



On your marks

Colour is a very powerful influence on our lives. We all have our favourite colours and these can have a strong effect on our attitudes and our emotions. Our world is full of colour and the proper balance and good blending of those colours can settle or startle us in equal measure. Colours are often linked to feelings and emotions and occur in many everyday expressions. This reflection explores the use of colour in this way and links it to a story about how we see or do not see what is important in life. All colours come from the one colour of light itself. The reflection ends with an opportunity to bring whatever colours/feelings are with the children and others that day so that they can reconnect them within the wider spectrum of God's gift of light.

Get set

You will need a set of sunglasses to which you have attached differently coloured paper over the plastic lenses to use with the story; a picture of a rainbow or rainbow-coloured object such as a candle; a cube which has differently coloured faces, namely red, blue, green, yellow, white and brown.

Go!

1. I wonder what is your favourite colour?

Invite the class to share their favourite colours and, if possible, reasons for their choice

2. Colours have strong connections for most of us.

I wonder what you think of when I say a certain colour?

Invite the class to put their hands up with instant responses to the following list of colours:

blue, green, red, yellow, brown, grey, pink, purple, silver, gold.

Colours are very much part of our lives and carry a whole host of meaning for each one of us.

3. Try this [reading game](#) with a few of the children, in which there is a list of colour words but each is coloured differently than the colour that the word is conveying. Invite the children to say the colour of the word but not the word itself. How fast can they read through this list?

(N.B. This is a good example of where the right- and left-hand sides of our brain come into conflict. Our logical left-hand brain wants to say the actual word according to how it is written, whereas our right-hand brain wants to respond creatively to the colour!)

4. In everyday speech we link colours to particular attitudes and feelings.

Work through the following list and see whether the children have come across any of these expressions using colours:

I'm feeling blue - meaning depressed and sad.

I'm green with envy - meaning conveying extreme jealousy.

He saw red - meaning he was very angry.

She's in the pink - meaning that she is very well indeed.

He's gone quite white - meaning perhaps with fear.

She's looking a bit yellow - meaning because she's ill in some way.

I'm browned off - meaning I'm fed up or bored.

She always looks at the world through rose-coloured spectacles - meaning that she's very over-optimistic about everything that happens.

5. In fact, we often look at our world through differently coloured spectacles. Indeed, we can sometimes come to think that everything we see is only one colour because of the way we're feeling at the time. Introduce some differently coloured sunglasses - with red lenses, plain dark lenses, green lenses. Use these to tell the following story.
6. Jesus often helped people to look at the world differently. Many of those who came to him thought they could see everything clearly but it turned out that as far as he was concerned they were quite blind; whereas people who were blind and who came to him were helped to see. The story is from John 9:1-41.

This is a long story, so here is a short version you could use, inviting some of the children to wear sunglasses appropriately:

Once as Jesus was walking along he saw a man who was blind.

One child should be wearing dark glasses and perhaps tapping with a white stick.

Jesus' friends assumed that he was blind because he must have done something wrong in his life. But Jesus said that was not true. He put some mud on the blind man's eyes and told him to go and wash in a nearby pool.

One child acting as Jesus could mime this with the blind man.

After he had washed the mud off, the blind man could see.

The child with dark glasses should take them off and throw away the stick.

Everyone was amazed but the man who had been blind didn't know where Jesus had gone. Some religious leaders came and when they heard the story, they were angry that Jesus had been healing someone on their special day of worship.

Some children could play the leaders, each of them wearing sunglasses, which have red-coloured lenses.

They asked the man many questions but all he could say was that someone very special had healed him. He began to wonder whether the leaders wanted to go and meet Jesus. Perhaps they were jealous?

Those playing the religious leaders should change their sunglasses from those with red lenses to a green lenses.

The leaders even questioned the man's parents but they couldn't help find Jesus either. *Some people could play the parents of the blind man, shrugging their shoulders when asked questions.*

Finally the leaders were so angry...

They should put back on their glasses with the red-coloured lenses.

... that they told the blind man that Jesus was bad and that he should keep quiet about what had happened. All the man who had been blind could say was, 'All I know is that I used to be blind but now I can see.'

Later he did find Jesus again and he discovered that Jesus was from God, which was why he could do this miracle. He said to Jesus, 'I put my faith in you.'

Jesus explained that he had come so that people who are blind could see...

Jesus should point to the man who had been blind.

... and to tell those who think they could see that they were really blind.

At this the leaders should put on dark glasses and begin to feel around as if they were blind.

7. *I wonder what stops people from seeing things as they really are?*

I wonder why some people only seem to see bad things?

I wonder how other people manage to see good things even when things are bad?

I wonder what sort of colours influence the way you see things?

8. Whatever colour we feel close to today, it's important to remember that it is not the only colour. There's always a lot more to see.

Show the children a picture of a rainbow or an object that is coloured like a rainbow. Every single colour comes from the one light, which God has given us.

I wonder what colour you feel most like today?

Think of this one colour and then remind yourselves that it is just part of a whole rainbow of colours that God has given us to see each day.

9. Use the last part of this time together to think about those who are trapped within one colour today for one reason or another.

Introduce the cube with the differently coloured faces. As you turn it around slowly, pause at each colour to let it remind the class of some group of people to think and pray about quietly. For example:

Yellow - think about those who may be ill or in pain today.

Red - think of those who may be angry for some reason today.

Green - think of those who are jealous and envious of others today and therefore restless inside.

Blue - think of those who for different reasons are sad today.

White - think of those who are 'white with fear' today, afraid of something they can't easily share.

Brown - think of those who are fed up and bored today and who might need cheering up.

Let's pause and think how we might help each other see all the colours and not just one. Pray that God will help them and us today to open our eyes to all the beautiful colours in this world that he has



made.

10. Finally show the rainbow picture again. God promises in the Bible that he will always show love to this world and as a sign of that he put the rainbow in the sky at the end of the story of Noah. This is a reminder of God's promise to everyone we've thought about this morning and to ourselves.

Why not use the colour cube regularly in your reflection time to think about others in various kind of need?