

# Lesson 2: Fighting Plaque and Cavities

## Overview:

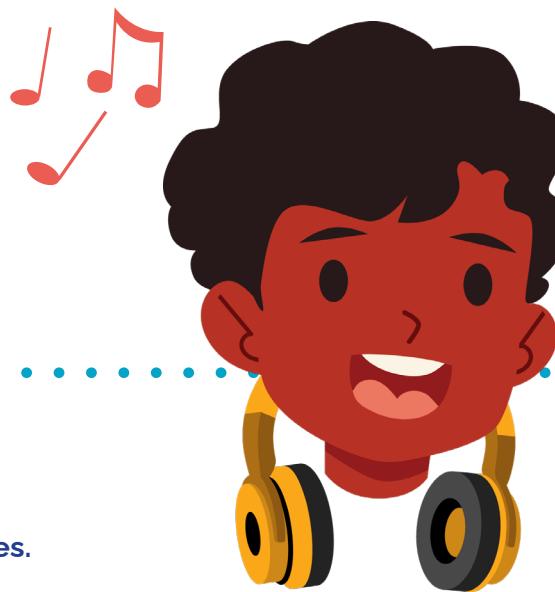
Students will learn why fluoride is important to protect teeth from plaque and cavities.

## ⌚ Time Needed:

45 minutes

## Supplies:

- [Shout & Toss Tooth Activity](#)
  - » One ball
  - » [Healthy Tooth Template](#)
  - » [Unhealthy Tooth Template](#)
- [Video: Fighting Off Plaque and Cavities](#)
- [What Can I Do Activity Sheet](#)
- [Lesson 2 Caregiver Handout: Ways to Keep Your Child's Oral Health at its Best!](#)



## **Review:**

Review with students the key points from Lesson One.

**Ask students these questions. Answers are in parentheses.**

1. What are parts of the mouth? (  lips,  cheeks,  tongue, and  gums)
2. What are the layers of a tooth? (  crown,  enamel,  dentin,  pulp,  root, and  gums)
3. What are the three types of teeth we have? (  incisors,  cuspids, and  molars)
  - » In permanent teeth, we also have a premolar! A premolar takes the place of a primary molar. You will begin to see these around ages 10-11.

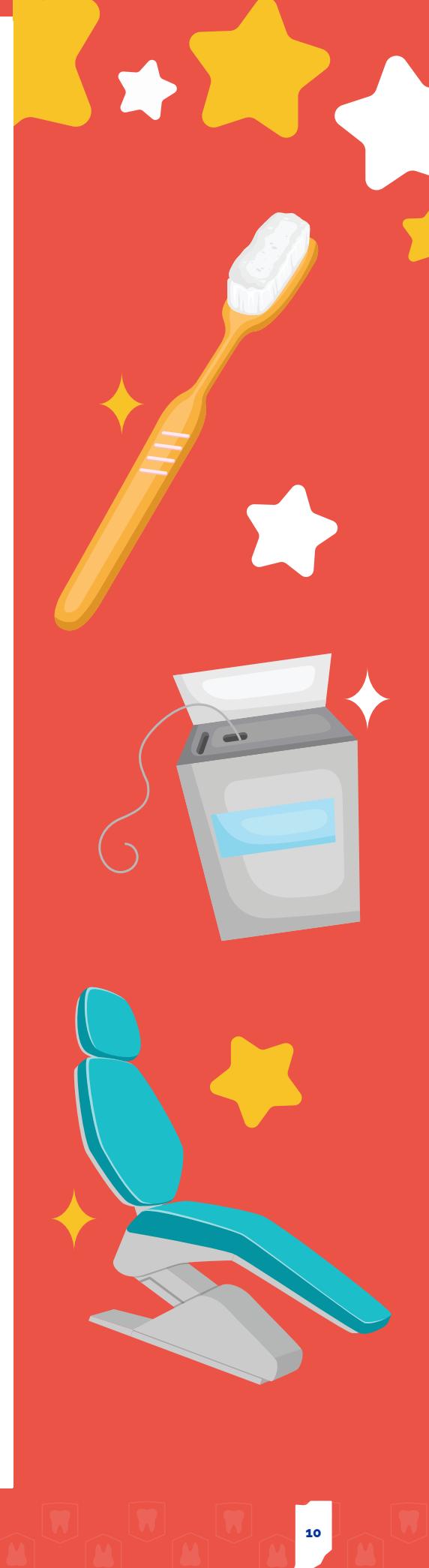
Now that you have learned parts of the mouth and teeth, let's learn how to keep your teeth healthy!

