



## january inspiration... ROYGBIV

Does it ring a bell? We all remember the early days of Kindergarten when our teachers passed out a Crayola "8" Box of crayons. It had all of the essentials plus black. We learned that grass and trees are green, the sun is yellow, and water is blue. Color...it was simple and FUN!

A year or two later, they added more colors. We got the 16 and/or the 24 pack. Those packs included yellow/green, blue/green, carnation pink, etc... because, well...there are a lot of colors in this world, so many more than we realized, gripping those original 8. Around the Third grade (I'm guessing here), we were introduced to the Color Wheel. The way I was taught to remember the order was ROYGBIV (pronounced Roy G Biv). Red/orange/yellow/green/blue/indigo/violet. How can anyone ever forget that?

Once ROYGBIV entered the picture, we were now using a 48 crayon box and if we showed real artistic promise, we received a 64 box from our parents for a Holiday or Birthday gift. That about does it for most people's color education.

If you took art classes in high school, you learned secondary and tertiary colors that were added to the original ROYGBIV of the color wheel. Professionals in fields that work with color study other color theories, based on dyes, light, and historical trends. Design students need to know color schemes such as Monochromatic, Complimentary, Analogous, Split Complimentary, and Triad.

Relax...that is more information than most people need to know and they can breathe deeply knowing that their designers' knowledge of color far exceeds theirs. That said, it is helpful when the color conversation comes up, clients can be a bit more specific then, "I am NOT a red person, but I love green". As we all know in real life, red can be the color of blood, a fire engine or the Nantucket Red of your neighbors trousers. If someone claims green for his/her favorite color is it Emerald Green, Olive Green, Chartreuse, Celadon? As you can see, the crayon box gets more complicated...48, 64, 120!



Professionals sometimes forget that not everyone works with color every day, and when asked, they are sometimes hard pressed to come up with vocabulary to describe their color preferences. I once described a color I had selected for a client as "Heliotrope". Even though this gentleman was a "Blue Guy", he had no idea how to interpret the color "Heliotrope". It got worse when I explained that it was named after a Victorian flower in the Blue/Violet family. I showed him the paint chip, but he just couldn't imagine himself having a "Heliotrope" Entrance Foyer. I then showed him another blue from a different paint deck. This blue (almost identical to the first) was called "Summer Breeze" a name they assigned for their color #2067-40. One company's "Heliotrope" is another company's "Summer Breeze".



Memories and associations most definitely affect our color preferences. "Heliotrope" reminded him of his Great Aunt Hattie, where "Summer Breeze" brought back associations of the summers he spent on Long Island...blue skies, blue water, and blueberry pie. It is easy to understand. If a project calls for the color pink, how can you show a client a pink named "Pink Eraser", "Little Piggy", or "Elephant Pink" ( yes, they are existing color names)? Could you ever select a pink that is the color of the underbelly of an Elephant? It is hard to even imagine. But pink #2087-70....now that's the ticket!

Speaking of pink, the iconic Diana Vreeland once pronounced, "Pink is the Navy Blue of India". I wonder what my "Blue Guy" would think of that?

**Happy Coloring!**

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