

Making Friends Is an

Art!

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To Joy – EGTBOK

~Love, Julia

BOYS TOWN
Press

Boys Town, Nebraska



My name is **Brown**.

I spend a lot
of my time in a
pencil box with
a bunch of
other colors.

“Well, I see lots to like:

You’re tall.

You’re sharp,

and you get to be **Brown!**

Lucky you!!”

“How is being **Brown** lucky?”

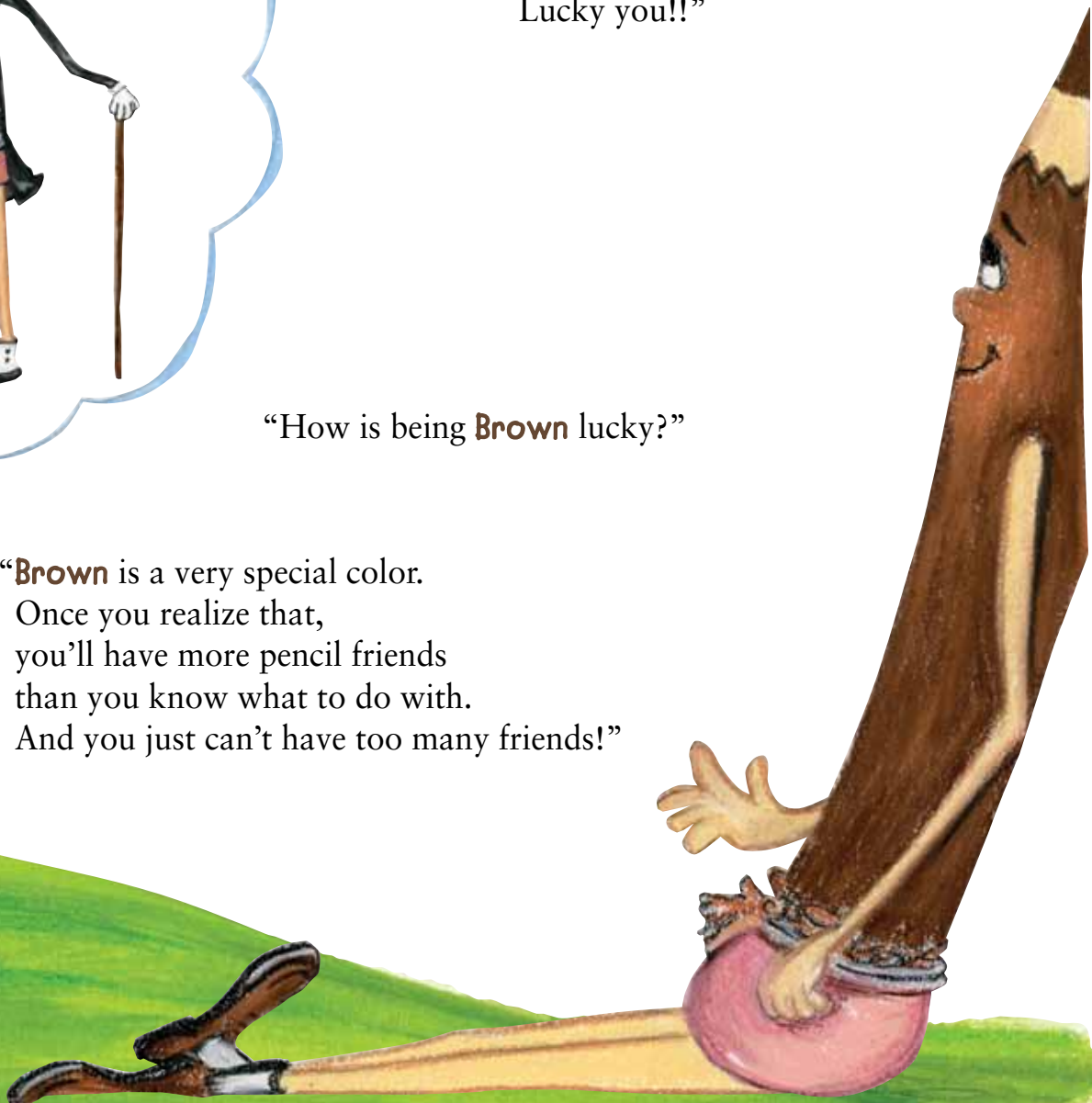
“**Brown** is a very special color.

