

Brush Two Minutes, Twice a Day



Fun Family Activities to Teach Your Child About Oral Health

Teeth are a very important part of a healthy childhood. Young children may not understand that brushing teeth for two minutes, twice a day helps prevent mouth pain, tooth decay, and cavities. Before exploring why children should brush, use these fun discovery activities to help your child learn all the amazing things that teeth do.

What's So Special About Teeth?

Discovery Activity 1: Make a Chart Collage

Create a large chart with the title "Food My Teeth Help Me Eat" on one side and "Words My Teeth Help Me Say" on the other. Have your child touch the edges of his or her front teeth. Explain that front teeth help you bite your food into small pieces. Have your child touch his or her flat back teeth. Explain that the back teeth mash your food to make it easier for you to swallow.

From an old magazine, cut out food your child needs to chew to eat. Help your child glue the pictures of the food on the chart under "Food My Teeth Help Me Eat."

Ask your child to repeat after you as you say: three teeth. Ask: *Did you notice how you used your teeth to say those words?* Now ask your child to try to say *three teeth* without using his or her teeth. Explain that some words depend on your teeth to be pronounced properly. In a magazine, find and clip out other words that use teeth to be pronounced. Glue these words to the chart under "Words My Teeth Help Me Say."

What Do Teeth Do?

Discovery Activity 2: Read a Poem and Draw a Picture

Print out Discovery Sheet A and read the poem to your child. If your child knows how to read, have him or her read the poem to you. Discuss the ways the author of the poem used her teeth during her day. Ask your child to use the blank space on Discovery Sheet A to draw the things he or she does with his or her teeth. Have older children use the back of the page to write their own poems about how their teeth help them daily.

How Are Teeth Made?

Discovery Activity 3: Color-a-Tooth Diagram

Ask your child what words he or she would use to describe teeth. Show your child an egg. Ask: *When you look at an egg, can you tell what's inside?* Explain that both teeth and eggs have a hard outside and a soft inside. Just like an egg's shell protects its soft inside, a tooth's hard outside (called the *enamel*) protects its soft inside. Ask your child: *Did you know your teeth are soft inside?* For first graders, explain that the inside of the tooth is called *dentin*.

Find a diagram of a tooth to look at online or use the illustration

on Discovery Sheet B to discuss what your child just learned about teeth. Have him or her point out the tooth's enamel and dentin. Give your child time to color in the diagram on Discovery Sheet B. Have your child trace the terms *enamel* and *dentin* to practice letter writing for young children and reinforce vocabulary for older children. After your child has finished coloring, quiz him or her about the hard and soft parts of teeth.

How Do I Take Care of My Teeth?

Discovery Activity 4: Have a Family Conversation About Oral Health

Ask your child to ask family members how they take care of their teeth. Share your oral health habits with your child and discuss the importance of brushing, flossing, and visiting the dentist. Explain what happens to teeth that are not cleaned for two minutes, twice a day. Have an age-appropriate conversation about tooth decay, cavities, and fillings with your child. Return to Discovery Sheet B and ask your child to use a black or brown crayon to draw cavities on the tooth diagram.

For educational videos and oral health tips, visit 2min2x.org.



Name: _____

My Mighty Teeth

Directions: Draw a picture in the box below to show what your teeth can do.

Today My Teeth

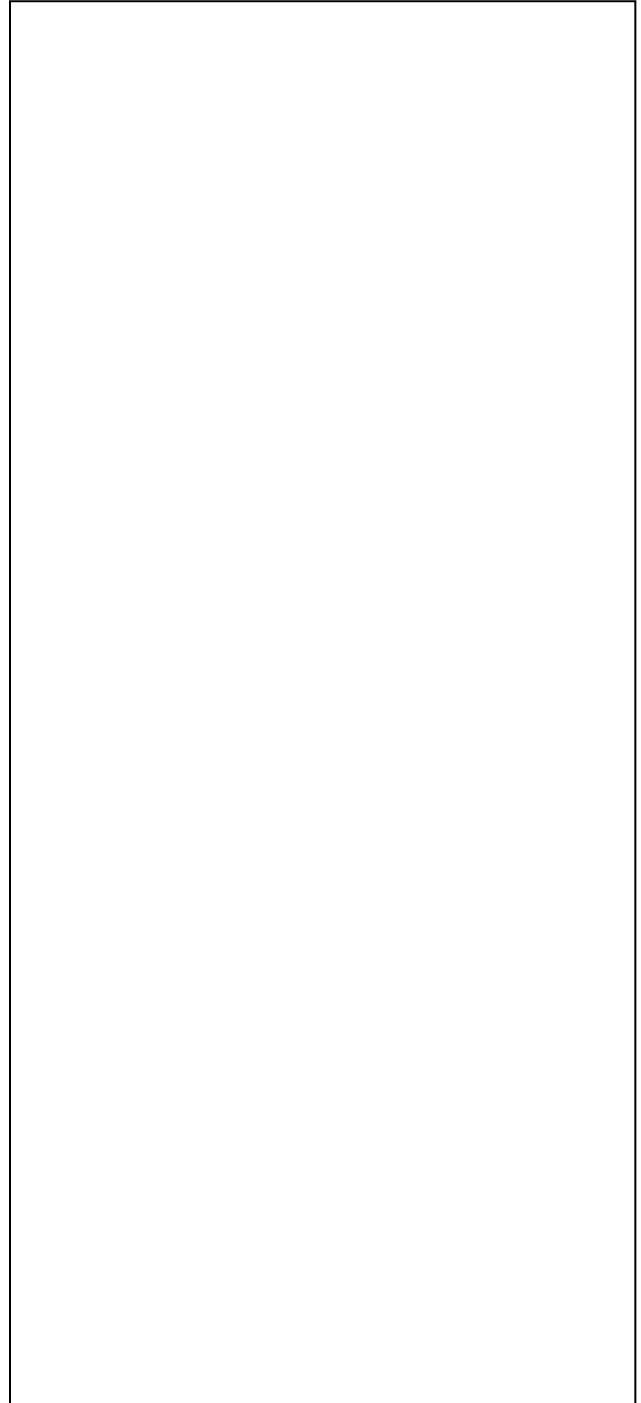
Today my teeth bit an apple
I ate it down to the core
After, I crunched a carrot
Then I asked for more

