

How it feels to be
colored me



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Zora Neale Hurston in “ How It Feels to Be Colored Me,” expresses her strong opinion that she is proud to be an African American and is not “ tragically colored” as some suggest. In this short story, Zora Neale Hurston expresses her pride in the fact that she is unique, and almost a race of her own. In summation, Hurston believes that her uniqueness should be celebrated and establishes how she is different than most throughout her piece. In “ How It Feels to Be Colored Me,” Hurston uses precise and colorful diction to help convey her emotions and thoughts throughout her story.

Initially, Hurston described growing up as an innocent young girl, not even realizing the segregation and racism that was occurring against her race. The diction used is uplifting, and innocent, creating a joyous tone that soon shifts when she turns thirteen and realizes not everyone is treated the same in society. When her realization occurs, she begins to analyze how she is different, using colorful diction to help describe her exact emotions and feelings towards race and society`s view on it.

Effective and powerful diction is evident when Hurston states, “ I am not tragically colored. There is no great sorrow dammed up in my soul, nor lurking behind my eyes. ” Words such as “ tragically” and “ sorrow” both have negative connotations, yet Hurston uses them in a positive light, implying how she does not believe she is any less of a person than whites are, and in reality, possibly even better due to her one of a kind race. (She is the only negro in the United States whose grandfather on the mothers side was not an Indian.)

The diction that Hurston uses also helps enforce the comparisons regarding the various literary devices used throughout the piece. Overall, Hurston`s

mastery of the english language supports her venerating and confident tone, as well as helping depict her pride of being an individual and not just another Negro.