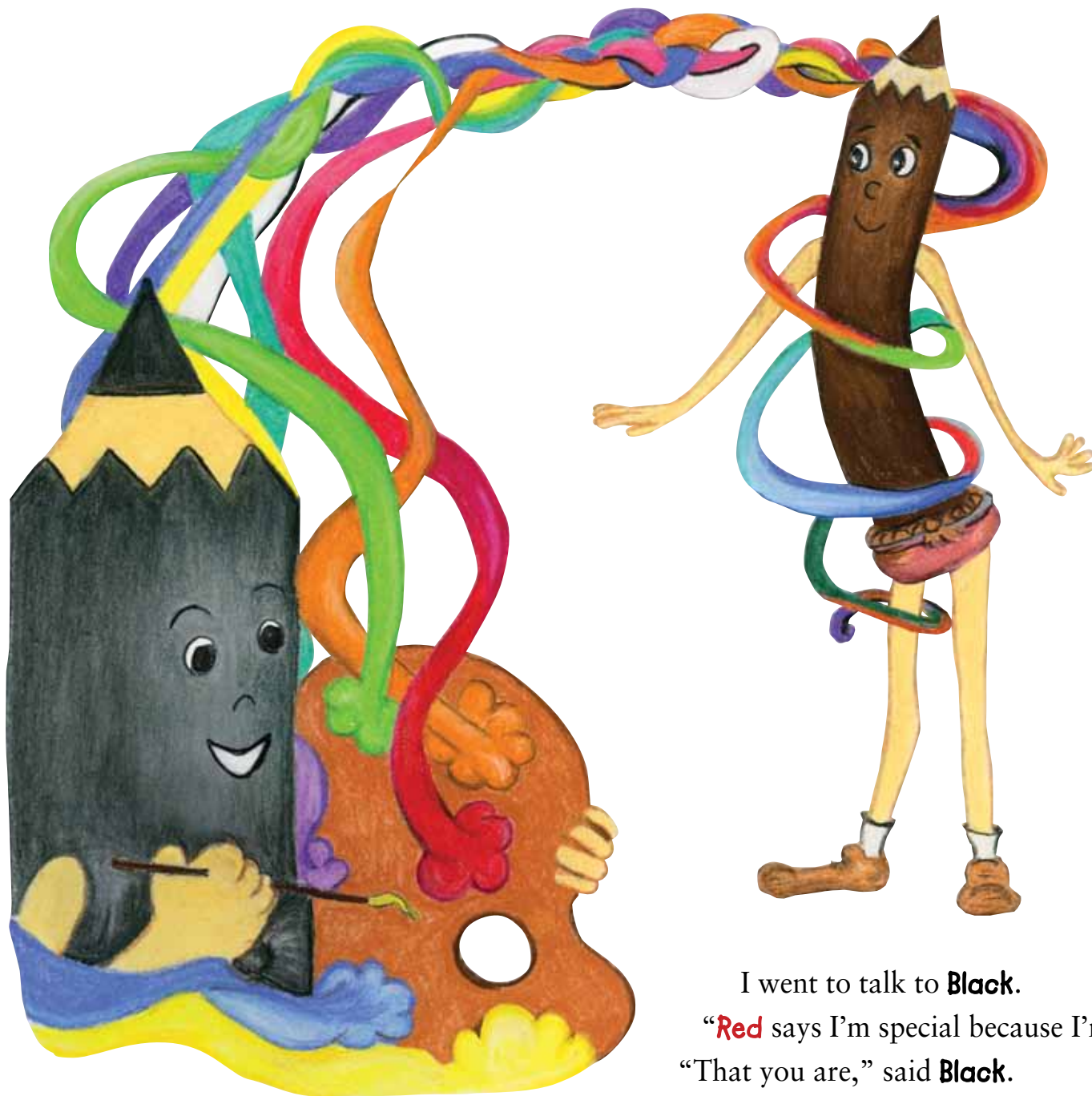
Once you realize that,

you’ll have more pencil friends

than you know what to do with.

