it 'snappy.'