

The Dentist

*Helping Individuals to Overcome
Barriers to their Oral Hygiene.*



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Introduction

Storytelling builds a bond between the storyteller and the story explorer, enhancing well-being and enriching their experiences. It builds trust and aids understanding and communication, social and emotional development.

Sensory stories are an excellent motivating tool for encouraging alternative communication systems. non-verbal, early communication skills, Makaton, BSL, body sign, choose boards, and to facilitate PECS exchanges.

Additional learning is enhanced through the development of turn taking skills, building tolerance, attention skills and sharing. Other learning outcomes are the skills of shared attention, increased engagement, achievement of learning targets, reduction in unwanted behaviours, social interaction and helping individuals to overcome barriers through a safe environment.

Observing reactions to a range of sensory stimuli enables you to build a picture of an individual's sensory preferences. This record of likes, dislikes, motivators and triggers can help parents, carers and teaching staff make informed choices to enhance daily life in areas such as diet, sensory needs, care plans, daily activities and leisure activities.

This story will build the learner's confidence to explore new and unfamiliar sensory experiences. Repeating the story in a safe and comfortable setting, can help the learner to become gradually desensitised to the props, helping to prepare the listener for visits out of their daily routine, in this case, an appointment or encounter with the dentist.

Health & Safety Disclaimer

The Dentist - A Rhyming Multisensory Poem Copyright © Victoria Navin 2020 All Rights Reserved.

⚠ Please read the health & safety information below prior to engaging in any of the activities.

The author has used their best efforts in preparing this story and makes no representation or warranties with respect to the accuracy, applicability, fitness or completeness to the contents. The information in this story is for pleasure and educational purposes only. If you wish to apply any ideas contained in this book you are taking full responsibility for your actions. If you are in any doubt regarding undertaking any activity or using a prop then seek advice before starting.

⚠ The activities are not advisable for children under the age of 3.

⚠ These activities are designed to be led and supervised by a responsible adult at all times.

⚠ Be aware of choking hazards.

⚠ Check the ingredients in any items you may be using for potential food or skin allergies or reactions. If you see any signs of redness, swelling or other symptoms of a suspected reaction seek immediate medical advice.

⚠ The interactions should be led by the story participant who should be allowed to participate without expectation. Never force stimuli and stop the activity if the story participant shows signs they are not enjoying the activity.

Resources/Props Checklist

Checklist of Resources (Story Props)

Congratulations! 😊 You have passed your health & safety check. Let's prepare for our visit to the dentist!

You may not need all of the items listed. There are different prop options within the story and you can also add your own!

Mirror ✓

Hand Sanitiser/Alcohol Wipe ✓

Balloon Pump/Bicycle Pump ✓

Bib/Napkin/Paper Towel/Flannel ✓

Goggles/Sunglasses ✓

Shirt ✓

Electric Toothbrush/Mini Massager ✓

Toothbrush & Toothpaste ✓

Bowl & Cup of Water ✓

Child Friendly Mouthwash/Water/Plastic Cup/Sink or bowl ✓

Sticker or badge ✓



How to Tell a Multisensory Poem

✿ Choose a quiet, distraction free place that is comfortable for you and the story explorer.

✿ Set out your resources where they are easily accessible to you but out of reach and sight of the learner.

✿ Place the first story prop into the story bag.

✿ The story is set out in a three column table format:

'STORY'

'PROP'

'SENSORY EXPERIENCE'

Read each sentence of the **STORY** slowly and clearly, introducing the story **PROP** as the corresponding word (highlighted in red lettering) of the sentence appears. Provide the **SENSORY EXPERIENCE**.

✿ Allow the story explorer time to engage their senses exploring the prop and to process the sensory experience.

This will give you plenty of time to place the next prop into the story bag.

✿ Use a variety of facial expressions, gestures and animated voices to add interest and communicate meaning.

✿ Work through the story at the explorer's pace. It should be a relaxing and enjoyable experience for you both.

You do not have to complete the story in one sitting. You can explore one or two sentences adding to the story in the next sitting. It may take several sessions to complete the story.

✿ Repetition is the key! The more exposure the story explorer has to the story, the more familiar they will become with it.

✿ Focus on having fun and it will become an educational experience!

