



THE TOOTHBRUSH STORY

Activity 1: Past Simple vs Present Perfect

Use the past simple or present perfect tense and the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. The Babylonians _____ (chew) on twigs to clean their teeth around 3500 BCE.
2. Dental hygiene _____ (improve) dramatically since ancient times.
3. The Chinese _____ (invent) the first proper toothbrush during the Tang Dynasty.
4. We _____ (come) a long way from using pig bristles and horsehair.
5. Nylon bristles _____ (appear) in 1938 and revolutionized tooth cleaning.
6. Scientists _____ (develop) many new types of toothbrushes in recent decades.
7. Ancient Egyptians _____ (create) tooth powder from crushed rock salt and mint.
8. Modern technology _____ (make) brushing teeth easier & more effective than ever before

Activity 2: Passive Voice Transformation

Rewrite these active sentences in the passive voice. Focus on the action rather than who performed it.

1. The Chinese attached pig bristles to bamboo handles.

2. Traders carried these brushes along the Silk Road to Europe.

3. Scientists invented nylon bristles in 1938.

4. The Egyptians made tooth powder from crushed rocks and flowers.

5. Ancient civilisations took dental hygiene very seriously.

6. Europeans found pig bristles too stiff for comfortable use.

7. Modern manufacturers produce toothbrushes in every color imaginable.

8. People have used various methods to clean their teeth throughout history.

Activity 3: Vocabulary in Context - Word Forms

Use the correct form of the word in CAPITALS. You may need to add prefixes or suffixes.

1. The _____ of the toothbrush is a fascinating story. (INVENT)
2. Ancient dental practices seem rather _____ by today's standards. (PECULIAR)
3. The Babylonians were quite _____ in their approach to oral hygiene. (CREATE)
4. Nylon bristles were _____ better than natural fibres for dental care. (ARGUE)
5. The pigs were _____ not consulted about donating their bristles. (PRESUME)
6. Europeans found horsehair a more _____ alternative to pig bristles. (COMFORT)
7. Modern toothbrushes represent a _____ improvement in dental hygiene. (SIGNIFY)
8. We should be _____ for modern dental technology and fluoride toothpaste. (THANK)

Teacher's Key

Activity 1: Past Simple vs Present Perfect

1. **chewed** (specific time in the past: 3500 BCE)
2. **has improved** (from past to present, no specific time)
3. **invented** (specific time: Tang Dynasty)
4. **have come** (from past to present, we still benefit now)
5. **appeared** (specific year: 1938)
6. **have developed** (recent decades = unfinished time period)
7. **created** (completed action in ancient times)
8. **has made** (from past to present, effect continues now)

Activity 2: Passive Voice Transformation

1. Pig bristles **were attached** to bamboo handles (by the Chinese).
2. These brushes **were carried** along the Silk Road to Europe (by traders).
3. Nylon bristles **were invented** in 1938 (by scientists).
4. Tooth powder **was made** from crushed rocks and flowers (by the Egyptians).
5. Dental hygiene **was taken** very seriously (by ancient civilisations).
6. Pig bristles **were found** too stiff for comfortable use (by Europeans).
7. Toothbrushes **are produced** in every colour imaginable (by modern manufacturers).
8. Various methods **have been used** to clean teeth throughout history (by people).

Note: The agent (by + noun) can often be omitted in passive constructions when it's obvious or unimportant.

Activity 3: Vocabulary in Context

1. **invention** (noun form needed after "the")
2. **peculiar** (adjective form - no change needed, or possibly "peculiarly" if modifying "seem")
3. **creative** (adjective form to describe their approach)
4. **arguably** (adverb form to modify "better")
5. **presumably** (adverb form to modify "not consulted")
6. **comfortable** (adjective form to describe "alternative")
7. **significant** (adjective form to describe "improvement")
8. **thankful** or **grateful** (adjective form after "be")