



Lesson Plan for Pre-K through 2nd grade

How you approach the material is really up to you, but here are the important points:

- a. Why are teeth important?
- b. Why and when do you brush your teeth?
- c. What's a good snack and drink choice?
- d. Why do you visit a dentist?

Program Timing

(You'll need a sugar kit for this lesson)

1. 5 minutes - Intro, why do you have teeth
2. 5 minutes – brushing
3. 15 minutes – sugar and snacks
4. 5 minutes – visiting the dentist, wrap up and thank-you!

Sample Program

1. Get students thinking about why they have teeth. Ask them what they do with their teeth (smiling, talking and eating). How would they look or sound if they had no teeth. Have students say "hello", then have them say "hello" by putting their lips over their teeth, to represent "no teeth." What's the difference? Ask why a baby eats baby food (they have no teeth!)
2. Explain how most of them still have baby teeth – but they will soon get permanent teeth. Ask if someone knows what permanent means. Permanent means something that doesn't go away. What else is permanent? (marker)
3. Talk about the importance of taking care of your teeth - - it revolves around three things:
 - a. Brushing
 - b. Healthy food
 - c. Regular visits to the dentist

Ask what it means to take care of your body – what do you do? (take a bath, exercise, consume healthy food and drinks, wash your hands). You take care of your body to stay healthy – you take care of your teeth to keep them healthy. Explain in general terms how plaque is a germ that can stick to your teeth, it's invisible and it can cause a cavity (a little hole in the tooth). Just like you wash your hands to get rid of germs – you clean your teeth to get rid of plaque. Plaque comes from foods – especially foods with sugar.

4. Talk about what happens if you don't take care of your teeth – cavities. Use the pea reference to show how much toothpaste you should use. Or relate it to the eraser on the top of a pencil. Stress the amount of time they should brush – not quickly! Two minutes is how long you should brush – use a timer or the class clock to help students understand how long two minutes really is!

5. When do you brush? After breakfast and before bed. After school would be a bonus!
6. Explain how another thing you can do to take care of your teeth involves what you eat and drink! Ask if anyone likes to snack! Maybe do a poll and ask students what they had for snacks after school yesterday – maybe do a show of hands for how many had candy, fruit, chips or cheese. Talk about what makes a “healthy snack”. Which snacks listed were healthy snacks? What makes a snack healthy? (Not too much fat, not too much sugar)

Bring out the sugar kit – explain how it’s important to understand snacks and drinks with lots of sugar can hurt your teeth over time. It’s important for students to understand that sweets are not off-limits, but you need to watch how often you eat them. Have students think about sticky snacks – things that can stick to your teeth and cause plaque. Sugar, starches and fat all play a role in tooth decay. ***Emphasize that sticky snacks are not a good choice. They stick to your teeth and can easily cause cavities. ***

Sugar experiment details

Remember this equation: 4 grams of sugar = 1 teaspoon

Explain how students will help you with a matching game. Bring out the test tubes of sugar and the kit items. Ask students if they can match the food or drink to the amount of sugar. You can do this as a group exercise or as a demonstration.

Stress to the class that you’re not telling them to never eat or drink sugary things - -but it can’t be what you always choose.

7. Which items had the most sugar? Which had the least? Make sure to point out the Pop Tart and CapriSun box combination. That’s why kids often eat in a hurry for breakfast in the car – without brushing teeth!
8. What’s a good snack choice? Use the snack poster for this! Come up with a list of good choices. Sticky snacks are the worst – they stick to your teeth, trapping sugar in your mouth!
9. Make sure to talk about water – water from the sink has fluoride. Most bottled waters do not. If you do eat sweets, water is a good drink choice; it can wash away the sugar in your mouth.
10. Ask what a dentist does. Relate a dentist to a doctor – just like the doctor checks your heart and lungs, a dentist checks your teeth, mouth and gums.
11. Wrap up by reviewing - - get students involved.