The Dentist - Teeth

Story

We need to look after our teeth and keep them nice and clean

So to help we visit the **dentist** who will make them gleam

Prop

Makaton sign for **dentist**

Mirror

Sensory Experience

To sign **dentist** using Makaton, curl your index finger and tap your front teeth twice.

Can the story explorer copy your action?

Can the story explorer look at their teeth using the **mirror**.



The Dentist - The Dentist's Room

Story

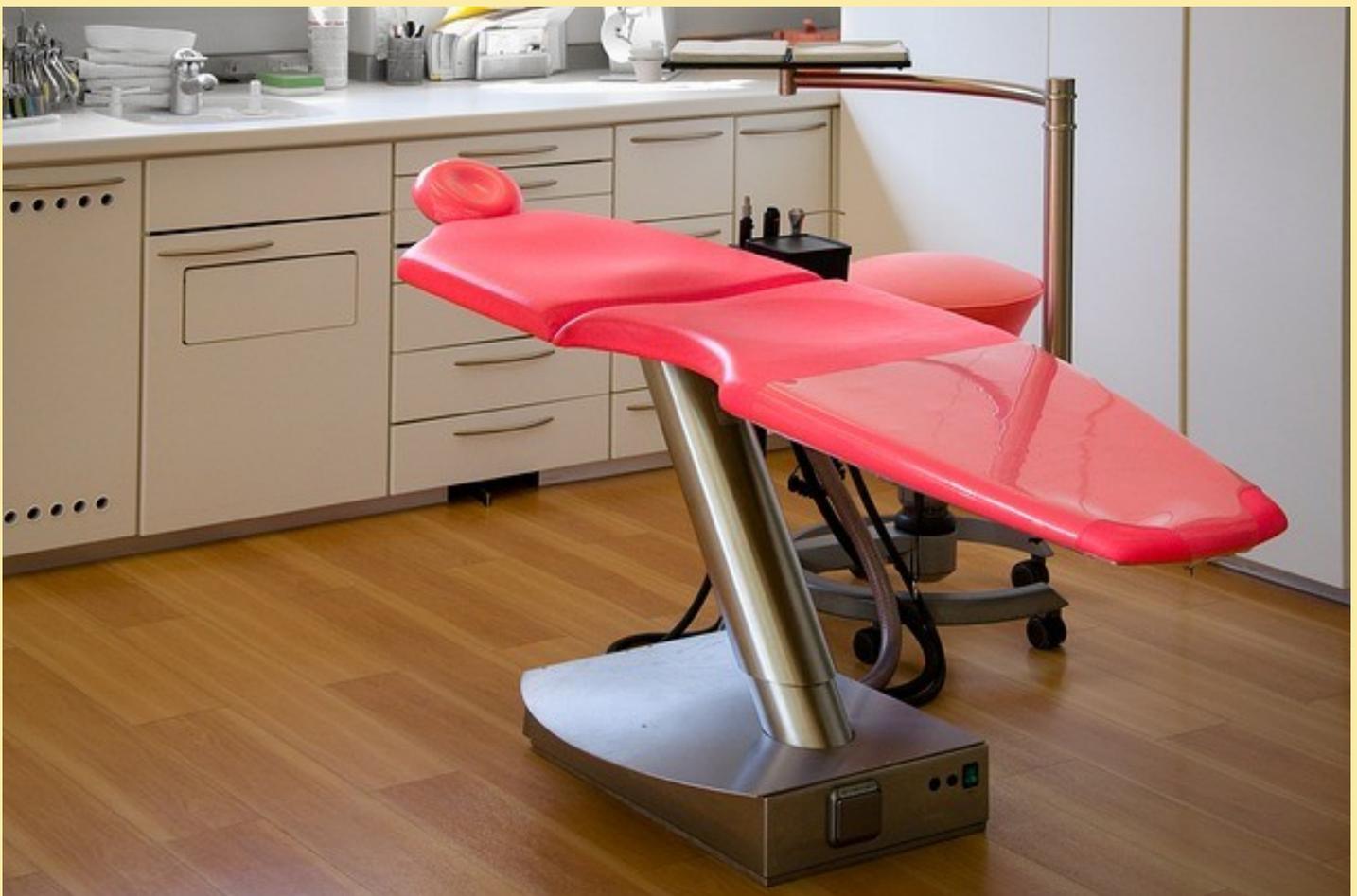
The dentist's room is light and bright and **smells** a little funny

I feel a nervous feeling like a tickling in my tummy.