## **Introduction:**

It is important to have healthy teeth. Having healthy teeth will help you talk, eat, and smile. As we learned in Lesson One, our teeth have different jobs and to do their jobs correctly, we have to keep our teeth strong and healthy.

### **Ask students:**

1. What ways do you keep your teeth healthy? (brushing/flossing, eating/drinking less sugary items, visiting the dentist, etc.)
  - » All those answers are correct! It is important to take care of your teeth and mouth because they connect to the rest of your body! We need our teeth to talk to our friends, to eat healthy meals, and smile to greet our friends and family.
2. What happens if your teeth are not healthy? (cavities, tooth pain, bad breath, teeth fall out, etc.)
  - » If you don't take care of your teeth, they can start to hurt and may lead to cavities. In this lesson, you will learn why it is important to brush and floss your teeth and ways to avoid plaque and cavities.



## Discussion Steps:

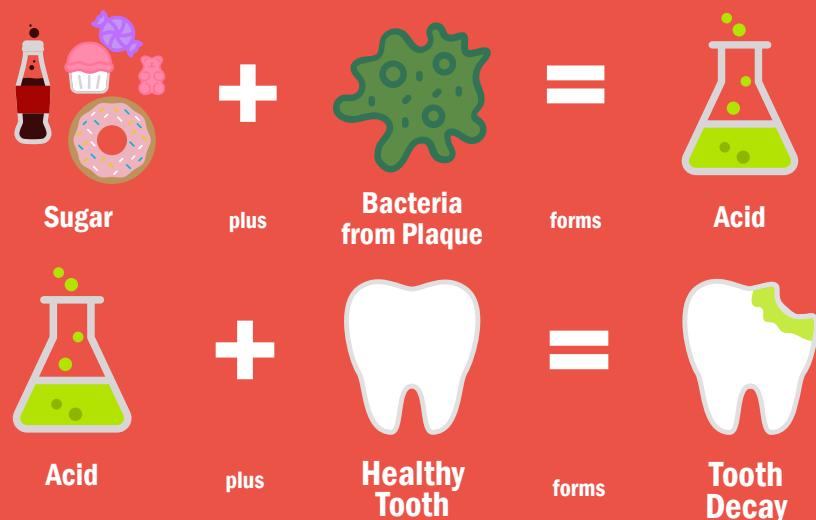
First explain what plaque and cavities are and how they affect your teeth.

1. **Plaque** is a slimy, sticky substance that forms on your teeth. It is made when bacteria in the mouth is mixed with sugary foods and drinks. Plaque feels like a layer of fuzz on your teeth. If you don't brush and floss daily, the plaque will keep building up.
  - » When too much plaque builds up on your teeth, it can make an acid that attacks your tooth enamel. Tooth enamel is the strong outer layer of your tooth. If your enamel is under an acid attack, it can lead to cavities and tooth decay. Which is why it's important to brush and floss your teeth every day!
2. **Cavities** are when a hole is formed in the enamel of our tooth. Cavities may cause toothaches or pain, bad breath, bleeding in your gums, and tooth decay.



**It is important to take care of our teeth every day. If we do not, we can develop tooth and gum infections, twisted teeth, and more!**

- **Tooth infections** happen when germs get inside a tooth. It can happen if you have a cavity or your tooth gets hurt. You might feel pain or swelling.
- **Gum infections** happen when germs get inside your gums. Your gums can look red, swollen, and hurt. They might even bleed when you brush and floss, so it is just as important to care for our gums.
- **Twisted teeth** happen when baby teeth fall out and adult teeth grow in crooked. Twisted teeth can make it harder to chew food or keep your teeth clean. There are many reasons for twisted teeth, like an injury as well.



