



Pinchas and the Wobbly Tooth

Ages 6-9
A story and 9 activities



Pinchas and the Wobbly Tooth

Pinchas has a wobbly tooth, and he does not want anyone to touch it.

It is a bottom tooth, right in the front. It has been loose for a week. When he pushes it with his tongue, it swings forward and back like a little door.

"It's ready to come out," says Totty at dinner.

"No way," says Pinchas. He clamps his lips shut.

"It'll fall out when it's ready," says Mommy. "Maybe tonight, maybe next week."

"Does it hurt?" asks his sister Rina, who is in third grade and has already lost four.

"Not really. It tickles a little."

"Tickles?" Pinchas frowns. That does not sound right. It sounds more like a trick.

That night, he lies in bed wiggling the tooth with his tongue. What if it falls out while I'm asleep? What if I swallow it? What if there's a lot of blood? What if the new tooth never grows in?

He pulls the blanket over his head.

In the morning, he goes to the kitchen. Rina is eating cereal and reading a book.

"I'm scared of my tooth," he whispers.

Rina looks up. She puts down her spoon. She doesn't laugh. "What part are you scared of?"

"The blood. And the part where it comes out."

"Okay," says Rina. "Do you want to know what it's really like?"

Pinchas nods slowly.

"First, the tooth gets looser and looser. Then one day, you bite into an apple, or you wiggle it, and it just pops. There's maybe a tiny bit of blood, like a paper cut. Mommy gives you a piece of gauze. You bite down for a minute. Then it stops."

"That's it?"

"That's it. And then you get to look at the little hole in the mirror. It's very funny. You can stick your tongue right through it."

Pinchas giggles in spite of himself. He has to admit, knowing what to expect has helped. It is like looking at a map before a trip.

On Thursday, at school, he bites into an apple at snack time. He feels a funny little pop. His tongue goes to the spot. The tooth is gone.

He looks in his hand. There it is, tiny and white, with a little tip at the bottom.

"I lost my tooth!" he announces, holding it up.

"Whoa!" says his friend Moishy.

The teacher gives him a little plastic box to carry it home. There is only a smear of pink on the apple, hardly anything.

When he gets home, he runs to the bathroom mirror. A gap stares back at him. He grins wide and lets the gap show. He wiggles his tongue through it.

"Rina!" he calls. "Come look!"

Rina comes. "Told you," she says. "Not so bad."

"It's the best thing ever," says Pinchas. "I can whistle through it. Listen."

He tries. What comes out is more of a wet puff than a whistle. They both burst out laughing.

That night he puts the tooth in a little envelope and writes his name on it, so it won't get lost. In the morning, Totty comes into the kitchen, looks at the gap, and whistles. Pinchas whistles back, a wet puff.

Totty takes out a shiny coin. "For your tzedakah box. A big boy's tooth gets a big boy's coin."

Pinchas drops it in. It clinks all the way to the bottom, and he grins his new gap-toothed grin the whole way to school.



Activity 1 of 9

Remember the story

1. Which tooth is wobbly?

2. Who gives Pinchas advice about the tooth?

3. What does Pinchas bite into when the tooth comes out?

4. What does Totty give Pinchas for his tzedakah box?



Activity 2 of 9

Fact or guess? (circle one)

1. Rina has lost four teeth already. Fact / Guess
2. The tooth comes out during snack time. Fact / Guess
3. Pinchas is very sad about the gap. Fact / Guess
4. Pinchas can whistle perfectly through the gap. Fact / Guess



Activity 3 of 9

Think and write

1. What does it help to know before something new happens?

2. Who could you ask about a thing you're nervous about?

3. What is something that turned out better than you expected?

Activity 4 of 9

Word search (find all 6)

Words: TOOTH, WOBBLY, APPLE, GAP, MIRROR, PILLOW

T	W	O	W	V	F	F	F	S	K	W
R	P	O	G	T	D	C	D	N	B	T
I	I	T	B	I	T	K	D	L	J	S
J	L	M	O	B	S	G	I	E	D	U
D	L	Y	I	P	L	H	K	S	E	T
D	O	P	M	R	F	Y	O	B	B	V
N	W	A	M	A	R	F	H	W	A	H
B	S	G	O	C	L	O	A	M	P	G
B	C	I	O	S	G	O	R	J	G	C
T	O	O	T	H	A	P	P	L	E	D
S	R	V	F	Y	S	S	H	I	D	N



Activity 5 of 9

Scrambled words (from the story)

1. HTTOO = _____

2. BYLBOW = _____

3. PELAP = _____

4. RMROIR = _____

5. THLSWEI = _____



Activity 6 of 9

Say it out loud

Practice each line in a calm, steady voice:

"I'm a little nervous. What happens next?"

"Can you tell me what to expect?"

"That wasn't so bad."



Activity 7 of 9

My chart

My What to Expect Chart

#	Something new	What I thought	What really happened
New thing 1			
New thing 2			
New thing 3			



Activity 8 of 9

Draw it

Draw Pinchas grinning with a big gap in his smile and a tiny tooth in his hand.





Activity 9 of 9

Answers

Remember the story:

1. A bottom tooth in the front
2. His sister Rina
3. An apple
4. A shiny coin

Fact or guess: 1 Fact; 2 Fact; 3 Guess; 4 Guess

Scrambled words: TOOTH, WOBBLY, APPLE, MIRROR, WHISTLE

Think and write: answers will vary; talk them over together.