Prop Sensory Experience

Alcohol Wipe Wipe the table or the story explorer's laptray with an **alcohol wipe** or a little **hand sanitiser** on a cloth.

Hand Sanitiser



The Dentist - The Shirt

Story

The dentist wears a **shirt** it could be white or blue or green

She tells me it protects from the dirt to keep her nice and clean.

A **face mask** covers her mouth and nose

She tells me its just part of a dentist's clothes!

Prop Sensory Experience

Shirt

Would the story explorer like to try the **shirt** on?

Place the shirt over the story explorer's clothing.

Practice self-care skills, can the story explorer put the item on independently?

Can the listener communicate a request for 'help' if they would like assistance?

Face mask

Place the face mask over your mouth and nose then remove it.



The Dentist - 'Ready?'

Story

Prop

Sensory Experience

The dentist gives me a little
bib, it tucks under my chin

**Bib/Napkin/Paper
Towel/Flannel**

Loosely tuck the **Bib/Napkin/Paper Towel or Flannel** into the
neck of the story explorer's clothing or lay it over their chest

She says that when I say I'm
ready, that we will begin



The Dentist - Goggles

Story

The dentist wear **goggles** to stop the lights that glare

They look like big sunglasses, she offers me a pair.

Prop

Goggles/Sunglasses

Mirror

Sensory Experience

Offer the story explorer a pair of sun-glasses/goggles to wear.

Encourage the story explorer to look at their reflection in the mirror.



The Dentist - Blast of Air

Story

'I'll take good care' the dentist says, as I lie back in the chair

With a big smile she tickles my hand, with a **blast** of air.

Prop

**Balloon
Pump/Bicycle
Pump**

Sensory Experience

Gently direct the air flow from the **balloon/bicycle pump** at the story explorer's hands/cheeks/lips/ teeth.

Can the story explorer activate the pump to release the air?



The Dentist - 'Open Wide'

Story

The dentist says words like 'Mouth
open wide'

Then gently with her fingers, she
takes a peek inside.

Prop Sensory Experience

Mirror

Encourage the story explorer to open their mouth to your
cue of '**Open wide**' whilst they look in the mirror.



The Dentist - Cleaning Teeth

Story

There is a special **toothbrush** used to clean my teeth

It hums and spins around my gums and cleans right underneath

Prop

**Electric
Toothbrush/Mini
Massager**

**Toothpaste
Manual
Toothbrush
Bowl Water
Mirror**

Sensory Experience

Explore the sensation of the electric **toothbrush** or **massager** on the back of the hand.

Encourage the development of the story explorer's fine motor skills.

Can they remove the toothpaste tube lid independently?

Can they apply the toothpaste to the brush independently?

Can they brush their teeth independently?

Can the story explorer communicate a request for help if they would like assistance?

Model brushing the teeth the correct way (using your own toothbrush)

Offer encouragement and praise as the story explorer admires their clean teeth in the mirror.

Alternative Activity

As an alternative to toothpaste, offer the listener fresh garden mint or fennel seeds to chew.



The Dentist - Mouthwash

Story

The dentist says I need to rinse my mouth with a wash that is bright pink

I swish it around my teeth and gums then spit it down the sink

Prop

Child friendly
Mouthwash or
Water
Plastic Cup
Sink or bowl

Sensory Experience

Open the lid of the mouthwash and gently waft for the story explorer to smell.

Pour a tiny amount into a container and encourage the story explorer to swish the mouthwash around their mouth then spit it out into a sink or bowl.

💡 Model if necessary



Strategies to Help Individuals Overcome Barriers to Dental Hygiene

The oral stimulation and sensory input required for brushing our teeth can be overwhelming for an individual with sensory issues and special needs.

Let's explore some of the issues that may be barriers to dental hygiene and suggested strategies.

Q Sensory overload

For an over responsive sensory system, brushing the teeth can be an unpleasant sensation, it may hurt or tickle.

Reassure the individual that you understand this and that you are there to help.

Q It's time consuming!

Two minutes is a long time to engage in an activity such as teeth brushing. Provide a visual aid such as a digital timer, sand timer, egg timer or a stopwatch. Add a visual schedule. This will enable individuals how many steps there are in the process, where they are up to and what is coming next.

