

Healthy, Happy Teeth

Summary

Students will learn about the right way to brush their teeth and why its important to keep them clean.

Materials

Disclosure Tablet Activity

Hand mirror
Toothbrush (labeled with child's name)
Disclosure tablets

Part I

- *I Know Why I Brush My Teeth*
, by Kate Rowan
Large tooth model

For each student:

Flosser
Snack-sized Ziploc® bag with student's name on it

Part II

- *I Know Why I Brush My Teeth*
, by Kate Rowan
Clear plastic cups
- [Monster signs](#) (pdf)
Water
Dark drinks
Vinegar
Fruit juices
Eggshells

For each student:

Apple with student's name on it

Part III

- *Tooth Puppets*
2 tongue depressors
- [Tooth Puppets](#) (pdf)
Scissors
Glue
Crayons
- *Written Assessment*
- [Tooth Test worksheet](#) (pdf)
Pencils or crayons
- *Brushing Up!*
Old toothbrushes
White paint
- [Tooth handout](#) (pdf)
Smocks
- *Toothbrush Chart*
9" x 12" construction paper

Paper towel

- [Toothbrush Chart handout](#) (pdf)
- [My Toothbrushing Chart handout](#) (pdf)

Scissors

Glue

Crayons

Additional Resources

Books

- *I Know Why I Brush My Teeth*
, by Kate Rowan; ISBN 0744572320
- *Make Way For Tooth Decay*
, by Boobi Katz; ISBN 0-590-52290-6
- *The Crocodile and the Dentist*
, by Taro Gomi; ISBN 0-590-67731-4
- *Vera Goes to the Dentist*
, by Vera Rosenberry; ISBN 0-439-43815-2
- *Open Wide Tooth School Inside*
, by Laurie Keller; ISBN 0-439-23205-8

Background for Teachers

Teeth are one of the most important parts of your body. They give your face its shape. They help you talk. They help you bite and chew food. At first, you have 20 baby teeth. By the time you are six or so, these teeth start to loosen up and fall out. Your 32 adult teeth push them out and grow in their place.

Tooth vocabulary:

Fluoride—Helps protect your teeth. You get it from toothpaste and check-ups at the dentist.

Cavity—A soft spot or hole in your tooth. Ouch, that hurts!

Plaque—A sticky layer of germs on your teeth. Brushing and flossing gets rid of plaque.

Brushing Basics

Every time you eat, tiny pieces of food get stuck in your teeth. Brushing gets rid of the food, so you should brush at least twice a day. Using a drop of toothpaste, move your toothbrush back and forth. Brush the front, back, and top of each tooth. Then give your tongue a gentle brushing to get rid of germs. Floss nightly and limit your snacks.

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate a positive learning attitude.
4. Develop physical skills and personal hygiene.

Instructional Procedures

Invitation to Learn

Disclosure Tablet Activity

Give each student a disclosure tablet. Have them chew it and then look in the mirror. They will see pink stuff all over their teeth. Tell the students the pink areas are where plaque "germs" are trying to make holes in their teeth. "We are going to learn ways to chase the plaque germs away during our lesson." Allow children time to try to brush the pink off their teeth.

Instructional Procedures

Part I

Read *I Know Why I Brush My Teeth*. Stop after page 6 and ask if anyone has had a wiggly tooth

like Sam. Continue reading and stop after pg. 13. Ask the students, "Did any of you have trouble getting all the plaque off your teeth? Let's learn the right way to brush our teeth so we can get all those 'plaque germs' off our teeth." Model proper brushing techniques on a large tooth model. Students practice on their own teeth as you demonstrate. Have the children use their flossers to floss their teeth.

Explain that if they brush their teeth the right way, their teeth will be healthy and happy. Let's learn a song to help us remember to do that.

Healthy, Happy Teeth
(sing to the tune of Old MacDonald)
Brush your teeth and floss then too,
For healthy, happy teeth.
Drink and eat foods good for you,
For healthy, happy teeth!
With a brush, brush here,
And a floss, floss there,
Here a brush, there a floss
Day and night a brush, floss!
See your dentist twice a year
For healthy, happy teeth!

Students take their toothbrush and flosser home in a baggie.

Part II

Fill clear plastic cups with different liquids, such as water, dark soft drinks, vinegar, and fruit juices. Label each cup. Prepare [Monsters](#) to put around each cup.

Invite children to learn by telling them that these are plaque attack "monsters." "They love to eat teeth. This egg shell is like a tooth. Eggshells and teeth both contain calcium. We are going to pretend it is a tooth. Who wants to put a pretend 'tooth' into our plaque monster cups?" Have the children help you put the eggshells into the cups. Set the monsters in a safe place so students can watch them for a couple of days. Students will notice what happens when too many sugars and sweets get on their teeth. The sugar helps create plaque. Plaque eats through tooth enamel, causes tooth decay (or holes in their teeth), and gum disease. Expect dark liquids to stain the shells. Vinegar and sugary juices will dissolve or discolor the shells.

