



An Activity Book for Learning  
About the Skin You Are In



# HUES

**SNEAK  
PEEK**



**SAMPLE  
ONLY**

**UNCORRECTED  
PROOF**

of you



**by Dr. Lucretia Carter Berry** Illustrations by Adia Carter

*AN ACTIVITY BOOK FOR LEARNING  
ABOUT THE SKIN YOU ARE IN*



# HUES

of you

**by Dr. Lucretia Carter Berry**

**Illustrations by Adia Carter**



## A NOTE TO LOVING ADULTS

We constantly support early learning about colors by sharing facts, singing songs, and playing games. We enthusiastically teach our children the hues of the rainbow and point out the red bus, blue sky, green grass, and so on.

But even though children from as young as three months old observe differences in skin color, we are far less enthusiastic or prepared to teach them about the beautiful hues of brown that make up skin tones. Instead, we leave them to figure out the differences for themselves, promote color blindness, or limit them to society's constructed racial categories (e.g., Black, White, Asian). Our children deserve more than silence or contrived myths about the human body's largest organ—the skin.

When we pretend not to “see” color or notice differences in race—and when we pretend that everyone is treated equally—we do not help our children understand that race should not matter; in fact this race- and color-blind ideology is extremely harmful because it leaves us ill prepared to change or even talk about the inequities in our society.

And racial categories alone don't give us the framework, language, and room to express the nuances of our many-hued reality. The concept of race was created to institute a social hierarchy, so racial categories describe only how we are grouped and not how we actually look. And if you, your family, or your community is multiethnic like mine, the confines of racial categories are too narrow and frail to hold the expanse of our ethnicities, histories, and heritages. We require the freedom and space to notice, describe, and appreciate our personal bodies beyond our racialized groupings.

Researchers have found that conversations with children about skin tone and race must be explicit, should use simple terms that children understand, and should be incorporated into family life and formal learning environments.

Perhaps you are thinking, *Yes, but . . .*

*How or where do I begin?*

*What if I say the wrong thing?*

*What if my children ask questions and I don't know the answers?*

*What if my children say something embarrassing in public?*

So here are answers to those frequently asked questions:

Start with this *Hues of You* activity book. Let the prompts guide your exploration as you build a foundation.

Posture yourself as a co-learner with your children and know that you are not obligated to know all the answers. Co-discovery is significant to the learning journey.

When you empower your children with understanding and language, they may want to have conversations about skin, hair texture, ethnicity, and so on, as they are making real-time observations.

Inevitably, your children will want to talk loudly in McDonald's or the grocery store when they encounter people who look different than them. Please don't be embarrassed, horrified, or offended. Instead, confidently affirm their observations.

Please don't tell the children, but I actually created the *Hues of You* activity book for loving parents, teachers, and caregivers like you to help you confidently approach constructive conversations around skin tone, ethnicity, culture, and race! I've had the privilege of presenting educational workshops in libraries, churches, and classrooms (and even at MOMcon), where I demonstrate fun, engaging, and age-appropriate ways to foster learning around race and skin tones. The response is an enthusiastically expressed need for more how-to instructional tools for braving the shift from color blindness to color consciousness and disrupting harmful racialized messaging. *Hues of You* is one such tool.

For additional resources and teaching models, check out the Learning Community Membership on my website, [brownicity.com](http://brownicity.com). You will also find a list of resources on page 62 of this book.

## TIPS FOR USING THE HUES OF YOU ACTIVITY BOOK

- ☐ Use skin-tone crayons, markers, or pencils.
- ☐ When your children are prompted to name a hue, encourage them to tap into their creativity and exercise their imaginations.
- ☐ The owner of the book gets to choose and name their own skin tones, and everyone else gets to accept their choice.
- ☐ When creating skin-tone names, choose words that have healthy meanings and associations and that are positive, beautiful, and affirming. You and your children can draw inspiration from nature, such as from fruit-bearing trees, food, spices, and precious metals or stones. You can add positive descriptive words like *sun-kissed*, *toasty*, *warm*, *sweetened*, and *rich*.
- ☐ Skin-tone names should be hues of brown. If you need help naming different shades, we have a provided a list at link tk.
- ☐ When necessary, help your children find answers to questions that require a little research or family history.
- ☐ Observe and support creative expression.
- ☐ As you are helping children through the journal, get comfortable answering their questions with questions. Asking “Why do you think that?” or “Can you tell me more?” will give you more context for their reasoning and inquiry.