🔄 Maintain a routine

Ensure that teeth brushing takes place at the same time every morning and evening. Offer praise and allow the individual to choose a motivating activity to look forward to after they have brushed their teeth. This could be sharing a book, playing a game or looking at photos.

🔄 The Toothpaste

Mint toothpastes can present as 'hot' and may even feel like they 'burn' to an individual who is sensitive to strong flavours. Switch to an unflavoured toothpaste or one without mint such as a fruity toothpaste.

oraNurse® Unflavoured Toothpaste

oraNurse® is an unflavoured toothpaste specially formulated for people sensitive to strong flavours.

The toothpaste was initially developed in a response to the need of autistic children sensitive to taste to the extent of not

liking the taste of water. oraNurse® has the daily recommended fluoride and is SLS free (non-foaming).



Henry, a twelve year old with Autism has an oversensitive sensory system. Henry only eats bland food and finds strong smells and flavours overwhelming. I tested oraNurse® unflavoured toothpaste on Henry. He responded well to the toothpaste's plain white colour and smooth texture (he will not use coloured toothpastes, dislikes 'grainy' sensations and the appearance, taste or texture of gel toothpastes). The non-foaming feature was fantastic as toothpaste froth makes him gag. It left the teeth beautifully clean and the breath fresh. When it came to brushing the teeth at bedtime, he was quite happy to use the toothpaste again. This was very positive as when he is tired at the end of the day tooth brushing time can be a bit of a battlefield!

Henry now uses oraNurse® as his regular toothpaste and is a lot happier. The product has taken the 'sting' out of his toothbrushing regime.



Other possible indications for the need of an unflavoured toothpaste

include: Lichen Planus sufferers, head and neck cancer patients after radiotherapy, burning mouth syndrome, Asperger syndrome, Autism, Sjögrens syndrome, Behcets disease, Kawasaki disease, Parkinson's disease and people that have an intolerance to Limonene.

Colgate Magik Toothpaste

Colgate Kids Magic Toothpaste is a colour changing toothpaste that encourages the development of good oral habits.

My tester was an 8 year old boy with MLD (mild learning difficulties) who needs motivation to brush his teeth due to the length and repetitive nature of the task. He loved the appearance of the toothpaste. It is a clear gel with blue particles in it, describing it as having 'magic sparkles' that looked like 'glitter'. He was very motivated to brush his teeth for longer than he normally would as he could watch the colour of the toothpaste gradually turn from clear, to white then from light blue to a deep blue.



Colgate Natural Fruit Flavoured Toothpaste

Colgate Natural Fruit Flavoured Toothpaste

Colgate Natural Fruit Flavoured Kids Toothpastes are available for ages 0-2 years and 3-5 years, it is also suitable for adults to use as a daily toothpaste. This toothpaste was a hit with my young testers who found the strawberry flavour novel and fun to use. The toothpaste was also tested by Ruth, a 24-year-old lady with a learning disability. Historically Ruth has faced challenges with her oral hygiene. She has sensory issues that limit her diet but does enjoy strawberry milkshakes, smoothies and yogurts. Her care worker gradually de-sensitised Ruth to using the toothpaste by allowing her to explore a little of the paste in her



ngers. She then built up to applying a little dot of the paste onto the lips from where Ruth licked it and explored the paste on her tongue. The carer contacted me after a week to inform me that Beth is happy for her carer to clean her teeth using the toothpaste which is applied with a soft cloth. This is a huge achievement for Ruth!

Individuals with under-sensitive sensory systems may seek strong flavours.

Experiment with the many flavoured toothpastes on the market: strawberry, fennel, aloe vera, tea tree, coconut and juicy fruit are just a few.

For individuals who respond well to motivating items, explore colour-changing toothpastes, jelly toothpastes and toothpastes that sparkle.

Take the individual shopping and let them choose their own flavour.

The Toothbrush

The Toothbrush There are many different types of toothbrush on the market, manual, electric, chewable, oscillating and sonic. Explore different bristle firmness, use a soft-bristled brush for sensitive teeth and gums.

Experiment with the shape of the brush a diamond head is narrower at the top and can help reach into tight spaces around the back teeth.

Brightly coloured toothbrushes, toothbrushes with favourite characters on, light-up and musical toothbrushes can be motivating.

