

## Crayola

Did you grow up using Crayola® crayons? Did you always want a bigger box so you'd have more colors to choose from? The word *crayola* comes from the French words *craie*, meaning “a stick of color,” and *ola*, from the word *oleaginous*, which refers to the wax in the crayons. Alice Binney, the wife of Edwin Binney, whose company, Binney and Smith, developed its first crayon in 1903, coined the term *crayola*.

The first Crayola crayons came in boxes of eight colors and cost five cents. The colors were red, blue, green, yellow, orange, brown, purple, and black. By 1948, crayons were available in boxes of 48 colors. By 1958, the number of available colors had risen to 64, and by 1972, there were 72 colors available.

Crayola celebrated its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary by introducing several new colors to make up a 96-crayon assortment. The new color names selected from nearly two million suggestions sent in by consumers included names like “Asparagus,” “Marvelous,” “Cerise,” and “Macaroni and Cheese.” By 1999, a box of 120 different colors, complete with a sharpener, could be found in stores. The cost was about 10 dollars.

All Crayola crayons are made from a combination of paraffin wax and color pigment. The density of crayons differs, though, depending on the amount of color pigment added to make a particular color shade. This is why some crayons float on water while others do not, and why some crayons sink faster than others.

Over the years, Crayola has changed the names of colors because of changing times. In 1958, the world was in the midst of the Cold War, pitting East Germany and other Communist nations against the West. Not wishing to add to the tension, the Crayola color “Prussian Blue” was changed to “Midnight Blue.” Prussia referred to a former European kingdom that included Germany and Poland.

## Unit 7

In 1962, in the middle of the civil rights movement, the name of one crayon was changed from “Flesh” to “Peach” in recognition that flesh comes in many different colors. Most recently, the company has responded to requests by educators and parents to change the name of yet another crayon, “Indian Red.” The concern centered on the belief that children might wrongly perceive that the color was intended to represent the skin color of Native Americans.

- Besides crayons, what else can you find in toy stores today that causes you to reminisce? Explain.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Do you agree that toys can contribute to misconceptions in children? Say why or why not.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Should names of products be changed in cases of consensus? Support your answer with examples.