

TOOTHBRUSH - A CLEAN STORY

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PDF 2: Varied Speaking Activities

Title: Toothbrush: A Clean Story – Speaking Activities

Level: Pre-Intermediate to Intermediate (A2–B1)

Time: 25–40 minutes

Activity 1: Image Discussion (Pairs)

Look at the big image and discuss:

- What do the three parts (“THEN”, “NOW”, and “NEXT”) show?
- Which part do you find the most interesting or surprising? Why?
- How has the toothbrush changed from ancient times to now?
- What do you think about the “future clean” with nanobots?

Activity 2: Would You Rather...? (Groups)

Discuss with your group:

1. Would you rather use only an ancient chew stick for the rest of your life or never brush your teeth again?
2. Would you rather have a manual toothbrush or a high-tech electric toothbrush with many features?
3. Would you rather test dental nanobots on your own teeth or continue using a normal toothbrush?
4. Would you rather forget your toothbrush when traveling or forget your wallet?

Activity 3: Design Your Dream Toothbrush (Future Version)

In pairs or small groups, design the ultimate toothbrush of the future (inspired by the “NEXT” part of the image).

Decide:

- What special features will it have? (nanobots, music, automatic toothpaste, AI voice, self-cleaning, etc.)
- What will it look like?
- What funny or cool name will you give it?

Present your “Future Toothbrush” to the class.

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Activity 4: Role-Play Prompts

Close your eyes and point to a number (1–8). Act it out with your partner:

1. You are William Addis in prison showing your new toothbrush invention to another prisoner.
2. You are selling the very first pig-hair toothbrush in ancient China.
3. You are a dentist explaining to a patient why brushing teeth is so important.
4. You are a parent trying to make a child brush their teeth properly.
5. Someone says “Brushing teeth is boring!” Defend the importance of the toothbrush.
6. You are a scientist in the future presenting dental nanobots to the world.
7. A person from ancient times travels to the present and tries an electric toothbrush for the first time.
8. You and your friend are arguing about whether the toothbrush or toothpaste is more important.

Activity 5: Quick Reflection

Answer one of these:

- What was the most surprising thing you learned about the toothbrush?
- Would you like to try dental nanobots in the future? Why or why not?
- How important is brushing your teeth in your daily routine?

Activity 6: The "Gross History" Ranking (Elicitation)

Before the modern toothbrush, people used some very strange things to clean their teeth. List these on the board and have students rank them from "Most Effective" to "Most Disgusting":

- Crushed eggshells (Ancient Rome)
- Burnt ox hooves (Ancient Egypt)
- A piece of rough cloth with salt
- Hog hair bristles (China, 1400s)

Student Prompt: "If you lived in the year 1400, would you rather use hog hair or just salt? Why?"

Bonus Activity: Toothbrush Timeline

Number the events in order (1 = oldest, 5 = most recent/future):

_____ Dental nanobots are developed
_____ Nylon bristles are invented
_____ William Addis makes the first modern toothbrush in prison
_____ People use chew sticks / miswak in ancient times
_____ First toothbrush with pig hair bristles is made in China

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