Think of words and things that make you feel happy.

## HI FRIENDS!

You are smart!

You are brave!

You are creative!

You make the world a  
brighter, better, and more  
beautiful place to live!

I created this activity book in celebration of your imagination and the light you bring to the world. As my children explored the world around them, they asked questions and made observations about the differences in how we look. Each *Hues of You* activity was inspired by our learning journey. Together, we read lots of books to help us understand how we get our skin tones. We also had many talks that helped us appreciate ourselves and our friends as unique little parts of the *big* human story.

By the time you finish *Hues of You*, you will have plenty of words and understanding to keep exploring our multi-hued world. I hope that in some way each activity helps you become a little smarter, a little braver, and a whole lot more creative!

Cheering you on,

Lucretia Carter Berry



## Words TO KNOW

### Skin tone

**Skin tone** is the color of a person's skin. The color of your skin depends on how much melanin it has, where your ancestors lived, and how much sun-light your skin gets.

### Hue

**Hue** can mean either a color like brown or a shade of a color like ebony or toffee.

### Pigment

A **pigment** is a substance that gives color to something.

### Melanin

**Melanin** is a brown pigment that makes your skin, your hair, and the irises of your eyes the colors they are.

You may have heard people with brown skin described as Black or people with peachy-colored skin described as White. But when talking about people, Black and White are the names of racial groups, not colors of skin.

Everyone's skin has a brown pigment called melanin. This means every skin tone is a hue—or shade—of brown! If your skin is more brown, it is because you have more melanin. If your skin is less brown, it's because you have less melanin.

More melanin means more brown. Less melanin means less brown.

You may have also noticed that some skin tones look a little bit yellowish, pinkish, or bluish. This is because of the skin's undertones, which are the natural colors—like gold, peach, pink, or blue—beneath the surface of our skin hues. This creates a wonderful variety of hues for us to recognize and celebrate!

The most important thing to remember, though, is this: No matter what color your skin is, you have the power to name your shade of brown and decide what hue best describes you!

In my family of five, we have five different hues of brown. I have a lot of active melanin with a bronze-golden undertone, so I named my very brown skin tone **mocha bronze**. My husband, Nathan, has less active melanin and named his skin tone **light olive**. Our daughters named their skin tones **peanut butter cookie dough**, **golden caramel**, and **cinnamon spice**.

Notice how we chose happy, positive, and affirming words that reflect nature, spices, precious metals, and food.