Let the individual choose their own toothbrush.

oraNurse® Oral Care Silicone Fingertip Toothbrush

The oral care silicone fingertip toothbrush is safe, non-toxic, odourless and tasteless.

My testers were two sisters, one of which is on the Autism Spectrum. The girls said they were 'fun' to use. They found they had more control of the brush as it was on their finger and that it 'tickled'.

They loved that they could be popped into the dishwasher to be cleaned.

The eldest sister is taking her fingertip toothbrush to school so she can brush her teeth after lunch!

Made from class A active silicone confirming to the FDA standards.



Rolly Brush is marketed as the smallest toothbrush in the world. It is disposable and requires no toothpaste or water. Pop the mint-avoured rubber disc onto the tongue and roll around the teeth using the tongue. The mechanical action of the 276 spiky bristles removes food from the teeth cleaning the mouth. The main ingredients of the Rolly brush are mint flavour to refresh your breath xylitol to prevent dental plaque and cavities fluoride to make your teeth stronger.



The Rolly Brush was tested by a young lady with a Pervasive Developmental Disorder who needs a lot of motivation to brush her teeth. My tester tried the mint flavour (also available in peach.) It was a fun and positive experience as she enjoyed the novelty of the Rolly Brush in that it was so different to the conventional method of using a toothbrush and toothpaste.

She liked that she didn't not have to stand in the bathroom as a Rolly brush can be used anywhere. She enjoyed the sensory feedback from the chewing, described her mouth as feeling 'smooth' and that she was 'happy' she had found a 'fun way' to brush her teeth!

⚠ Rolly Brush Health and Safety

Not recommended for children under three or any individual who may swallow the Rolly Brush.

Do not swallow.

Disposable product. Dispose of in a proper waste receptacle.

Colgate MAGIK Brushing Kit

The Colgate MAGIK brushing kit works with an augmented reality Colgate MAGIK smartphone app (available for Android and iOS) that encourages correct brushing techniques by using fun games. Brush: Open the Colgate Magik app and get brushing Teach: Games guide where and how to brush Track: Keep an eye on your child's progress Reward: Unlock new game experiences via good brushing Repeat: Build good life-long oral hygiene habits

The App opens a game, the goal of the game is to earn diamonds by brushing away 'Cavity Monsters' that appear on the screen. The diamonds are used to unlock fun new worlds and AR face masks. My tester was Jacob, a 10 year-old boy with Down Syndrome. Jacob is a reluctant brusher. Jacob was very keen to open the inviting packaging. The toothbrush was easy to set up. Jacob placed the colorful MAGIK connector onto the end of the toothbrush, he liked the suction cups at the base of the brush as they stuck it to the sink. He needed a little help initially to download the Colgate MAGIK app and to follow the instructions to create his prole avatar then he was ready to go! This toothbrush is hugely motivating for Jacob and has given him

independence in brushing his teeth, he can't wait to open the app and start brushing. His parents track his progress via the app

Suitable for ages 6+The Colgate MAGIK brushing kit is currently available to buy on Amazon.

For older children and adults, Colgate sell a Colgate Connect E1 Smart toothbrush, this also tracks brushing techniques and has some fun games included in the app. <https://shopcolgate.co.uk/pages/e1>



Desensitisation Programme

Exposing the individual to dental items through role play presents a fun way to engage and can help to desensitise.

Include items such as a mask, a range of toothbrushes and toothpastes, a small mirror, joke teeth to brush.

Rewards and Motivators Use reward charts, stickers or timed iPad access. Use motivating toothbrushing songs and apps

A desensitisation program is a step-by-step guide to completing a task. By taking small steps (called forward chaining,) you can help to desensitise an individual to brushing their teeth.

Desensitisation programmes are personal to the individual and tailored to meet their needs.

Here is an example:

1. Start by allowing the individual to explore the toothpaste with no pressure or expectation.
2. Progress to briefly and gently touching the lips with a small amount of toothpaste, offer praise followed by a motivating activity
3. Encourage the individual to gently rub the toothpaste onto one tooth encouraging using an index finger or a small cloth. Follow with praise and a motivating activity.
4. Continue to work forward in small steps gradually increasing the number of teeth having toothpaste rubbed onto them.
5. Introduce the toothbrush, following the same steps as you did with the toothpaste.
6. Offer consistent praise and reward with the motivating activity.

