

The Rainbow Collection:

Let Me Show You

What Colors Can Do

15 new poems

Poetry Written for Children (English)

Palanca Awards 2015

Green Frog

Green jumps like a verb
From a blade
Of a dewy morning leaf
To a field of grass
Swirling in the breeze.
It breathes through the trees,
Dances through the meadows,
Hops like a grasshopper
And prays like a mantis—
Then, it leaps from a tree
Into an old quiet pond
To make the sound
Of water.

Sonorous Red

Red punctuates
And makes bold statements,
Says something, and means it
Like an exclamation point!
Red is a sonorous sound –
Loud, full, deep, and grand;
It is not shy to express
Thoughts, moods, feelings
Even confessions
Of love.

Scent of the Sun

Yellow gives the sun
The scent of ripe mangoes –
Gentle and golden at dawn;
It rises and shines
Like a good morning
In a plate of rice, *chorizo*, and eggs,
Sunny side up –
Served with sweet mangoes
That ends up shining
Brightly on the lips
Of a smile.

Cool Blue

Blue rolls the ocean waves,
Ripples
The surface of a pool;
You dip your toes
In shimmering sapphire, or
Dive into the peaceful calm.
Blue is cool, inviting;
Makes peace, makes friends —
On land, in the air,
Up in the clouds, even under
The sea.

A Dot on White

White quiets everything
Like giant clouds outside
The plane's windowpane;
Soothes the itchy throat
As the Bridal Chorus begins,
Suppresses the cough – Silence!
She walks down the aisle
In gown, lace, and veil.
White is an empty canvas, a page –
Blank, and full of possibilities
Even a dot on it becomes
A clap of thunder,
A rumpus.

Black Is Never Quiet

Black blocks out everything
Even shadows, even dreams
It is as if you closed your eyes –
You are not dead, not asleep
But restless;
Something stirs in the dark
You see nothing but black
Something bubbles, something breathes
Something is getting ready to pounce.
Black may shut everything out
But it is never quiet –
Not in the abyss
Not in the cave
Not in the shadows.

What Orange Really Is

Orange is
A ginger cat –
Playful, upbeat
Trying to get
A goldfish in a bowl,
No drama –
Like a big round fruit
In the sky at sunset,
Like the sound and shape
Of a violin held
Over the shoulder and chin
When you turn your head
At a 45-degree angle –
Hmmm, the smell, the taste
Of sweet and sour pork
Rice in terra-cotta pots –
Look, the rooster's feathers,
The hornbill's beak
Are orange, too!

Baby Blue

Blue is

A lullaby

A loving mother's gaze

A wish like a fairy

When the sky shifts

To an inky shade

Of indigo

To reveal the evening star

The waxing moon – playing

Lead to a countless collection

Of twinkling stars

And hopeful dreams

In little children's

Hearts.

Everybody's Pink

Pink is

A smile

A rosy glow, a healthy blush –

Cute and dainty

A doll, a daisy

A baby mouse maybe –

Quite girlish, but really!

Pink is innocent

Calm and dreamy –

It is, I declare:

For everybody!

Brighter than the Moon

Yellow is
Fireworks
Bursting in the night –
A happy explosion
A dawn – gentle and golden
A new day, a sunny start-over
Warming everything
In its path;
Bathing the earth
In brilliant perfection
Like a field of sunflowers
Smiling, beaming
Exploding brighter
Than the moon.

Green Makes the Flowers...

Green is

The first leaf

A fern frond

A baby plant, a patch of grass –

It creeps; it crawls

Like a worm, a caterpillar –

It inches, or itches

Its way to the sun.

I wish I could say “green”

Without mentioning “grow”

But green, like rain,

Makes all the flowers...

Glow.

Red-letter Day for a Day

Red is

A holiday

A jolly day, a break

From the ordinary,

From the everyday;

It is Christmas, it is Valentine's –

Queso de bola, Santa Claus, wrapped gifts,

Cards with cut out hearts,

Deep friendship, hearts on fire –

Fire trucks, emergency exits

Ambulance sirens blaring, wailing

Warning signs that alert us

Something is too much –

Too much holiday is too much!

Red cannot be ordinary

Or every day, but only special

For a day.

Purple Treats

Purple is
A treat, often sweet
Like *ube*, the water yam
In the *halaya* jam,
Or the star apple we call *caimito*;
What about eggplants
Or purple sweet potatoes, hmmm?
Sometimes, purple is tart
Like the skin of grapes,
Like *duhat*, the java plum.
Sometimes, I think that the sky
When it threatens to rain
Would taste like purple –
Sometimes a little tart,
Sometimes a little sweet,
But always a sweet little treat!

The Yellow Revolution

Yellow is
A street of yellow bells –
Trumpet flowers;
A road paved with exploding
Caballero blooms –
Peacock flowers
Bursting with joy.
In 1986, it was a street
Of people in an avenue
Marching their yellow brick road
To freedom, EDSA, and democracy.
Yellow was a song, a prayer –
It still is – a revolution!
Yellow is the power
Of a people, who will not be
Silenced in the blackness
Of mourning
And dictatorship.

Midnight Blue Is Still Blue

Blue is
The taste of seawater
And tears;
The sound of the ocean
As it whispers something
Secret and soothing
In your ears.
Blue is comfort
In your jeans;
The smell of sunlight
On your blankets and sheets.
The sky outside your window
Is 24/7 blue
Even when you sleep—
Bright and light at daytime,
Dark inky indigo at night;
But midnight blue
Of a moonlit night sky
Is blue, too.

Nothing follows.