



# black is brown is tan

*Arnold Adoff, Emily Arnold McCully (Illustrations)*

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**black is brown is tan** Arnold Adoff , Emily Arnold McCully (Illustrations)

Brown-skinned momma, the color of chocolate milk and coffee pumpkin pie, whose face gets ginger red when she puffs and yells the children into bed. White-skinned daddy, not white like milk or snow, lighter than brown, With pinks and tiny tans, whose face gets tomato red when he puffs and yells their children into bed. Children who are all the colors of the race, growing up happy in a house full of love. This is the way it is for them; this is the way they are, but the joy they feel extends to every reader of this book.

*Black is brown is tan* is a story poem about being, a beautiful true song about a family delighting in each other and in the good things of the earth.

## black is brown is tan Details

Date : Published 1973 by HarperCollins

ISBN : 9780064432696

Author : Arnold Adoff , Emily Arnold McCully (Illustrations)

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# From Reader Review black is brown is tan for online ebook

## Mackenzie says

This book is about a bi-racial family with a white dad and an African American mom. The two children are mixed. I think this book would be appropriate to use in the classroom, because it does a nice job explaining and showing how race doesn't matter. The pictures depict laughter and happiness, even in the midst of a two race household. The grandparents on both sides sit together, happy and in tune with one another. The storyline shows how each member of the family is different in their own way, yet they come together as one family. These characters and this situation is real life, which is why I think this book can be relatable to many students. It's important to show diversity in the classroom, and this book does a great job of doing that.

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## Seok Hyeon says

Nearly all the people in my country, Korea, is yellow-skinned Asian. When I was elementary school student, there was just one brown-skinned boy in my school. He seemed different from others, students disliked to be friend with him and bullied him. At that time, I was so young, I couldn't accept him like other students. I thought of him after I found the book, felt so sorry to him and I want to learn more about multi-culture. The book showed diversity in the family but how they love each other. This is an important topic because many families are diverse nowadays, and the rate of diverse family is still on increasing. The book can help students to understand the diverse family and accept it.

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## J says

This is a poem with illustrations. It's a strange poem and I wasn't a fan of it at all. I wish there were more books with black woman + white man couples that didn't focus on race or skin color. There need to be more books with this combination where the couple is just a couple and the skin colors HAPPEN to be different, no commentary on it necessary. Four stars purely because it's hard to find books with black woman + white man couples.

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## Julia says

It took a little bit for me to figure out how to approach reading this book, but once I did I loved it! It's always great to see a family that looks like yours depicted in a children's book. This was an engaging read for me and my daughter.

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## Ursula says

A beautiful portrait of a family that has beautiful different parents that make even more beautiful children and how beautiful life is. :D

Read & share with your beautiful family!

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### **Brooke Lewis says**

Fantastic, poetic introduction to bi-racial families. Black is Brown is Tan uses simplified language that children can understand without much thought. The constant use of metaphors help skin color become tangible and relatable. The book shows both the black, white, and tan family members getting along wonderfully. It also shows both the mother and father engaging in cooking as well as outdoor activities, this prevents the book from setting patricarichal tones. The family becomes relatable to all families through the emotions they go through. It includes examples of playfulness, frustration, and love. Black is Brown is Tan is a great way to introduce all children learning about diverse families.

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### **Errin Tucker says**

I gave this book 3 stars because I had some difficulty understanding the book in the beginning. It is considered to be in the genre of poetry. It wasn't until the end that I understood what the book was really about. This book is written for ages I and above.

The story was about a family where the mom is African American and the dad is Caucasian, therefore the children are bi-racial. It goes into more detail by showing the grandparents and showing how diverse the family truly is.

Overall the theme of the book was very good. I liked how they showed diversity in the family but how they all still loved each other. This is an important topic because so many families are diverse at this day in age. I enjoyed the pictures because it showed how everyone of all walks of life can get along. The textures used in the book were exceptional. I think that they word choice might be a little too hard for the some children to understand. But the overall story was good.

This can be a very important topic to be discussed in a classroom. Understanding diversity at a young age is important. Knowing that it's okay for someone to be a different race or look different. Also that families come in all different shapes and colors but that people should except people for who they are not based on what they look like.

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### **Abbey Milhouse-cunningham says**

This beautiful book depicts a multiracial family through poetry. The main characters are an African American mom, White father, and two mixed children. Throughout the book, they are seen doing typical family-oriented activities (ex.combing hair, kissing and hugging parents good-bye, sitting around the kitchen table). This story reiterates the idea that race is just a color and not a person. Meaning, we should see pass color. As a literacy teacher, I could use this story in various ways. For example, I could use it to introduce

the genre of poetry to my students. I could also use it to talk about the concepts of family and race. Students can interact with this book by bringing in photos of their families to share with the class. Not only will this make the book come alive, but they will be able to see more racial and family diversity. The author, Arnold Adoff, relates to the content of the story, because he is a White male who married an African American woman. The two of them married during a time in which African Americans were considered inferior (1960s). Therefore, it took guts for them both to stand by each others side in the name of love. His life story in itself teaches bravery, courage, and stress the importance of standing up for what is right. His life-story could also serve as a history lesson for the students. It is always a plus when two subjects can be addressed in one lesson. It is certain to say that Arnold Adoff knows first hand the reality of race and its impact on marriage. I applaud him for nicely transitioning his personal experiences into a children's book that can help not only children but adults, as well. The illustrator, Emily Arnold McCully, is very talented, as well.