Remember!

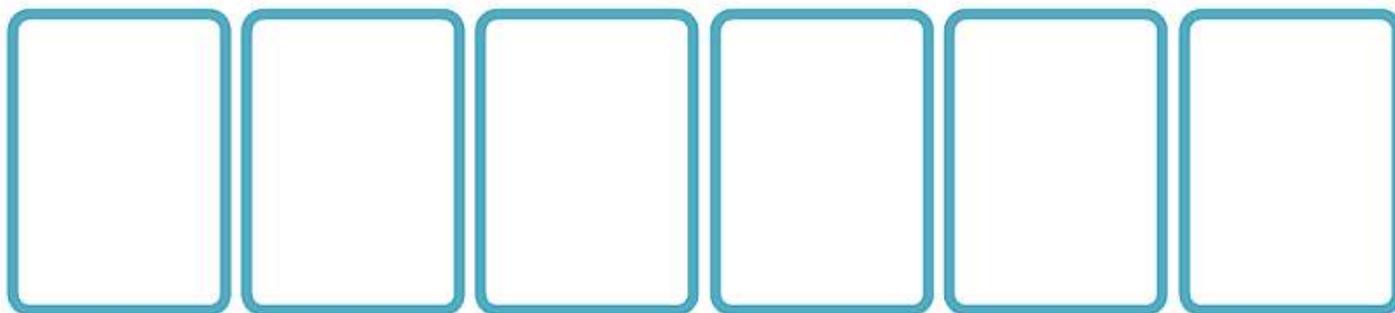
Take steps back in the process (chain) if you need to and build back up again.

If a toothbrush is not tolerated, encourage the individual to wipe their teeth clean using a damp soft cloth.

Try adjusting the water temperature. Brushing the teeth in lukewarm water may be more comfortable than cold water

Brushing Teeth Visual Schedule

This is a suggestion and the information provided should not be interpreted as a specific treatment plan or course of action and is no way intended as a substitution for medical advice



Cleaning your teeth Visual Schedule for The Dentist - Rhyming Multisensory Stories Created using Boardmaker Online

(Thanks to Jane at [Jane Mullen Speech Therapy](http://www.janespeechtherapy.co.uk/) for creating the visuals) www.janespeechtherapy.co.uk/

Dentist Themed Listening Game

A quick search on the internet will provide you with access to a library of free audio clips and sound effects. These can be played via your phone, iPad, Kindle or recorded to be played back on a Dictaphone or Talking Tile, Multi Memo Recorder or other device.

✂ Play dentist themed sound effects for the learner to experience e.g. air blowing, a telephone ringing, the radio playing in the background, water being sprayed from a bottle.

✂ Can the learner communicate a request for 'more' to listen to a motivating sound again?

✂ Can the learner activate the listening device independently?

✂ Can the learner imitate the noise?

✂ Can the learner correctly identify the sound?

✂ Experiment with different levels of sound.



Dental Surgery Role Play

Role play is a crucial part of development providing opportunities to practice imaginative play, communication and language skills building narrative thought acting out scenarios.

> Set up a dental surgery by placing chairs to make a waiting area with magazines and a separate table and chair for the receptionist. Provide a diary for writing appointments and a telephone.

> Assign roles. The receptionist, the dentist and the patients. You could also have a dental nurse. Encourage students to swap roles. This sharing of roles and turn taking will develop awareness of others' thoughts, feelings and opinions. Provide craft materials for students to make badges to identify their role.

> Provide a blue, white or green shirt, goggles and face masks for the dentist and dental nurse to wear, toothbrushes, toothpaste, mirrors, a small torch, fake 'toy' teeth,

Setting up a dental surgery role play area provides an excellent opportunity to work with money, whether it is calculating change or devising a price list for services. They could set up an area to sell products (toothbrushes, toothpaste and dental floss.

> Booking appointments presents opportunities to practice time.

> Role play provides an excellent opportunity to facilitate PECS exchanges.

