

Common Color Associations and Symbolism Found in Literature and Art

Color	Tone	Western Culture	Eastern Culture	Native Cultures	Language Use
Red	Warm	Passion, Excitement, Danger, Love, Lust, Life, Stop, Blood, War, Sin, Christmas (<i>when paired with Green</i>); Victory (Egypt),	Good Luck, Celebration, Bridal Color, Purity (India) Communism (China) The sun and the empire (when paired with white in Japan) life force, preservation, the sacred, blood, fire (Buddhism)	Triumph, Success (Native American) Sun (Navajo) Mourning, Heightened spiritual and political mood, sacrifice, struggle (Africa)	Red-neck, Red-handed, Red-hot, Paint the town red, Seeing red; In the Red, Wave a Red Flag in front of a bull, Roll out the red-carpet, Red-eye, Red flag, Red Herring, Red in the face, Red tape, one red cent, Red-faced, Red Letter Day (Britain), Scarlet Woman
Blue	Cool	Heaven/Sky , Virgin Mary, Peace, Calm, Stability, Water (sea or lake), Depression, Sadness, Conservative, Corporate, Military or Police, Little Boys (Baby Blue); Poison, Bruised (<i>when paired with blue</i>), Life and rebirth (Egypt)	Heaven, Spirituality (Iran) coolness, infinity, ascension, purity, healing (Buddhism)	Defeat, Trouble (Cherokees) Spiritual sanctity, good fortune, peacefulness, harmony, love (Africa)	Blue blood, Blue Stocking, Blue moon, Blue Monday, Blue ribbon, the Blues, Something borrowed, Something blue, Black and Blue, Blue in the Face, Out of the Blue, Talk a blue streak, Men in Blue, Blue-pencil something, Once in a Blue Moon, True Blue, Sing the blues, Blue-collar, Blue Streak, Blue Laws, Blue Funk, Blue Chip Stocks
Yellow/Gold	Warm	Hope, Hazards, Coward; Sun, Cheerfulness, Mourning or indestructible (Egypt); Dishonesty, Deceit,	Nourishing (China) Courage (Japan) Sense of being rooted, Renunciation, Earth (Buddhism)	Merchants (India) Sanctity, preciousness, royalty, wealth, spirituality, vitality, fertility (Africa) Trouble, Failure (Native Americans)	Yellow-livered, yellow-bellied, To have a yellow streak, Golden boy, golden opportunity, golden handshake, Yellow journalism, Yellow Peril, Golden nectar
Green	Cool	Spring, New Birth, Nature, Tranquility, Jealousy, Envy, Money, Wealth, Neophyte, Go, St. Patrick's Day, Ireland, Christmas (<i>when paired with Red</i>)	Infidelity, Exorcism (China); Islam (India) Eternal Life (Japan) Balance, harmony, vigor, youth, action (Buddhism)	Growth, vitality, fertility, prosperity, fruitfulness, abundant health and spiritual rejuvenation (Africa)	Green thumb, Green with envy, Greenhorn, Green light, Green around the gills, Green-eyed monster, Grass is always greener on the other side, Go green, Green behind the ears
Purple/ Maroon	Warm	Royalty, Luxury, Spirituality, Nobility, Ceremony, Mystery, Wisdom, Enlightenment; Female Sexuality, Courage	Mourning (Thailand)	Healing, rituals, Feminine, Power to repel malevolent spirits (Africa)	Purple Heart, Purple Passion, Purple Prose

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Orange	Warm	Creativity, autumn, Sunset, Excitement, Flamboyance, Attention-seeking, Halloween (<i>when paired with black</i>) Protestant Religion (Ireland)	Death		
White	Cool	Purity, Peace, Angels, Good Guy, Hospitals, Doctors, Brides, Winter; Cold; Clinical Sterility; Surrender, Omnipotence (Egypt)	Death (Japan) Learning, knowledge, purity, longevity (Buddhism)	Peace, Happiness (Native Americans) Contact with ancestral spirits, deities, spiritual entities such as ghosts (Africa)	White as a Ghost, White as driven snow, carte blanche; Raise the white flag, white elephant, white lie, whitewash something, white papers, white-collar, White Magic
Black	Warm	Funeral, Death, Disease, Famine, Sorrow, Bad guy, Evil, Rebellion, Elegance, Outcast, Sophistication, Power, Sexuality, Solemnity; Bad Luck, Misfortune, Halloween (<i>when paired with orange</i>); Life/Rebirth (Egypt) Bruised (<i>when paired with blue</i>) Opposite of White (<i>when paired with white</i>)	Young Boys (China), Killing, Anger (India) Primordial darkness, hate (Buddhism)	Intensified spiritual energy, communion with the ancestral spirits, antiquity, spiritual maturity and spiritual potency (Africa) Death (Native Americans)	Black death, Blackout, Black cat, Blacklist, Blackball, Black market, Black tie, Blackmail, Black belt, Kettle calling the pot black, Black and Blue, Black and White, Black sheep, In black and white; In the black, Black Magic, Black look
Gray/Silver	Warm	Old Age, Purification, Security, Reliability, Intelligence, Staidness, Modesty, Maturity, Conservative, Sadness, and Boredom, Ambiguity		Gray: Spiritual cleansing—ash (Africa) Silver: serenity, purity, joy (Africa)	Gray area, gray-beard, gray matter, Silver screen, Born with a silver spoon in their mouth, silver lining
Ivory	Warm	Beauty, Fine Craftsmanship			Tinkle the ivories (play piano), Ivory tower
Brown	Warm	Earth, Hearth, Dullness, the Natural, Sense of Isolation, Strength; Stability, the Outdoors, Endurance, Comfort			Brown-out, Brown-nose, Brownbag, Brownie points
Pink	Cool	Little Girls; Dawn, Innocence, Good Health, Love, Romance, Beauty, Femininity; naivety, bright and positive	Marriage	Tenderness, calmness, pleasantness, and sweetness (Africa)	In the pink, rose-colored glasses, Pink slip, Seeing Pink Elephants, Tickled pink, Pink-collar, pinkies, rosy future
Rainbow		Fresh Beginning, Dreams and Wishes, Path to riches as in the pot of gold, Tolerance for diversity	Nirvana		Chase rainbows, rainbow bridge, somewhere over the rainbow

Compiled by Desiree Hamill,
Highland High School