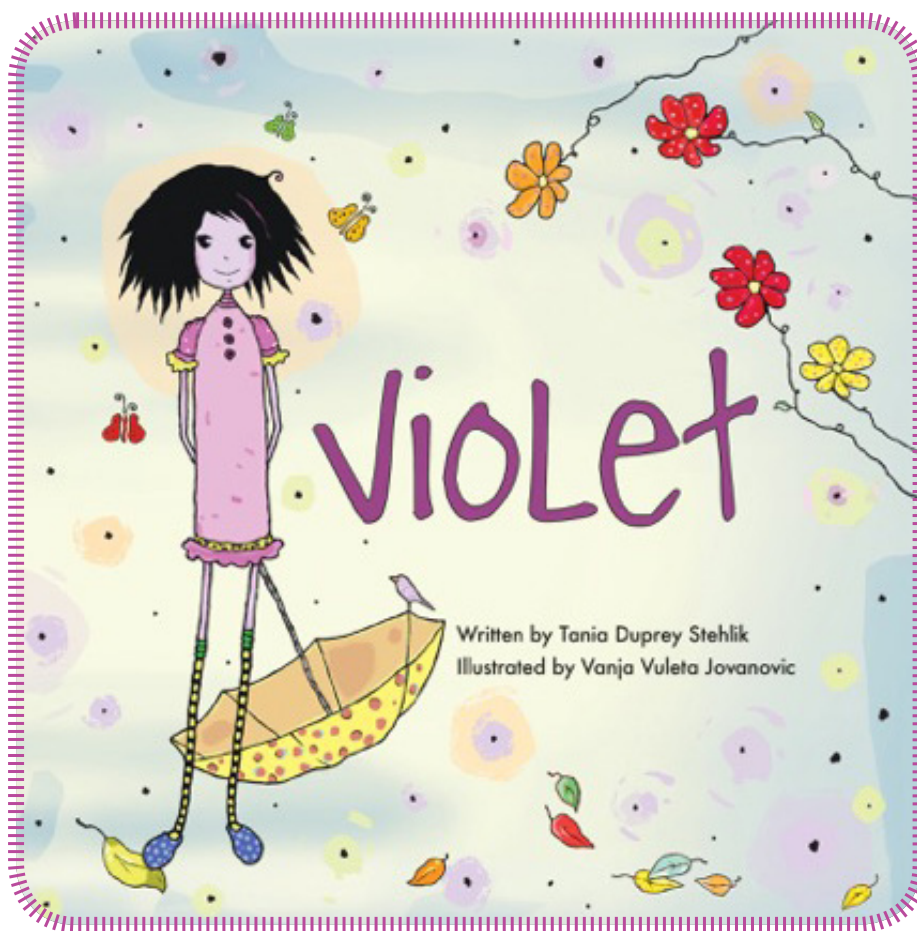


AGES 5-8 \ GRADES 1-3

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# Violet

Written by Tania Duprey Stehlik  
and  
Illustrated by Vanja Vuleta Jovanovic



## TEACHING GUIDE

by  
Lawrence Swartz

Second Story Press

[www.secondstorypress.ca/resources](http://www.secondstorypress.ca/resources)

## SUMMARY

When Violet's father comes to pick her up at school, one of her classmates asks: "How come your dad is blue and you're not?" Violet has never even thought about this before. Her mother is red and her father is blue—so why is she violet?

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- | Social Justice, Diversity, and Equity
- | Race
- | Ethnic Origin
- | Identity
- | Acceptance and Inclusiveness
- | Colour Theory

## VOCABULARY

- | contagious
- | dread
- | flurry
- | shrug

## PREPARING TO READ VIOLET

Do you know how the colour purple made? What are some different names for the colour purple? Who is wearing the colour purple today?

What does the expression, "fitting in" mean to you? Is "fitting in" always a good thing? Is it as good or even better to be different? Are acceptance and fitting in the same thing?

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

At the beginning of the story, Violet tells her mother that her stomach hurts, and she doesn't want to go to school. Why might Violet complain to her mother about being ill?

Why did Violet think that giving away her lunch might make her some new friends? Is this a good idea?

How do we know that Violet's mother cares about her daughter's feelings?

Draw students' attention to a page or a page spread of illustrations. Ask: How do the illustrations in this picture book match the text? What new information do we learn by looking at the illustrations?

Violet's mother explains, "People should like you for who you are, not what colour you are." Is this a hard lesson for Violet to learn? Why might some people have difficulty liking people who are different from them?

Did this story remind you of stories from your own life? From other books or films? From well-known personalities or athletes?

This is a story about being different. Sometimes we have an opinion about others without knowing much about them. Sometimes our perceptions are based on our experiences and beliefs. This is called bias. How does the story of Violet help us to understand perceptions and bias?

## RESPONDING TO VIOLET

### THINKING STEMS: Written and Oral Responses

Have students use the following thinking stems to share their responses to the picture book *Violet*. Once completed, students can work in groups to share their personal responses to the story.

I feel. . .

I remember/I am reminded of. . .

I hope. . .

I wonder. . .

### PERSONAL NARRATIVE: Names as Identity/Oral and Written

In this story we learn that Violet gets her name from her father who is blue and her mother who is red. Students can orally share stories about their own names by considering one or more of the following:

What is your full name?

How did you get your name?

What is the meaning of your name?

Do you know your name in other languages?

Do you have a nickname? How did you get this nickname?

If you could choose a different first name to have, what name might you choose? Why?

What, if anything, is unique about the spelling of your first name? Your last name?

After telling a story, students can write or share, if they choose to, a personal narrative that gives information about their name.

### PERSUASIVE WRITING: Reviewing and Promoting *Violet*

Students can write a letter to a teacher, librarian, or someone they know outlining why this picture book can be shared to help readers understand race, heritage, and/or diversity better. The following outline can be used to write the letter:

Summarize the story.

Why was Violet confused about her heritage?

What lesson(s) did Violet learn in this story?

Who might be interested in reading this story? Why?

### TRANSFORMING TEXT: Creating Graphic Text

Have students imagine that this picture book is going to be transformed into a graphic story.

A graphic text (comic) most often includes, panels, speech bubbles, thought bubbles, and narrative captions.

Students can create a comic of one page of the story by transforming the written text into graphic format that includes four to six panels. To prepare students for this activity, demonstrate how conversation from the text can be written in speech bubbles. For younger students three boxes might be sufficient: First/Next/Then. Children in higher grades can add depth and complexity to their graphic story.

### ART and SCIENCE: Mixing Colours

Provide students with samples of red, blue, and yellow paint to have them explore how mixing two primary colours can create new secondary colours.

red + yellow = orange

yellow + blue = green

red + blue = purple (violet)

Students can then create a painting using only three primary colours. How many different shades of orange, green and purple can they create? As a possible challenge, students' paintings can focus on the concept of "stripes" or a rainbow to create their paintings. A sunset, a multi-coloured costume, a balloon seller, a bouquet of flowers are also suggestions that might help inspire budding young painters.