CHAPTER 25: Clothing that Suits You   **Focus on *Fashion***

Finding Your Colors

Directions Did you know that color affects your appearance? Read the article below and then follow the steps to find out which colors are most flattering on you. Use the Discovery activity to put it all together.

Marie received two lovely sweaters for her birthday this year. One was a dark, rich red, with a beautiful soft texture. The other was a nubby knit that blended many different shades of brown, from cocoa to tan. Whenever she wore the sweaters, Marie got different reactions from people. When she wore the red one, people tended to say something like "You look great today!" or "I love your sweater!" With the brown sweater, on the other hand, fewer comments were made. In fact, a couple times people said she looked tired and asked whether she was feeling all right.

After a while and some thought, Marie figured out that the problem was not her on those brown-sweater days—it was the color. As an olive-skinned brunette, brown just was not her best color. Marie eventually traded the brown sweater, giving it to her friend Colleen—a freckle-dusted redhead who looked terrific in it. In exchange, Colleen gave her a navy-blue shirt that actually looked better on Marie.

1 ▶ **Evaluate warm and cool colors.** To find which colors look best on you, learn whether warm colors or cool colors are best for your skin tone. Cool colors have blue undertones. Warm colors are based on gold or orange. Thus, although red is technically a warm color, some shades of red lean toward purple and blend in better with cool tones. Similarly, green is a cool color, but some shades of green are yellow-based and blend in with warm colors. The lists below give examples of warm and cool colors.

Warm Colors	*Cool Colors*
Yellow	Gray
Orange	Navy
Peach	Blue
Gold	Green
Brown	Violet
Beige	Berry red

To test warm and cool colors on you, gather articles of clothing in as many of the listed colors as possible. If you can not find clothes in these colors, see if you can find pieces of fabric that you can hold near your face.

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Place each piece of clothing or fabric under your chin and evaluate how it looks on you. A color that looks good makes your face appear bright and healthy. It minimizes lines, shadows, and blemishes. By contrast, a color that is not right for you may make your complexion look pale, spotty, or yellowish. Lines, shadows, and blemishes stand out. The color may appear to pop out, while your face fades away into the background.

Record how each color looks on you, using a one-to-ten scale, with ten as the most flattering. Sometimes other people see what you do not. You could have a friend or family member help you with this step. After testing all the colors, total the numbers for each group (warm and cool). Is one score much higher than the other? The higher score indicates the better color group for you. If your scores for both groups are very close, try comparing some of the colors directly—for instance, brown versus gray or blue versus gold. This may help you see more clearly which color group to choose.

2 ▶ **Evaluate light and dark shades.** With warm or cool in mind, do you look better in light or dark shades? Compare different shades of the colors in your group. Here are some examples of color pairs you could compare:

Warm Colors	*Cool Colors*
Orange versus peach	Cranberry red versus pink
Chocolate brown versus tan	Royal blue versus powder blue
Olive green versus jade green	Charcoal gray versus pearl gray
Gold versus lemon yellow	Deep violet versus lilac

3 ▶ **Compare bright and muted colors.** Muted shades are less intense because the pure color is blended with brown or gray. Here are some examples:

Warm Colors	*Cool Colors*
Bright orange versus rust	Bright red versus burgundy red
Yellow-gold versus mustard brown	Bright blue versus gray-blue
Lime green versus jade green	Hot pink versus mauve
Gold versus lemon yellow	Emerald green versus pine green

Discovery

Best Colors Display What did you decide your best colors are? Create a display that shows the answer. Choose a format for your display. You could do a poster and use crayons, markers, paint, or fabric swatches to show your colors. You could make a paper model and design outfits for it in your best colors. Another idea is to make a video or use still photos that show best and worst colors on you. Present your project to the class.