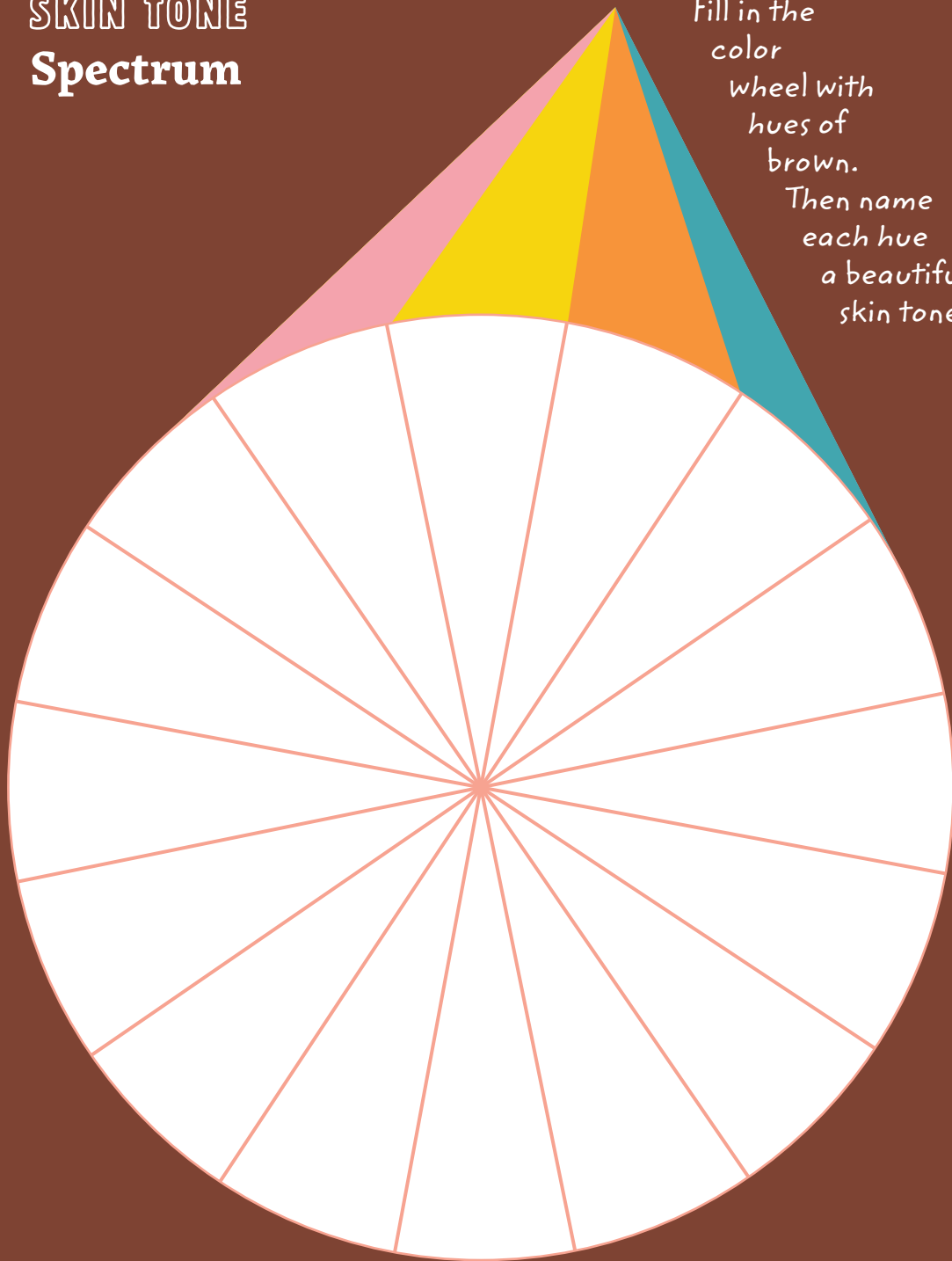
### FUN FACTS

- Freckles are small areas of skin that have more melanin than the skin around them.
- While eumelanin is responsible for brown and black hues, a different kind of melanin called pheomelanin is responsible for red hair.