"Remember what Sam told us about teeth yesterday?" Review the main points of the story.

"Let's find out more about plaque 'monsters' today." Continue reading *I Know Why I Brush My Teeth* on page 14 and finish the story. "Let's be scientists and do an experiment to show what happens to a tooth when plaque monsters attack. This apple is like your tooth." Poke a hole in the apple with the point of a pencil, representing the cavity in a tooth. Tell the students that the plaque monsters make a hole, or cave, in your tooth. "We are going to watch what happens to this 'tooth' over time." Provide students with an opportunity to make their own apple cavity.

Students may each bring an apple from home, or the teacher may provide one for everyone. Use a permanent marker to label each apple with the students' names. Display them in the room by the plaque monsters.

Ask the students to touch their nose if they practiced brushing their teeth the right way last night and remembered to floss. Review the "Healthy, Happy Teeth" song. Tell the children that today we are going to learn a new song to help us remember to brush our teeth everyday.

"Do You Brush Them" song
(sung to Are You Sleeping?)
Do you brush them?
Do you brush them?
Everyday? Everyday?

Yes, I try to brush them.

Yes, I try to brush them.

Everyday. Everyday.

Part III

Students work in small groups at each of these centers. Put students that have shown strong knowledge of the topic from the teeth brushing demonstration and the written assessment first. All other students will have an opportunity to review at the puppet center before performing the written assessment.

[Tooth Puppets](#)

Students make two puppets on tongue depressors--a healthy, happy tooth, and a sick, sad tooth. The picture of the tooth will be glued on one side of the tongue depressor and a [picture strip](#) will be glued on the other side to show what things help your teeth or hurt your teeth. Students use these as an oral assessment during the assessment centers at the end of the Healthy, Happy Me unit.

Written Assessment

Using the [Tooth Test worksheet](#), students turn the circle into a happy face or a sad face as they decide whether the item above it will help their teeth or hurt their teeth.

Brushing Up!

Students practice their brushing skills with this painting activity. Use old toothbrushes, white paint, and the [Tooth handout](#) copied on gray or brown paper. Students practice "brushing" the paper teeth with paint and watch them turn white!

[Toothbrush Chart](#)

Students create a *Toothbrush Chart* to take home and mark off for a week. Fold a piece of 9" x 12" construction paper in half horizontally. Trace the rectangle on the side opposite the fold from the [My Toothbrushing Chart](#) handout. Students cut that rectangle off their paper, making sure that they cut through both halves of the paper. Glue a white paper towel in between the large square part of the toothbrush. Make small straight cuts in the paper towel to resemble the bristles of a toothbrush. Glue the chart on the square "head" of the toothbrush.

Extensions

Help children to understand that teeth have an inside and an outside by teaching the basic tooth parts. Use the bottom of page 15-19 in *I Know Why I Brush My Teeth*. Students draw and label the parts of a tooth in their journals, similar to the drawing in the back of *I Know Why I Brush My Teeth*.

Help children understand that all teeth are not the same. Each type of tooth has its own shape and its own job. Incisors are like scissors. They cut food with their sharp edges. Canines are like knives. They tear food with their sharp points. Molars are like hammers. They crush and grind food into tiny bits. The students can experience this with a healthy snack. As they chew it, talk them through when they are using each type of tooth to chew the food. You use your incisors to bite it and your pointy canines tear it up and the molars grind it before you swallow it.

Family Connections

Students will take home their "Apple Cavity" and puppets home. Use these to demonstrate knowledge they have learned about teeth to members of their family.

Hang the brushing chart some place where it will be easy to mark it each day. Return it in a week to receive a "tooth treasure" necklace, tooth sticker, etc.

Assessment Plan

Formal assessment included in worksheets.

Students use their happy tooth/sad tooth puppets in small groups to explain good and bad things for their teeth. This is an oral assessment.

Use the [My Toothbrushing Chart](#) to assess that students are forming a life long healthy habit. Disclosure tablets during assessment centers in “Healthy, Happy Me” activity plan.

Bibliography

Research Basis

Wood, R. K. (1994). A Close-up Look at How Children Learn Science. *Educational Leadership*, 51(5), p. 33-35.

Students often use their preschool experiences to form personal theories about the world and rarely correct misconceptions even when they acquire new information. This article describes an elementary science teacher’s efforts to help students revise personal theories through experimentation. There is no simple way to “teach away” students’ misconceptions, but a hands-on approach helps.

Cosgrove, M. S. (1992). Inside Learning Centers. ERIC ED356875.

Learning centers are areas in a classroom that define a specific focus or provide a unique learning opportunity by using the skills in interesting, meaningful, relevant, and social contexts. Learning centers give students opportunities to participate in thought-provoking activities.

Authors

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