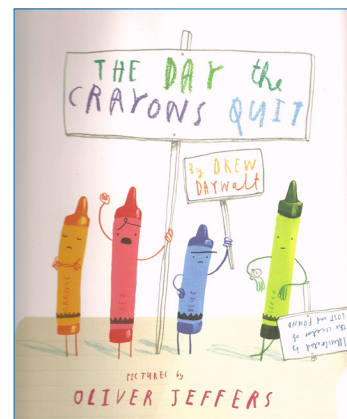


## Title: **The Day the Crayons Quit**

Author: **Drew Daywalt**

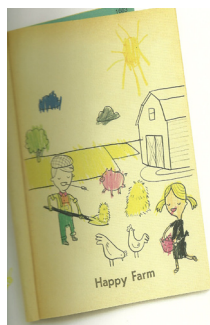
Illustrator: **Oliver Jeffers**

Publisher: **Harper Collins**



### First look

- \* Share the book with the whole group by reading it aloud to them. Give an uninterrupted read, without making comments and holding it up so that everyone can see the pictures as they listen.
- \* Go through the book again page by page concentrating on the visual text. Look closely at every picture and ask the group to point out to each other anything that strikes them as interesting.
- \* Chat in pairs or as a group about the first experience of the book. Did you like it? What did you like or dislike and why? What are your memories of using wax crayons at school?



### Look again

When the group have discussed their first responses, return to the book, look, think and talk more about the artwork.

#### Colour

Colour, is at the heart of this book. *The Day the Crayons Quit* challenges artistic conventions that are often introduced to children when they are very young. For example, who decides that the sun must be yellow? Must all leaves be green? Why is pink almost exclusively associated with princesses and not with dinosaurs?

#### Space

Space is divided equally on each double page spread to display a letter, written by a crayon, listing concerns. The letters are illustrated by sketches drawn in the appropriate colour.

#### Line

There is a marked contrast between the flowing lines made by the crayons in their own pictures and the drawings in the colouring books. On the last page, where the publishing information is listed, Oliver Jeffers thanks 'a few little friends' for their help. Can you identify drawing and colouring done by the 'little friends'?

Talk about any visual aspect of the book that interests you, i.e. end papers, font choices, title page and layout. Do these 'extras' to the story contribute to the overall impact of the book?

### Interpreting the texts

It is always beneficial, when studying a book, to use tasks which require imaginative response to encourage students to engage fully with the text. The following suggestions may help the group of young readers to become engrossed in the book.

#### Discussion

Remember there may be differences between what happens in a book and what a story is about. Colouring books are used in part of this story. What is the difference between *colouring in* and being artistically creative? What skill is needed to colour inside the lines? What skills are needed to create an original picture? Why did Duncan get a gold star for creativity at the end of the book? Many people (both young and old) are reluctant to draw, paint or design things. Artists know that everyone can be artistic. Explain how you feel about being asked to draw.

## **Drama**

We can infer from what the crayons say on each page that they have distinct personalities:

Purple says 'I'm going to COMPLETELY LOSE IT' – short tempered?

Beige says 'It's not fair' – whining?

Green says 'I like my work' – cheerful, positive?

Each member of the group could choose which colour they want to represent and prepare themselves for an interview. Answer the questions in character. Questions could include:



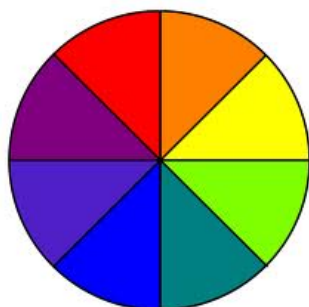
'Do you like being a crayon?'

'Does Duncan have a favourite crayon?'

'What do you think about the way you were used in the picture Duncan does at the end of the book?'

## **Art**

Make a colour wheel from any media (e.g. paint, collage, crayons etc.). The wheels can be simple basic colours or add tints and shades to make it more interesting.



## **Exploring colour as a topic**

Use the internet for some quick and easy research into the many ways that colour is part of everyday life. There is so much colour in every aspect of life (e.g. fashion, sport, food, plants, heraldry, politics, animals, seasons etc.) and anything could be considered but here are a few suggestions:

### \* Vocabulary

What are primary colours? What is the difference between a colour, a tint and a shade? We use other words such as hue, pastel, pigment etc. Are the crayons in the book primary colours shades or tints?

### \* Colour meanings

Make a list of sayings and expressions that include colours. For example, using the colour RED:

Red letter day; In the red; Red herring; Red tape; Red rag to a bull

Can you think of any phrases that use purple, pink or green?

### \* Science

Get a 'scientist' (teacher or student) to explain the dispersion of light into the colours of the spectrum. There may be a prism available in school that could be used to demonstrate.