Today my teeth flashed "hello"
When I smiled a great big grin
Then a kid smiled back
I made a brand-new friend

Today my teeth showed
How very smart I can be
When asked, "What's 1 + 2?"
My teeth helped me say "three"

Now the day is over
And just before I sleep
I brush and brush my teeth
To thank them for helping me

Brush your teeth
for two minutes,
twice a day.

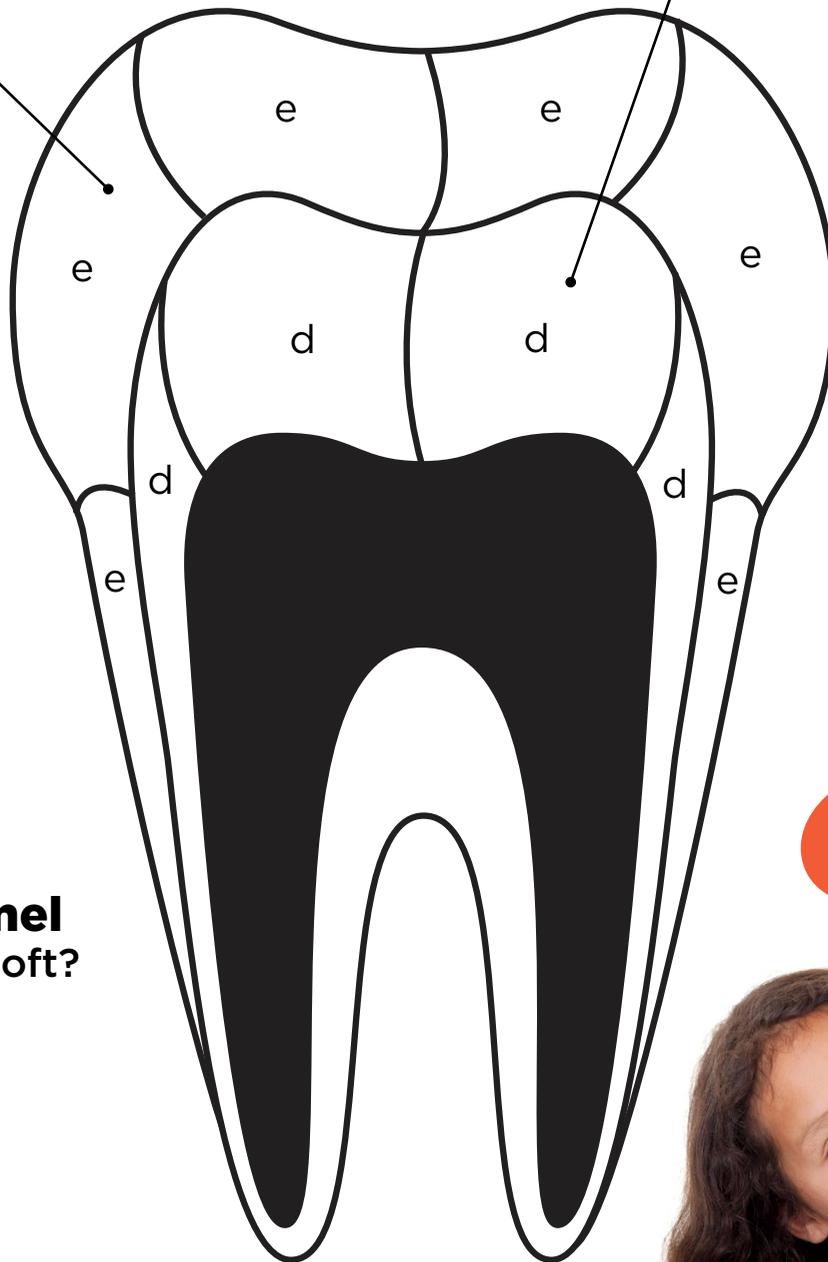


Name: _____

Hard and Soft: Parts of My Teeth

Directions: Color any part of the tooth that has an **e** on it gray and any part that has a **d** on it yellow.

e n a m e l d e n t i n



Is **enamel**
hard or soft?

Is **dentin**
hard or soft?

Brush your teeth
for two minutes,
twice a day.