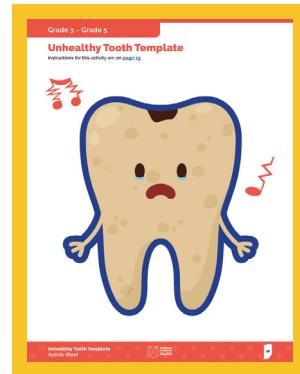
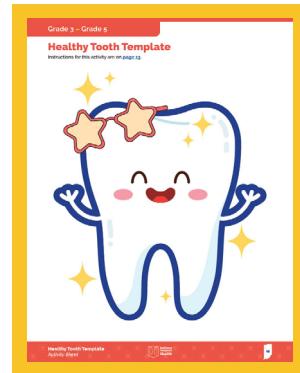
## >Tooth Tip:

**Fluoride** helps build strong tooth enamel. It protects our teeth from plaque and tooth decay. Fluoride is like a superhero for your teeth! Fluoride can be found in toothpaste, mouthwashes, and tap water. It is important to use fluoride toothpaste when brushing your teeth and drink fluoridated water to keep your tooth enamel strong and prevent cavities. Check your toothpaste to make sure it has fluoride!

## Activity Time

### Shout & Toss Tooth Activity

1. Explain the activity to students:
  - a. Have students sit in a circle. Display the [Healthy Tooth Template](#).
  - b. Explain that when they have the ball, they will shout out a food item that makes a tooth healthy. Then, they will toss the ball to a classmate.
  - c. After students have a turn to list food items that make teeth healthy, display the [Unhealthy Tooth Template](#).
  - d. When a student has the ball, they will shout out a food item that may cause a tooth to be unhealthy or lead to a cavity. Next, they will toss the ball to a classmate.
2. During the activity, jot down the food items that students shout out under each tooth.
3. After the activity, ask students these questions.  
Answers are in parentheses.
  - a. Why is it important to eat healthy foods? (safe for our teeth, prevents cavities, stronger teeth)
  - b. What happens if we avoid brushing and flossing after eating unhealthy foods? (cavities, tooth pain, bad breath)





Next, we will learn about what you can do to avoid plaque and cavities! Play the [Fighting Off Plaque and Cavities Video](#) that explains ways to avoid plaque and cavities.

After watching the video, hand out the [What Can I Do Activity Sheet](#).

1. Explain the activity
  - a. In each tooth, students will draw or write what they can do to avoid plaque and cavities.
2. Walk around and observe as students do the activity.
3. At the end, encourage students to share what they drew or wrote and why with the class.

At the end of the lesson, ask students these review questions. Answers are in parentheses.

1. How does brushing reduce plaque? (brushes away plaque and food particles)
2. How does flossing prevent cavities? (removes plaque and food hidden between teeth)
3. How many times should you visit the dentist in a year? (twice)



### ☛ Prepare students for what's coming in Lesson Three!

- In the next lesson, we will learn about nutrition and foods that are healthy and unhealthy for our teeth!