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### **Rena Williams says**

This book features an interracial couple with two beautiful children. It is a great family book and it shows that families come in all colors. It also proves that children are a blend of both of their parents taking on their unique features. This would be great to read to biracial children who are struggling to find their identity.

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### **Kourtney says**

This is a nonfiction book, written in poetic form. A beautiful poem that focuses on the love of a family. The young boy has an African American mother and a white father, which he describes beautifully. He says that his father may be white, but he is pinker and tanner than plain white. It talks about how color makes no difference in families, and that color is just color. This book is a great book to teach younger children about race. I enjoyed reading this book, even though at first it was a struggle to catch the flow of the poetry. It is a great book for younger children because it rhymes race with parts of the body and how the color of skin doesn't matter if it's different, just like a nose, or an ear. The story highlights the fact that even though our complexions may differ as people we are no different than another. We may look different but we are the same and the love is the same. The illustrations pair closely to the text and it includes characters that are relate-able. This will be interesting for children because of the illustrations and the fun words used to describe themselves.

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### **Melissa says**

This is a fictional book. I think this book may be confusing to kids if they read it on their own and they may not find it interesting. The words have spaces in them and some of the sentences are not complete sentences. If i teacher was reading this to her students then i do not think it will be a problem and they will stay interested in the story. This book is more for older kids because they may understand the text better. There is not really a stated problem in the story but i think the problem is that the kids do not understand why their family is different from others that may have same race couples. Throughout the book the parents tell the kids that their family is great and how race is nothing to be ashamed of. The illustrations are good but i think they could be better because kids may not understand the words so they look at the pictures for help. The illustrations are kind of washed out like but i think they did that because they want you to focus more on the words. The father is white and the mother is black and they did not go into details about their culture. Overall

i would not reminder this book to be read until fourth or fifth grade because that why you can understand it better and also ask questions and leave the students something to consider.

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### **Cassidy Goddard says**

Black is brown is tan, is a great children's book to use to talk about race with students. This book is about an African American mother, a Caucasian father, and their two children. This book is in the form of poetry, so it was a little harder to understand, but overall it was a great book. Arnold Adoff uses the kind of "I am" form of poetry throughout this book. This book describes who the mother is, and the color of her skin. I like the fact they relate it to certain shade of browns and whites instead of just thinking their is one shade of each. The mother says her skin is like chocolate milk, while the father says his skin is not as quit white as snow. I think this shows an awesome point to the students that the color of peoples skin does not matter. Everyone can and should be loved no matter the color of skin. This book was beautifully illustrated and properly portrays the cultures of the family. This is a great book to read with students to talk about race and accepting everyone no matter the color of their skin.

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### **Xaviera Hanif says**

I love how this book begins with the illustrations showing a mixed family! From what it seems like it shows an african american mother and a caucasian father. The kids have a tan skin color! The colors of the illustrations really point out the different skin tones which is great! :) I have personally never read many children's books promoting interracial couples/families. I think this is a great children's book to have at home or in a classroom, considering that our society is changing into a very diverse place with different races coming together beautifully! This story shows that having a interracial family works just as easily as a "same color" family. It shows them going to the beach, getting ready for bed, eating breakfast together, reading books together, etc. The illustrations show the family being very happy! I think that this book does a great job in trying to keep the child's attention! This is great for young children who can also relate with having a diverse family! This book promotes a positive understanding of interracial families, there are no negative stereotypes found! The lifestyles of the characters in the book are simple, which implies that an interracial family works just as easily as any other!

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### **LaDonna says**

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As my youngest gets older, I find it necessary to make sure he understands how race is viewed in our country. I don't want to take away his innocence but I need him to understand that race isn't defined or referred to as colors you find in a Crayola box. More often than not, race isn't the afterthought. It's what people see first and often draw conclusions about. Yes, the conversation adds a sense layer to his world, but I must prepare my kids for the way things are. Nonetheless, I still make sure to leave the door open to discuss where we'd like the world to be.

The book, considered non-rhyming poetry, centers around an interracial couple and their children. My son and I enjoyed reading *Black is brown is tan* together. We spent more time talking about the similarities our

families share versus the actual different shades we see in both. But, when it's all said and done we had a good talk about race and how society defines it. Maybe, one of these days, we'll move away from these artificial labels. But, until then, I need my kids to understand what race means in America. Arnold Adoff's book serves as a good icebreaker.

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## **Taylor says**

"Black is brown is tan" is a poetic piece. "I am black I am a brown sugar gown a tasty tan and coffee pumpkin pie with dark brown eyes and almond ears and my face gets ginger red when I puff and yell into bed" (2002, pp. 10). This fun loving piece is a natural introduction to multicultural families. this tale shows equality within a family, which is highlighted in many interracial families. My favorite part of this piece would be the very descriptive backgrounds that are given for both the African-American mother and Caucasian father. These descriptions not only show the readers the importance of love and equality, but it uses descriptive alternatives which allow teachers to ask questions about the meaning of words with their students. Also, while continuously promoting uniqueness we are introduced to many of the words being spaced out which shows an equal meaning across the board.

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