

# Sparkle & Smile: A Discovery of Teeth

## Lesson Overview

This five-day unit introduces toddlers to their teeth, oral hygiene, and healthy habits through sensory play, music, and hands-on activities. Designed for 2-year-olds, it focuses on building positive associations with dental care.

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- Identify where their teeth are and what they look like.
- Demonstrate the back-and-forth motion of brushing.
- Distinguish between "happy" (healthy) foods and "sad" (sugary) foods for teeth.
- Participate in a dentist role-play to reduce anxiety about check-ups.

## Materials Needed

- **Daily Essentials:** Child-safe mirror, toothbrush, toothpaste, "Tooth" songs (e.g., "Brush Your Teeth" by Raffi).
- **Day 1:** White playdough or large white marshmallows, red construction paper.
- **Day 2:** White washable paint, old toothbrushes, heavy paper cut into a large tooth shape.
- **Day 3:** Empty egg carton (painted white), yellow/brown washable markers, cup of water.
- **Day 4:** Pictures of animals with big teeth (lion, crocodile, shark), toy animals.
- **Day 5:** Flashlight, a "dentist chair" (comfy beanbag or recliner), stickers.

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## Day 1: My Hidden Pearls

**Focus:** Identifying teeth and their appearance.

- **The Hook (5 mins):** Sit in front of a mirror. Ask: "Where is your nose? Where are your ears? Where are your... TEETH? Give me a big cheesy smile!"
- **The "I Do" (10 mins):** Point to your own teeth. Say: "Teeth are hard and white. We use them to crunch our snacks!"
- **The "We Do" (20 mins):** Sensory Play. Give the child white playdough. Help them roll small balls ("teeth") and stick them onto a red piece of paper ("the mouth"). Talk about how they are all lined up in a row.
- **The "You Do" (15 mins):** Mirror exploration. Let the child use a flashlight to look in their mouth in the mirror. Count the teeth together (1, 2, 3...).
- **Recap (10 mins):** Sing a song about smiling while cleaning up the playdough.

## Day 2: Brush, Brush, Brush!

**Focus:** Learning the mechanics of brushing.

- **The Hook (5 mins):** Play a lively "Brush Your Teeth" song. Dance and mimic the brushing motion

with your finger.

- **The "I Do" (10 mins):** Show the child a large tooth shape cut out of paper. Use a real toothbrush and white paint to "brush" the paper tooth. Say: "Circles, circles, back and forth!"
- **The "We Do" (25 mins):** Art Activity. Give the child their own paper tooth and a brush with white paint. Let them "scrub" the paper until it's all white and sparkly.
- **The "You Do" (10 mins):** Practice with a real brush (no paste yet). Have the child brush their favorite stuffed animal's "teeth" while you brush yours.
- **Recap (10 mins):** Check the "sparkle" in the mirror. High-fives for clean teeth!

## Day 3: Happy Teeth, Sad Teeth

**Focus:** Understanding how food affects teeth.

- **The Hook (5 mins):** Show an apple and a candy bar (or pictures). Ask: "Which one makes our teeth feel strong?"
- **The "I Do" (10 mins):** Use an upside-down white egg carton as "giant teeth." Use a brown marker to make "sugar bugs" (dots) on the carton. Show how water and a brush make the dots disappear.
- **The "We Do" (20 mins):** Sorting Game. Provide pictures of milk, apples, and broccoli vs. cookies and soda. Help the child put the healthy foods near a "Happy Tooth" drawing and the sugary foods near a "Sad Tooth" drawing.
- **The "You Do" (15 mins):** "Scrub the Sugar Bugs." Let the child use a wet toothbrush to scrub the marker dots off the egg carton "teeth" until they are white again.
- **Recap (10 mins):** Have a "Healthy Tooth" snack together (like apple slices or cheese cubes).

## Day 4: Animal Smiles

**Focus:** Comparing human teeth to animal teeth.

- **The Hook (5 mins):** Roar like a lion! Show a picture of a lion's big teeth.
- **The "I Do" (10 mins):** Look at pictures of a shark (lots of teeth) and a cow (flat teeth for grass). Explain: "Animals have teeth to eat their lunch, just like you!"
- **The "We Do" (20 mins):** "Animal Dentist." Use toy animals (dinosaurs or crocodiles work best). Give the child a toothbrush and have them "clean" the animal's teeth. "Does the T-Rex need a scrub? Yes!"
- **The "You Do" (15 mins):** Pretend play. Ask the child to show you their "Lion teeth" (big wide mouth) and their "Mouse teeth" (tiny nibbles).
- **Recap (10 mins):** Read a simple board book about animal teeth or dental hygiene.

## Day 5: The Friendly Dentist

**Focus:** Preparing for a dental visit through role-play.

- **The Hook (5 mins):** Tell a story: "The Dentist is a tooth-helper who makes our smiles shine like stars!"
- **The "I Do" (10 mins):** Set the stage. Put a bib (paper towel) on a stuffed animal. Use a flashlight to look in its mouth. "Open wide! Look at those pretty teeth!"
- **The "We Do" (25 mins):** Dentist Role-Play. Let the child be the "dentist" and check your teeth with the flashlight. Then swap roles. Practice the "Aaaaah" sound and staying very still like a statue.
- **The "You Do" (10 mins):** The "Shine" Station. After the "exam," give the child a special sticker,

just like at the real dentist.

- **Recap (10 mins):** Review the week. Ask: "How do we keep teeth clean?" (Brush!) "What do we do at the dentist?" (Open wide!).
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## Success Criteria

The lesson is successful if the child:

- Willingly opens their mouth to "show" their teeth.
- Attempts to mimic the brushing motion on themselves or a toy.
- Can identify a toothbrush and its purpose.

## Differentiation Strategies

- **For Active Learners:** Incorporate "The Toothbrush Hop"—hop every time you say the word "brush."
- **For Sensory-Sensitive Learners:** Use a very soft finger-brush or just a damp washcloth instead of a bristled toothbrush for Day 2 practice.
- **For Advanced Learners:** Introduce the concept of "top" and "bottom" teeth or "front" and "back" teeth.

## Assessment Methods

- **Formative:** Observe the child during the egg-carton scrubbing activity. Are they understanding that brushing "removes" the dirt?
- **Summative:** On Day 5, observe the child's comfort level during the dentist role-play. This serves as a practical assessment of their understanding and emotional readiness.