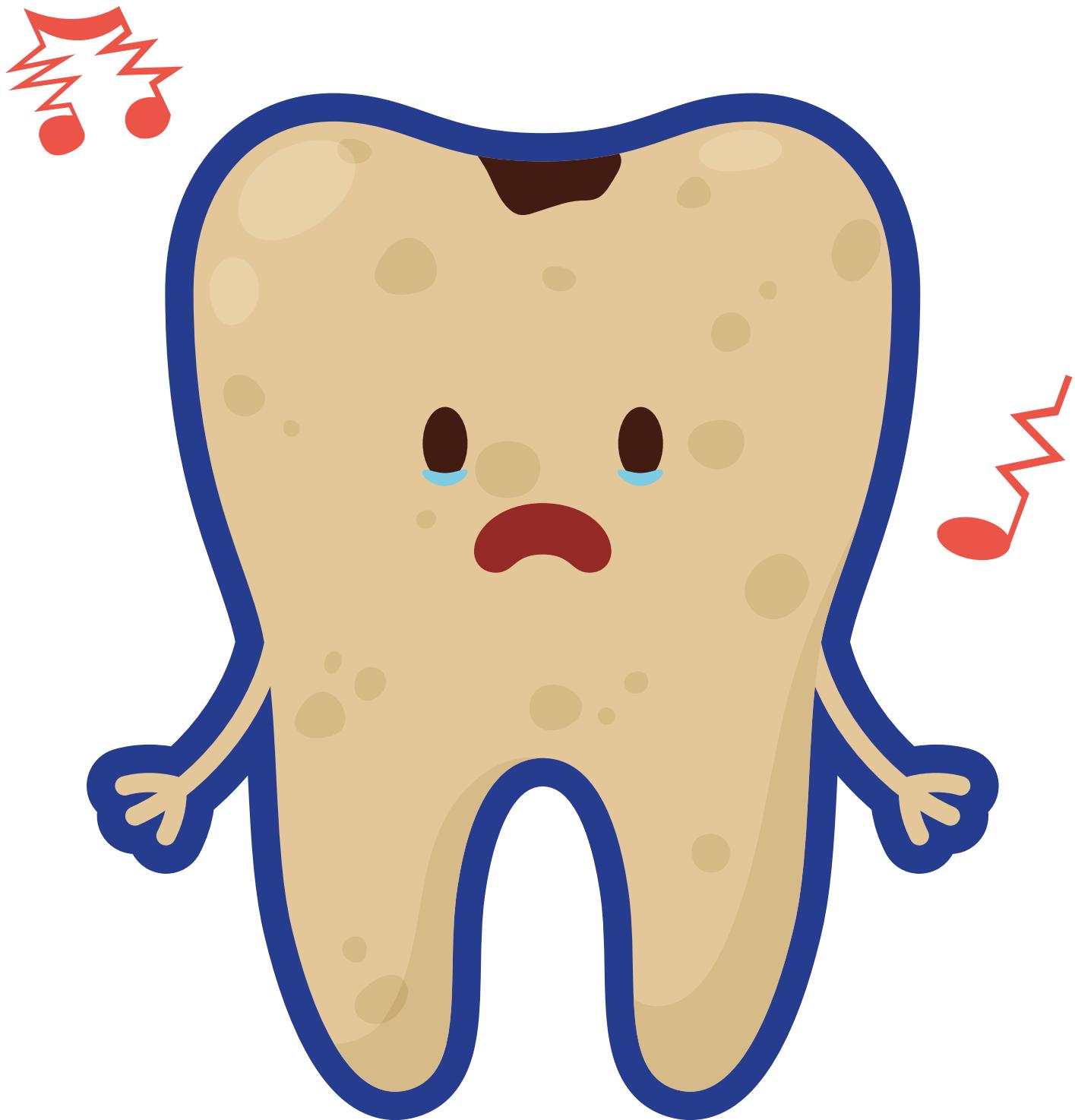
# Healthy Tooth Template

Instructions for this activity are on [page 12](#) and [page 16](#).



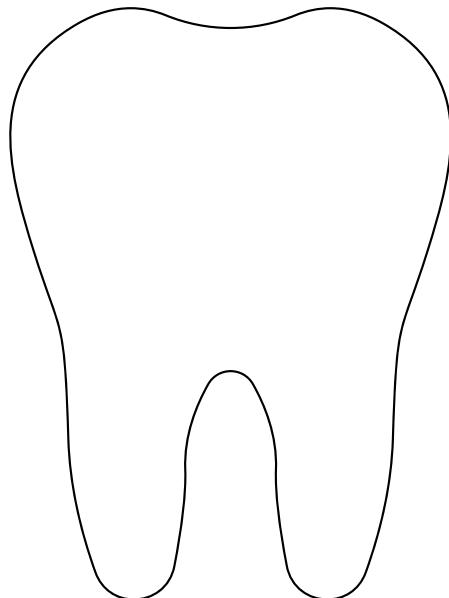
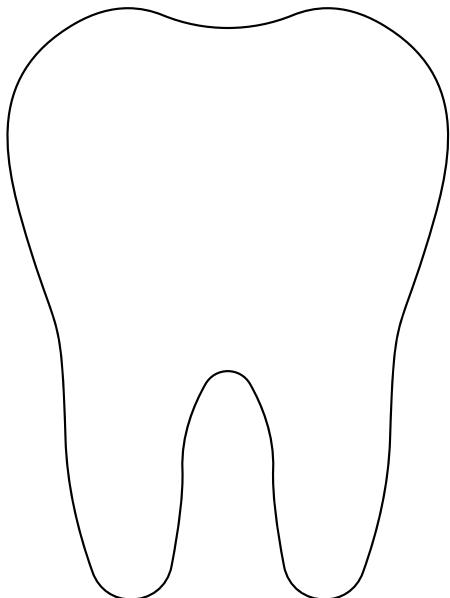
## Unhealthy Tooth Template

Instructions for this activity are on [page 12](#) and [page 16](#).



# What Can I Do Activity Sheet

Instructions for this activity are on [page 13](#).



## What Can I Do to Protect My Teeth?