And you just can’t have too many friends!”





I went to talk to **Black**.
“**Red** says I’m special because I’m **Brown**.”
“That you are,” said **Black**.
“Why?” I asked.

“Haven’t you noticed that when all of us are mixed together we make **Brown**?
You are a combination of all the colors. You just don’t realize it yet,
but you have everything inside you that it takes to be a great friend.”

Tips for Parents, Teachers, and Counselors



FRIENDSHIPS ARE VERY IMPORTANT when it comes to our emotional health! A lack of friends can have devastating effects on a child. Children who struggle with making and keeping friends often experience mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. They are also more likely to get into trouble and drop out of school.

To a child, having even just one good friend can make a huge difference. Research shows it is not the quantity of friends children have that matters, it's the quality of even one or two good relationships. You can help your children or students become better at making and keeping friends by teaching them three basic social skills:

- **How to break the ice with kids they haven't met before.**
- **How to act positively with others.**
- **How to manage conflict constructively.**

To teach these skills to a child, you must first figure out what the child is already doing right and then what the child needs to learn to do better. Specific needs vary from child to child and situation to situation. Here are some tips:

1 Observe your child objectively in social settings and compare his interactions to those of well-liked children.

2 Isolate the skill(s) that your child needs to learn or use more effectively. For example, does your child interrupt others, always try to “be the boss,” act aggressively toward others, or cry

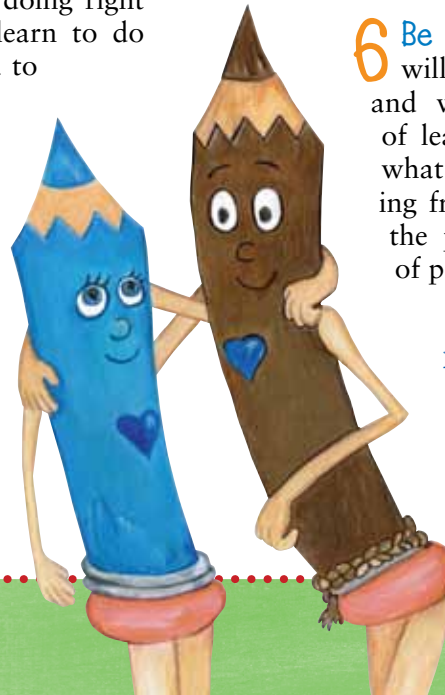
and pout when things don't go his way? Or, is your child excessively shy and quiet around other children, afraid to try new activities, or reluctant to join a group?

3 Explain the steps of the skill to your child. Relate the skill to his world-view by attaching it to a situation the child has experienced. Demonstrate how to effectively use the skill. (For example: “You told me there's a new student in your class that you'd like to know and be friends with. If you want to introduce yourself to him, look at him, smile, and say something like ‘Hi, my name is Jason. Would you like to play catch with me during recess?’”)

4 Help your child practice the skill. (“Now pretend I'm the new student and introduce yourself to me. What would you say?”)

5 Give your child constructive feedback. Always start by telling your child what he did right and then what he can improve on. Remember to teach ... not criticize.

6 Be patient. Teaching social skills will never be as easy as it sounds, and we are all at different levels of learning. Always try to practice what you preach. Remember: Making friends is an ART! – so get out the pencils, practice, and use lots of paper!!!



For more parenting information, visit:

parenting.org
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