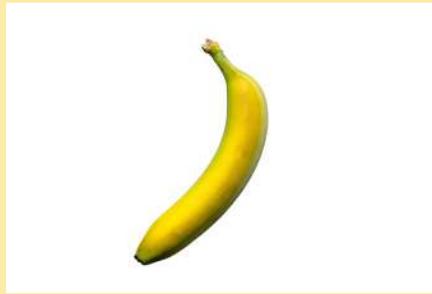


Healthy Eating Game

Photocopy and cut out the pictures. Can students sort the pictures into two piles healthy choices and foods to eat as a treat. Explain that sugary foods and drinks cause tooth decay



Sweets



Banana



Milk



Cakes



Fruit & Vegetables



Fizzy Drinks



Salad



Biscuits



Chocolate

Plaque Attack Activity!

You will need:

Toothbrush ✓

Toothpaste ✓

Disclosing Tablets ✓

Mirror ✓

Aim of the Activity

The aim of this activity is to show individuals how effective they are at brushing their teeth and to see the areas where plaque accumulates that they have missed and need to concentrate on brushing.

Ask the individual to brush their teeth as they normally would.

Follow the instructions on the plaque disclosing tablet ⚠️ (this is generally to chew a tablet, letting it mix with saliva for 30 seconds then spitting it out but instructions may differ depending on the brand of tablet used.)

Tell the individual to look in the mirror and see the areas of colour where the plaque remains.

Ask them to repeat brushing their teeth concentrating on these areas.

Now when they look at their teeth in the mirror they should see that most of the colour has been brushed away.

Explain that when brushing the teeth it is important to concentrate on the harder to reach areas such as the back as well as easier areas such as the front teeth.

⚠️ Be allergy aware



What is a Multisensory Story?

A multisensory story immerses the listener by telling a story using words and sensory stimuli (story props), connecting the individual to culture and literature in a way that is motivating and meaningful to their lives.

Who Are Multisensory Stories For?

Multisensory stories are aimed at individuals with special educational needs and learning disabilities from curious preschoolers to teenagers with complex needs. The stories form an excellent base on which to scaffold learning providing opportunities for the individual to work towards their personal learning goals and targets. The stories are also suitable for dementia patients in residential settings.

Are The Stories Only For Use In Educational Settings?

Absolutely not! The stories and poems are fully resourced, step by step guides, making them the perfect resource for Parents, Siblings, Guardians, Childminders, Early Years Educators, Teachers, HLTA's, TA's, Speech Therapists, Play Therapists, Support Workers, Activity Coordinators, Storytellers, Librarians and anyone with an interest in exploring storytelling through the senses in a fun and engaging way!

*Why **Rhyming** Multisensory Stories?*

The combination of sensory stimuli, listening to the rhyme and rhythm and the repetitive structure of the stories, supports memory and aids learning, playing a crucial role in the development of early communication language skills; joint attention, eye-contact, turn-taking, anticipation and the learning of concepts.

What Are The Benefits Of Multisensory Storytelling?

Storytelling builds a bond between the storyteller and the listener, enhancing well-being and enriching experiences. Exposure to sensory stimuli allows the listener to engage with new experiences to calm and alert the sensory system in a safe, therapeutic environment and use their senses to understand the world around them.

Can Multisensory Stories Build Communication Skills?

Sensory stories are an excellent motivating tool for encouraging alternative communication systems, early communication skills, Makaton, sign language and to facilitate PECS exchanges. The stories build the confidence of learners with speech impediments and communication difficulties as they have a physical (story) prop to support the words they are saying.



I Have a Question!

Your questions, queries, comments and feedback are always welcome!



Rhyming Multisensory Stories

STORYTELLING THROUGH THE **Senses** 

Website: www.rhymingmultisensorystories.com

✉ email: rhymingmultisensorystories@outlook.com

f www.facebook.com/storytellingthroughthesenses

t Twitter: @RhymingStories

p <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/rhymingmultisensorystories/rhyming-multisensory-stories/>

Useful Contacts & Links

Thanks to:

Jane Mullen Speech Therapy Ltd for providing the visual support www.janespeechtherapy.co.uk