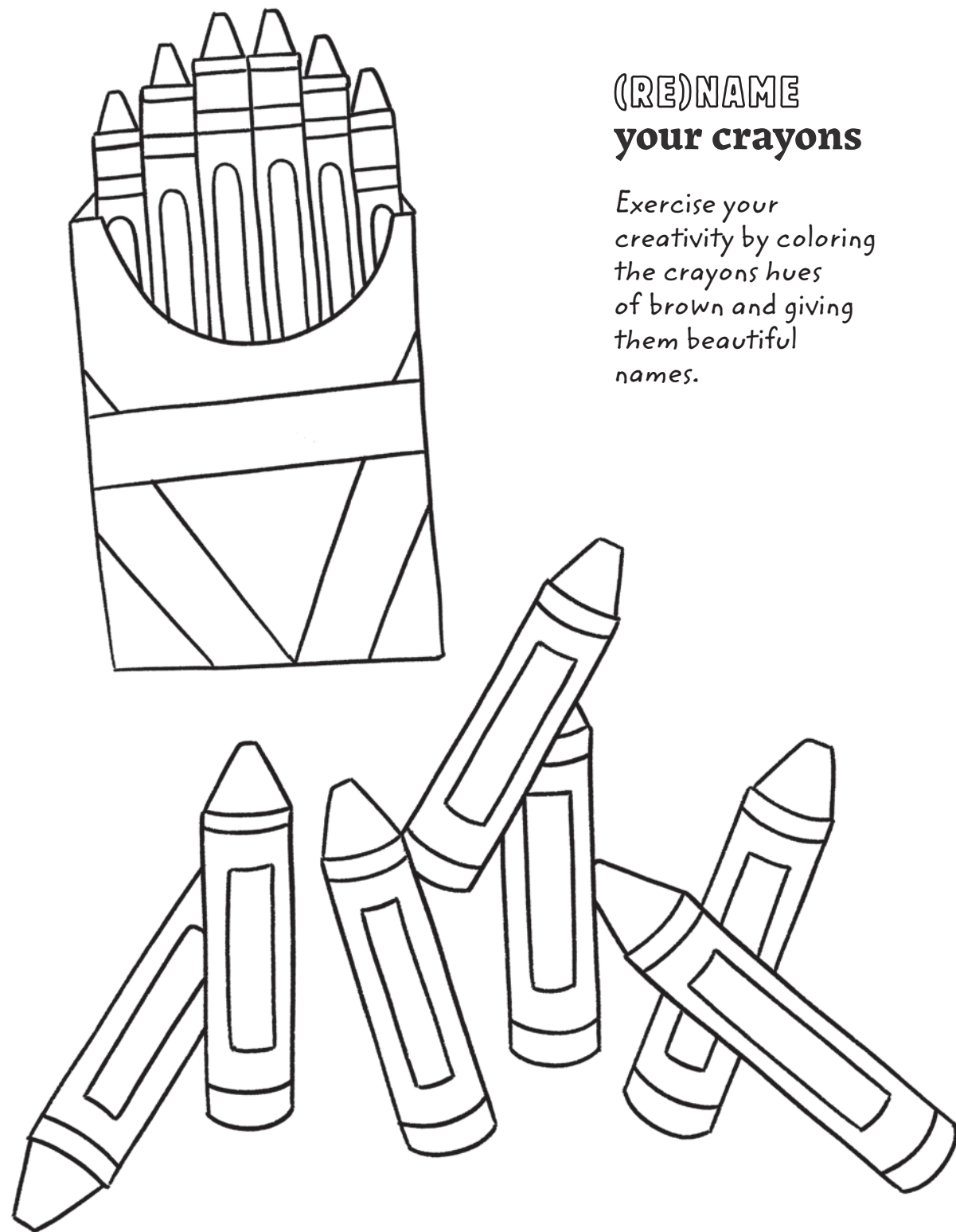
## SKIN TONE Spectrum

Fill in the  
color  
wheel with  
hues of  
brown.  
Then name  
each hue  
a beautiful  
skin tone.



## (RE)NAME your crayons

Exercise your  
creativity by coloring  
the crayons hues  
of brown and giving  
them beautiful  
names.



# HUES OF YOU

*Hello*

**My name is** \_\_\_\_\_.

**My birthday is** \_\_\_\_\_.

**My age is** \_\_\_\_\_.

Let's focus on YOU and your very own hues! Although you may resemble or look like a family member, an ancestor, or a friend, you are uniquely designed. All of YOU, including your skin, hair, and eyes, is full of colorful qualities.

