

CHILDREN'S BOOK REVIEW

Reviewed by Carol McDowell

Bear Sees Colors

Written By Karma Wilson

Illustrated By Jane Chapman

New York, NY: Scholastic Press, Inc. 2014

Bear is off on another journey with his friends Mouse, Hare, Badger, Gopher, Mole, Raven, and Owl. This time, author Karma Wilson's Bear is discovering colors—blue, red, green, yellow, and brown—artfully illustrated by Jane Chapman. While all the Bear books in this series describe delightful adventures, this particular story easily lends itself to lessons incorporating music, art, and movement.

Bear and Mouse are out walking and talking, until Bear sees blue. Bear describes all the things that are blue, and then ends with, “Blue, blue everywhere! Can you spy blue with Bear?”

Thus readers are invited to find things around them that are blue. As Bear meets his other friends along the trail, he goes through the same sequence of events, encountering a different color each time. The tale ends as Bear and his friends eat a picnic lunch, and his friends ask readers, “Colors, colors, everywhere! Can you find colors, just like Bear?”

This charming story affords a variety of activities teachers can use in an integrated lesson about color in art and movement, and tone color in music. In the art classroom, children will delight in finding things around them that match the same five colors Bear discovers, and then locating them on the color wheel and discussing how to mix colors to

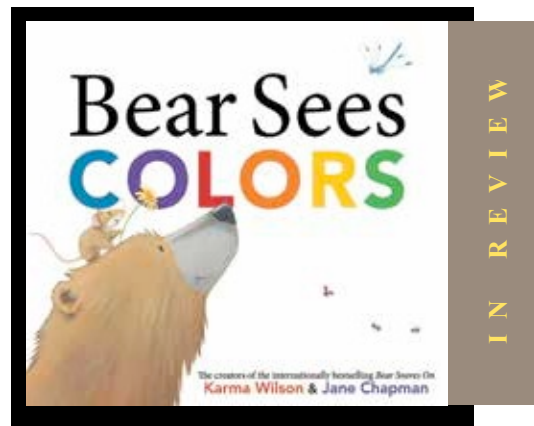
create new ones. After the discussion, they may experiment further by combining two different colors of Play-Doh to make a new color.

To add a movement element, distribute squares of construction paper in different colors. Assign each color a movement; for example, blue = hop, red = clap, yellow = snap, green = tip-toe, brown = jump. Bring in music by selecting a style—jazz, patriotic, Baroque, folk—to play while the children perform the movements.

You can introduce tone color by assigning a different classroom instrument for each animal in the story, à la *Peter and the Wolf*. For example, Bear might be a drum, Mouse a triangle, Badger a guiro, and Hare a maraca (skin, metal, wood shaker). Another idea is to have children play a colored egg shaker, chiquita, boom whacker, or hand bell when their color is mentioned in the story. Build on this concept by inviting volunteers to take turns playing the instruments used in the story—out of sight—while the others guess the instrument's name and which animal it portrayed.

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To enact the picnic, use a bear puppet to “help” you read the story. Give children different colors of pretend food and ask them to feed the bear when their color is read. Compose a little melody on sol-la-mi to sing with the repeated query, “(Color), (color), everywhere! Can you spy (color) with Bear?” Whenever Bear learns a new color in the story, children can practice color recognition by waving a scarf that matches.



This amusing escapade in the life of Bear takes children on a colorful, educational exploration that is readily adaptable to non-arts subject areas as well. It provides a playful, engaging means to help preschool students learn colors, as well as a fun review for primary or ELL students. Karma Wilson's *Bear Sees Colors* is a worthwhile addition to everyone's Bear book collection. ■

CAROL McDOWELL teaches elementary music for the City of St. Charles (MO) School District. She was appointed to the editorial boards of *The Orff Echo* (2008-2016) and *The Missouri Journal of Research in Music Education* (2000-2018), where she also served as editor from 2004 to 2008. Carol has presented workshops and research poster sessions for national and state conventions, and her research articles have been published in various music education journals. Carol has successfully completed three levels of Orff Schulwerk teacher education and Kodály teaching methods.