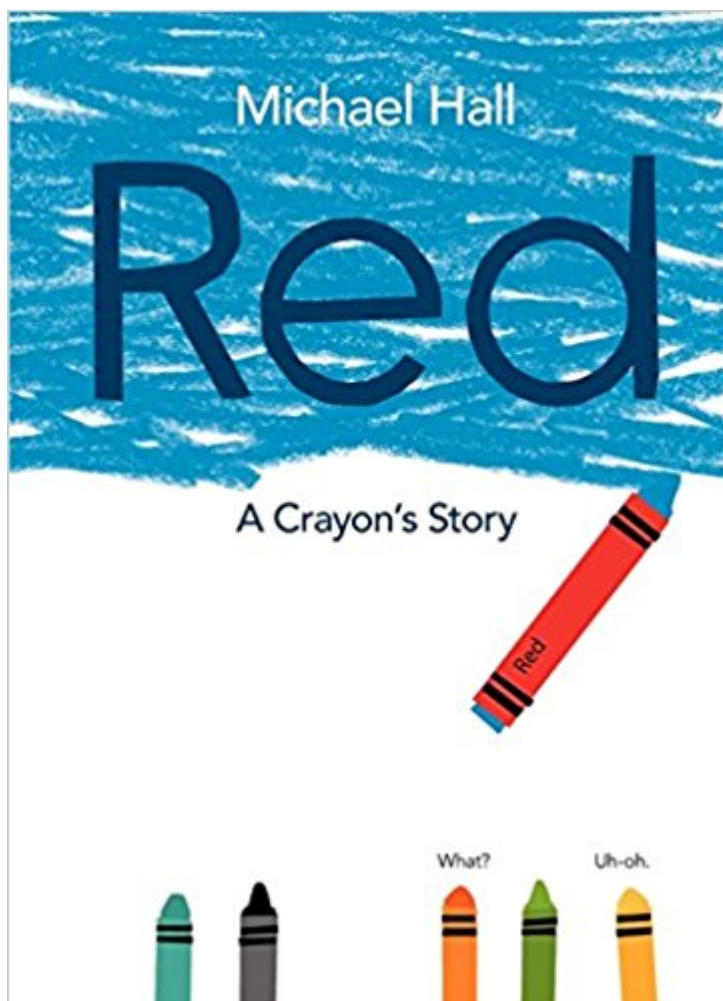


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# Red: A Crayon's Story



## Synopsis

A blue crayon mistakenly labeled as "red" suffers an identity crisis in this picture book by the New York Times bestselling creator of *My Heart Is Like a Zoo* and *It's an Orange Aardvark!* Funny, insightful, and colorful, *Red: A Crayon's Story*, by Michael Hall, is about being true to your inner self and following your own path despite obstacles that may come your way. Red will appeal to fans of Lois Ehlert, Eric Carle, and *The Day the Crayons Quit*, and makes a great gift for readers of any age! Red has a bright red label, but he is, in fact, blue. His teacher tries to help him be red (let's draw strawberries!), his mother tries to help him be red by sending him out on a playdate with a yellow classmate (go draw a nice orange!), and the scissors try to help him be red by snipping his label so that he has room to breathe. But Red is miserable. He just can't be red, no matter how hard he tries! Finally, a brand-new friend offers a brand-new perspective, and Red discovers what readers have known all along. He's blue! This funny, heartwarming, colorful picture book about finding the courage to be true to your inner self can be read on multiple levels, and it offers something for everyone.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 380 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Greenwillow Books (February 3, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0062252070

ISBN-13: 978-0062252074

Product Dimensions: 8.2 x 0.2 x 11.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 184 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,629 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #34 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Self-Esteem & Self-Respect](#) #47 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Emotions & Feelings](#) #69 in [Books > Children's Books > Activities, Crafts & Games > Activity Books](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

PreS-K • Step inside the life of a crayon in this funny and poignant picture book. The star of the show is Red, a blue crayon who mistakenly has a red label. His teacher tries to convince him to draw strawberries, but they show up blue. He tries on a red scarf, but it just does not match. His mother suggests he mixes with other colors, but the results are not what he expects. No matter how hard Red tries, his efforts just keep coming out blue. His other crayon friends try to help him reinvent himself, but no matter what they do, Red is still a blue crayon. After much self-doubt and denial, Red makes a new friend, a Berry-colored crayon, who asks him to complete his drawing by adding a blue ocean for his boat. Red gives it a go, and suddenly, he finds his true self and discovers what his other art-supply friends knew all along. The rest of his crayon friends are impressed with his new style, and Red comes to embrace his true identity. Hall's latest picture book is all about staying true to oneself, no matter what others say. The illustrations emulate children's artwork, giving readers a great opportunity to identify colors and new vocabulary. Large, clear text make this perfect for a read-aloud, as well as independent reading. VERDICT Reminiscent of Drew Daywalt's *The Day the Crayons Quit* (Philomel, 2013), this witty and heartwarming book is sure to become a favorite for children and adults alike. • Natalie Braham, Denver Public Library