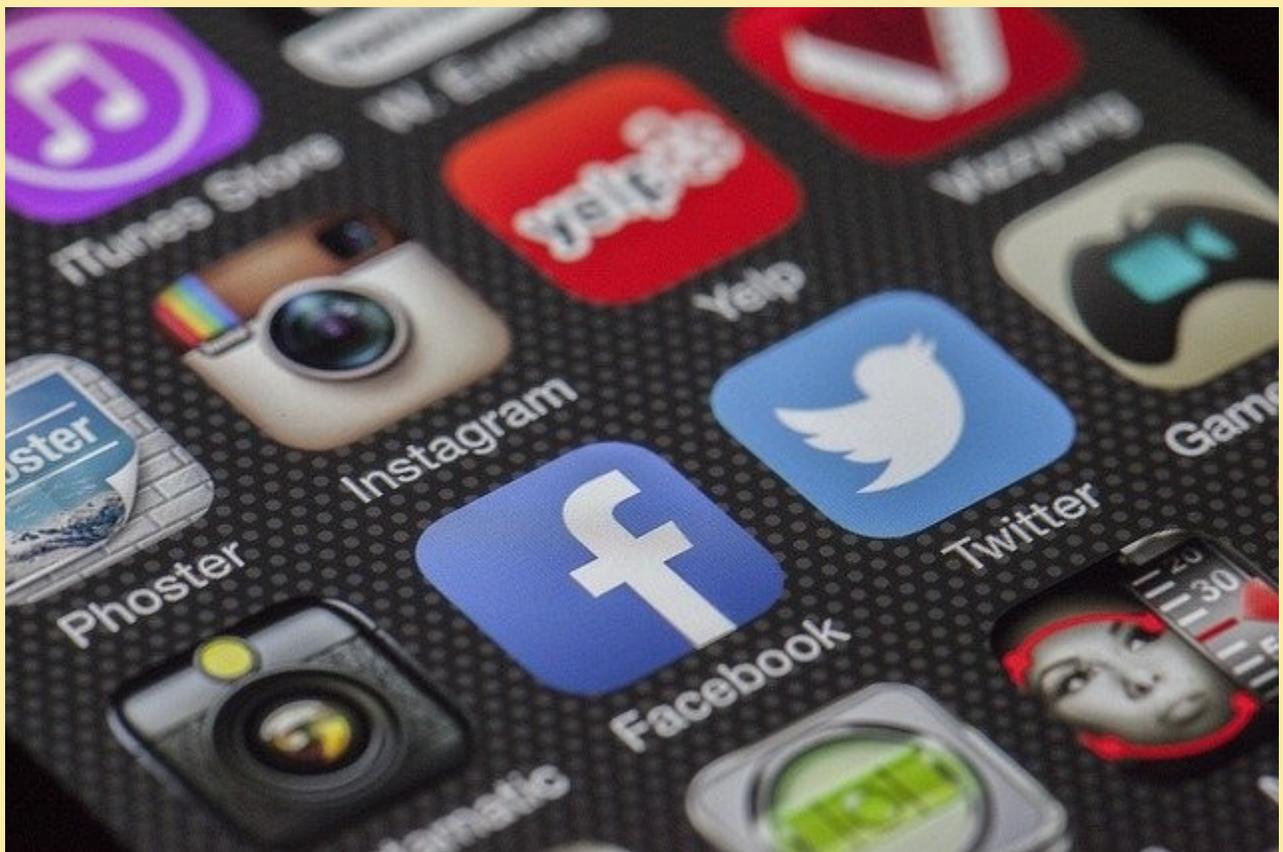
RIS Healthcare www.ris.healthcare

oraNurse® www.oranurse.co.uk

Rollybrush Uk www.rollybrush.co.uk

Colgate-Palmolive (U.K) Limited www.colgate.palmolive.co.uk

Colgate 'Bright Smiles, Bright Futures' school dental hygiene programme <https://colgate.com/en-gb/bright-smiles-bright-futures/program-materials/for-teachers>.



The Dentist

Helping Individuals Overcome Barriers to their Oral Hygiene.

This fully resourced, step by step multisensory poem will build the learner's confidence to explore new and unfamiliar sensory experiences. Repeating the story in a safe and comfortable setting can help the learner to become gradually desensitised to the props, helping to prepare them for visits out of their daily routine, in this case, an appointment or encounter with a dentist.

Multisensory stories tell a story through the senses in a fun and engaging way using props. The stories are adapted to suit a range of abilities from curious preschoolers to teenagers with complex needs.

Rhyming Multisensory Stories

Connecting individuals to literature, culture and topics in a way that is meaningful to their lives!

For more stories, poems, ideas and inspiration visit the website:



Rhyming Multisensory Stories

STORYTELLING THROUGH THE Senses 