**TRACE** your hand; then color it in  
using a hue that matches the **BACK** of your hand.



Name this beautiful hue:

**TRACE** your hand again; then color it in  
using a hue that matches your **PALM**.

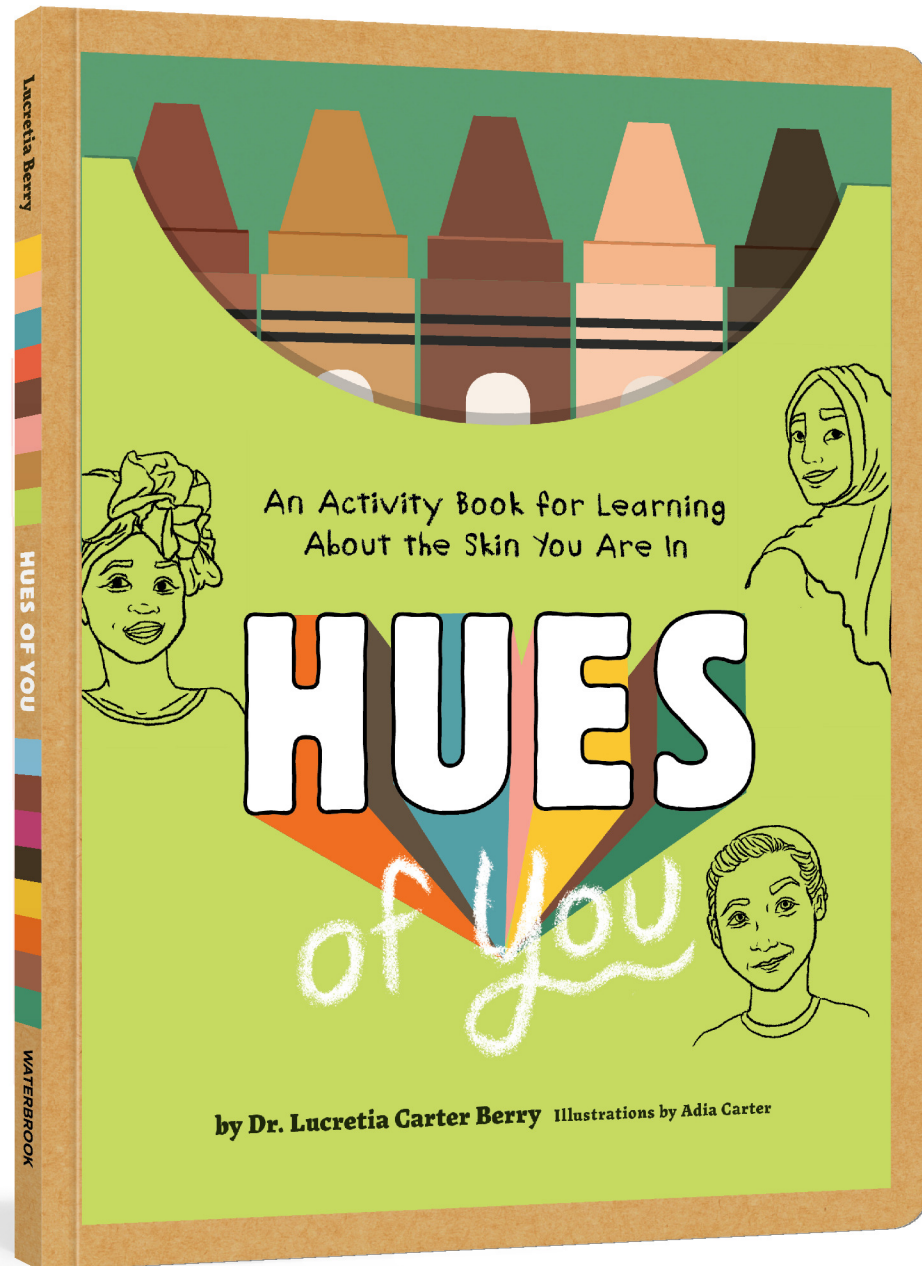


Is the palm  
of your hand  
a different  
hue than the  
back of your  
hand?

Why do you think that is?

Name this beautiful hue:





**Continue reading...order today!!**

**BUY NOW**



**WATERBROOK**