• “[A] fresh approach to colors and feelings. . . . Readers will share all the emotional elements of the tale • humor, despair, sadness, frustration, and finally, excitement. • (Booklist (starred review)) • “When a red-labeled crayon discovers he’s actually blue, he finds joy, ebullience and acceptance. . . . Hall’s compositions . . . convey a strong sense of emotion. Red captures [his feelings] . . . in an exuberant, far-reaching sky. Smartly designed and appealing, Red’s story offers much for discussion and affirmation. • (Kirkus Reviews) • “Crayon Red may be labeled red, but he colors blue. . . . Once he lets go of his label and proclaims, “I’m blue! everything turns around . . . Smart design, bold colors, and sharp details keep the story both effective and amusing. • (Horn Book Magazine) • “Red is a crayon, and children will see his problem right away: his label reads “red, but he’s blue. . . . The overly cheerful encouragement Red endures will sound familiar to any child who’s struggled to perform. . . . Unexpectedly affecting. • (Publishers Weekly) • “Funny and poignant . . . Hall’s latest picture book is all about staying true to oneself, no matter what others say. . . . Witty and heartwarming [and] sure to become a favorite for children and adults alike. • (School Library Journal) • “Funny and clever, with a wonderful message about embracing who we are. • (Huffington Post) • “This story of mistaken identity has a simple yet profound

premise that makes it feel fresh. (USA Today) "[A] smart, insightful coming-of-age story for [the] youngest readers. (Shelf Awareness)

I am a grade K-8 librarian and, as soon as I heard about this story, I had to purchase it for my school library. I was definitely not disappointed and I will admit to weeping slightly as I read this (though, I do tend to weep at most touching picture books, but that's another story). Red can be read in many different ways. In its simplistic form, it's merely about a crayon simply wanting to be itself without succumbing to the pressures of its family and peers. Children could easily view this as their intrinsic need to try and fail, all the while gain autonomy over their lives (fitting with Erikson's Psychosocial Stages). On a more complex level, you can definitely see this book relating to the LGBTQT community as well as dealing with the mental health issues related to being denied your true self (e.g. depression, feelings of "otherness", etc.). In fact, I believe the one-star reviewer saw this book only as a platform for the transgender community and not the many other possible moralities to this story (which prompted me to write this review). From my brief experiments with the book and a survey of about 15 teachers and parents, adults seem to immediately see the crayon as a transgender person. They tend to overlook the crayon being blue on the inside and only see the red label at first (10ish/15 did not see a blue crayon - I say 10ish because one person had already read the book prior to my survey). Only when the crayon begins to struggle creating red pictures do they realize the crayon is, in fact, blue. I have yet to "experiment" reading this with kids, but this week I plan on reading this to several classes of varying ages to get a sample of opinions. My hypothesis: most elementary students (K-5ish) will see the book as a powerful "coming of age" story about self-acceptance unless they have a prior relationship to the LGBTQT community. I am very interested to read this book to classes where some of the students have same-gendered parents. I also think starting in grades 4/5, students might begin thinking there is more to the story and relate it to bigger ideas of morality, gender, and identity.

We love this story! It's the best story of acceptance and understanding!

A very gentle story for children and their families about being different from what you have been labeled. Red can not be blue, no matter the wrapper label.

Love this story. Great conversation started for children and adults. My daughter took it to school and read it to her class for book week, and the teacher ordered it before the day was over for her

classroom. Great book. Great lesson in accepting your true self, or the true self of others.

Great book to explain all types of differences that we have and a wonderful book for little ones and siblings of those that fall under the transgender umbrella.

Excellent story - read it as a read-n-share with my 9/10s. Thoughtful story and great way to introduce topic of transgender.

Super-fun read for any kid. My partner's 5-year old and 8-year-old love this!

A really heartwarming story of just being yourself, despite others trying to convince you to be something different. All kids should read this. Find your true color!

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