

Colour and décor

1 The words in the lists below are all synonyms of, or closely related to, which colours?

- | | | | | | |
|----|---------|------------|----------|---------|--------|
| a. | scarlet | ruddy | ruby | crimson | ginger |
| b. | emerald | olive | lime | | |
| c. | marble | chalk | pale | pearl | ivory |
| d. | coal | ebony | jet | ink | |
| e. | coffee | sun-tanned | brunette | khaki | |
| f. | straw | butter | sandy | canary | lemon |

Now answer these questions.

Which words describe precious stones?

Which describe things you eat and drink?

Which of the colours above would you collocate with the words below?

cheeks hair lips skin a uniform

2 Match the colour to the emotion or state below.

green blue white yellow pink red

- I'm feeling a bit depressed at the moment.
- I was so angry!
- I'm so jealous of you!
- He's a complete coward – scared of everything.
- The children looked very healthy.
- He was so shocked

Can you rewrite the phrases above, using an idiomatic phrase, which includes one of the colours?

3 Complete the phrases with the words *black* or *white*.

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| a _____ look | a _____ lie |
| _____ hot | a _____ eye |
| the _____ market | the _____ sheep of the family |
| a _____ wedding. | _____ wine. |

Now complete the sentences with the phrases above.

- In this country, you can't buy such things legally. You'll have to get them on _____.

- b. I must have said something stupid. My girlfriend gave me _____.
- c. Don't touch it. You'll burn your hand badly. It's _____.
- d. 'What would you like to drink?' '_____, please.'
- e. He punched me in the face and gave me _____.
- f. I couldn't tell her the truth. She would have been very upset. So I told her _____.
- g. His brothers and sisters are doctors, teachers and lawyers, but he's been in and out of prison all his life, and has never had a job. He's _____.
- h. I'd like the dress, bridesmaids, everything traditional when I get married. I'd like _____.

4 Complete the gaps with the words below.

moon pitch sheet beetroot

- a. He went as white as a _____. He was so scared.
- b. It was as black as _____. It was so dark.
- c. He went as red as a _____. He was so embarrassed.
- d. It only happens once in a blue _____. In other words, almost never.

5 Read the passage. Choose the best word in each case.

Decorating a new flat

I've decided to redecorate my flat. I love wonderful *vibrant/lurid* colours so I'm going to *paint/dye* the living room a *brilliant/subtle* red colour. I've bought a new hall carpet, which is green *with a hint of blue/with a bluish tint*, and I'm going to give the hallway a new *coat/level* of paint to match. I've decided to paint the bedrooms white with a *splash/riot* of colour provided by red and blue cushions and throws – nothing too dramatic, though. I think colours in bedrooms should be *restful/vivid*.

6 Imagine that you are going to redecorate your bedroom. Think about the following

What colours are you going to paint it?

Which of the following will you change, and what colours will they be?

Carpets	furniture	rugs	curtains
throws	cushions	bedspreads	

Which of the following will you add to improve the style and décor of your room?

vases	ornaments	potted plants
framed photos	lamps and lampshades	

Interview your partner.

7 Write a description of your favourite room.

Using the Macmillan English Advanced Learner's Dictionary and CD ROM

If you have access to the Macmillan English Advanced Learner's Dictionary and CD ROM, try the following quiz. You can find all the answers by finding the key word *colour*, and following the various links. If you don't have the dictionary see how you get on with the quiz.

Colour Dictionary Quiz

- 1 What are you if you are *off-colour*?
- 2 What's the difference between a *deep* colour and a *sombre* colour?
- 3 What sort of things do children *colour in*?
- 4 What does it mean if you want to *see the colour of someone's money*?
- 5 What are the *primary colours*?
- 6 If you like *local colour* on holiday, what are you looking for?
- 7 What is *colourful language*?
- 8 What is a *colourless person* like?
- 9 What's the difference between *shade* and *tone*?
- 10 What is a *colour supplement*?
- 11 Which of the following is positive: *gaudy*, *vibrant*, *garish*?