

Lesson Plan: Building Oral Hygiene Habits in Young Children (Ages 5-6)

Book Title: *Teeth Don't Play Basketball*

Objective: To build an understanding of basic oral hygiene habits and foster a positive relationship with oral health.

Duration: 30-35 minutes

Materials:

- *Teeth Don't Play Basketball* book
- Large model of teeth and toothbrush (optional)
- Music player (for background music during the movement activity)
- Flossing prop (string or ribbon)

Lesson Outline:

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- **Teacher Says:** "Today, we're going to learn how to take care of our teeth with Liam and his friend, Harlem the tooth. Harlem dreams of playing basketball, but he needs to stay strong and healthy by brushing and flossing every day!"
- **Discussion:** Ask the children, "Do you know why it's important to brush your teeth?" Encourage a few answers before explaining that brushing and flossing keep our teeth strong and happy.

2. Story Time (10-12 minutes)

- Read the attached below *Teeth Don't Play Basketball (shortened version)* aloud, making sure to stop and ask the children questions about what Liam and Harlem are doing to take care of Harlem.
- After the story, ask: "What did Liam do to help Harlem play basketball?" Emphasize how brushing and flossing are important for Harlem's 'strength.'

3. Movement Activity & Chant (10 minutes)

- **Introduction to the Chant:** "Now, let's pretend we're Harlem the tooth, and we're going to clean all the parts of our teeth to make sure we're ready for the big game!"
- **Chant with Movements:** Teach the children the following chant and encourage them to act it out by pretending to brush and floss their teeth:

Chant:

- *Brush my belly, brush my back,*
(Pretend to brush your tummy and your back, making wide circles with hands as pretend brushes)
- *Every groove and every crack,*
(Move fingers around ear, nose and mouth as if reaching into the grooves of the molars)
- *Floss my armpits, left and right,*
(Pretend to floss under the arms, mimicking the action of flossing between teeth)
- *Or they'll be stinky the whole night!*
(Hold nose and make a funny 'stinky' face)

Repeat the chant several times, encouraging all children to participate in the brushing and flossing actions. Add background music to make the activity lively!

4. Demonstration and Practice (5 minutes)

- Using the large tooth model, demonstrate the proper way to brush (gentle circles at front of tooth, back of tooth and along its biting surface) and floss (sliding up and down between teeth).
- Let the children practice with their own pretend toothbrushes and floss (using their fingers) to solidify the skills.

5. Closing Discussion (3 minutes)

- Reinforce the importance of brushing and flossing every day by asking, “Who’s going to help their own teeth stay strong and ready for anything, just like Harlem?”
- End by reviewing the chant one more time as a fun takeaway.

Learning Outcomes:

- Children will learn the importance of brushing and flossing through a playful, engaging activity, as well as introducing an understanding of correct and comprehensive technique.
- They will develop positive feelings about oral hygiene by associating it with fun movements and teamwork.

- The chant will help them remember the key steps in maintaining a clean, healthy smile.

Extension: Ask the children to teach the chant and movements to their parents or siblings at home to spread the fun of oral hygiene!

Teeth Don't Play Basketball (Shortened version to be read aloud in 10 minutes)

Liam woke up early, excited for basketball tryouts at school. But as he looked in the mirror, he saw something unbelievable—a tooth, sitting on his bed. Not just any tooth, but one with arms, eyes, and a big smile. Liam couldn't believe it.

Suddenly, the tooth spoke! "I'm Harlem, and I'm your tooth! Take care of me, and I'll take care of you."

Liam was confused but intrigued. "I'm Liam. I don't know how to take care of a tooth!" Harlem frowned. "But I'm important! I help you smile, eat, and play basketball, just like you want to do."

"Brush my belly,

Brush my back,

Every groove

And every crack!

Floss my armpits,

Left and right,

Or they'll be stinky

The whole night!"

Liam thought it was a little weird, but Harlem explained that his dream was to play basketball, too. However, Harlem had been rejected from a team because he was dirty and stained. Harlem asked Liam to brush and floss him regularly to help him get clean and strong. But Liam had his own life to live and didn't want to deal with it.

Over time, Harlem followed Liam around, reminding him to take care of him, but Liam barely brushed and never flossed. Harlem grew larger, but he felt sick and dirty from the sugary foods Liam ate. He tried to get Liam to play basketball with him, but Liam didn't take him seriously. He told Harlem, "You're just a tooth! Teeth don't play basketball!"

Harlem was heartbroken. All he wanted was to be clean, healthy, and to play basketball with Liam. Eventually, Liam noticed that his teeth started to hurt, and people weren't as friendly anymore because his smile wasn't bright.

One day, Harlem sat with Liam in the bathroom and said, "If you take care of me, I'll take care of you." Liam finally realized Harlem was right. He started brushing Harlem twice a day, flossing regularly, and eating healthier foods. It didn't take long before Harlem looked and felt better. In return, Harlem helped Liam gain confidence with his clean smile and stronger teeth. Liam even talked to the girl he liked!

Then one day, Liam surprised Harlem with a trip to a basketball game. They went to a stadium to watch a team that Harlem adored. As the game went on, Harlem saw something incredible—some of the players weren't even human! There was a lion mascot doing tricks, and Harlem realized that maybe, just maybe, a tooth could have a place in basketball too.

After the game, one of the players even complimented Harlem, saying, "You're the cleanest, shiniest little tooth I've ever seen!" Harlem was overjoyed—it was the best day of his life.

From then on, Liam and Harlem were a team. Liam kept taking care of Harlem, brushing and flossing every day, and Harlem made sure Liam's smile stayed bright, strong, and ready for all of life's adventures.