

# Third Grade Baby

teacher's guide

Third Grade  
Baby



JENNY  
MEYERHOFF  
pictures by  
JILL WEBER

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for choosing to read *Third Grade Baby* in your classroom. I hope that you and your students will enjoy the activities I have prepared to enhance and extend the reading experience.

When you and your students have finished the activities in the guide please visit me on the web at [www.JennyMeyerhoff.com](http://www.JennyMeyerhoff.com). I love to hear from my readers!

Happy Reading!

Jenny Meyerhoff



Photo by: Mindy Garfinkle

## about the author

In third grade, Jenny Meyerhoff read *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret* twenty-one times. During her teenage years, she wrote hundreds of angst-ridden poems and one picture book. She dreamed of becoming a professional children's book writer. So, Jenny studied creative writing at the University of Michigan, and received her master's degree in education at Northwestern University. She then became a kindergarten teacher, because in addition to loving children's books, Jenny enjoys sitting on the floor - that's also why she practices yoga. Jenny is now a full-time writer and a full-time mom, which means she never sleeps. She lives in Riverwoods, Illinois, with her husband and three children.

For more information about Jenny, please visit her website: [www.JennyMeyerhoff.com](http://www.JennyMeyerhoff.com).

# Lesson 1 - Language Arts



Now that Polly Peterson has a baby brother, she's supposed to feel bigger, but her parents keep treating her like a toddler! And Zachary, the new kid, won't stop teasing her just because she's the only third grader who hasn't lost a single baby tooth. But when her tooth finally falls out, Polly has a new problem: she's not sure she can put her tooth under her pillow. Maybe third graders are too old to believe in the tooth fairy. If Polly still believes, does that make her a third grade baby?

## Discussion Questions

1

When Polly's mother kisses her goodbye on the first day of school, she uses a baby wipe to remove the lipstick from Polly's cheek.

**How does Polly feel about this? Why?**

**Can you think of a time you've felt this way?**

2

After Polly writes her name on the tooth board, she returns to her seat to find a mean note on her desk.

**Who do you think wrote the note?**

**Why do you think that person wrote it?**

3

After Polly loses her tooth, why does she think third graders might be too old for the tooth fairy? Do you agree?

**Are there any things you think third graders are too old for?**

4

Why do you think Polly tells Zachary that she has a picture of the tooth fairy? Why does she agree to bring it to school?

5

At the end of the book, Polly decides to let her baby brother Max come with her to Bill and Penny's Dollar store, even though she knows he will be disruptive. **Why do you think she does this?**



# Lesson 2 - Social Studies

**Materials:** ~ *Third Grade Baby* by Jenny Meyerhoff  
~ *Throw Your Tooth on the Roof: Tooth Traditions around the World* by Selby Beeler  
~ map of the world

## Tooth Traditions Around The World

In the book *Third Grade Baby*, Oliver doesn't believe in the tooth fairy because he has grown up with a different tooth tradition. His father was from China, and Oliver throws his tooth on the roof when he loses a lower tooth and puts his tooth under his bed when he loses an upper tooth. This is to encourage his upper teeth to grow straight down and his lower teeth to grow straight up.

Tell students that Oliver's beliefs are not unusual. Most countries around the world have different customs for commemorating lost teeth. Ask your students if they have heard of other tooth traditions besides the one we have in America: the tooth fairy. Then tell them you are going to read a book about many of the world's different tooth traditions. Read the book *Throw Your Tooth on the Roof* to learn more about other tooth customs, then encourage discussion with the following open ended questions.

## Discussion Questions

1

Polly says that while she wants to get a tooth fairy visit for her first tooth, she might throw her next loose tooth on the roof. **Do you think you'd like to try any different loose tooth traditions?**

2

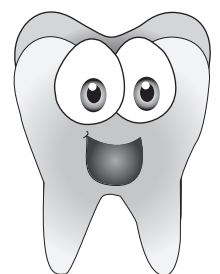
**Do you notice any similarities and/or differences between the different customs? What is your favorite custom?**

3

**Why do you think, even though all these customs are different, every place seems to have some kind of ritual for losing teeth?**

## Extension- Make a Map

Post a world map in your classroom. Map the world's tooth traditions by having each student draw a picture of one of the traditions depicted in the book and then post it on the country that follows that tradition.



# Lesson 3 - Creative Writing

**Materials:** ~ *Third Grade Baby* by Jenny Meyerhoff  
~ templates T-1 and T-2 (located at the end of this packet)  
~ large construction paper (12x18")


**Pre-Requisite: Complete Lesson 1 tooth traditions around the world**

## Create Your Own Tooth Tradition

# Discussion & Demonstration

Tell students that today they will create their own tooth traditions. Using template T-1 at the end of this guide, students will invent a new country. For example, I invented the country "Meyerhoffland". Then students will imagine a completely new tooth ritual for that country and explain its purpose or legend. For example, in Meyerhoffland, when children lose a tooth they go outside in the middle of the night and throw the tooth up to the sky. The baby tooth will then become a star in the sky. When this is done, silver coins, (like nickels and dimes) will fall back from the sky for the child with the lost tooth. The old stars who need a rest are thanking the child for adding a bright new star to the sky.

After students have completed template T-1, give them the second template, T-2. There, they can illustrate their new tooth tradition. When both sheets are completed they can be mounted side by side on the construction paper.

<p>Name: <u>Jenny Meyerhoff</u> T-1</p> <p><b>New Tooth Traditions</b></p> <p>Name of your country: <u>Meyerhoffland</u></p> <p><b>How does your country commemorate lost teeth?</b> <u>When children lose a tooth they go outside in the middle of the night and throw the tooth up to the sky. The baby tooth will then become a star in the sky. When this is done silver coins (like nickels and dimes) will fall back from the sky for the child with the lost tooth. The old stars who need a rest are thanking the child for adding a bright new star to the sky.</u></p> <p>_____ _____ _____</p>	<p>Name: <u>Jenny Meyerhoff</u> T-2</p> <p><b>New Tooth Traditions</b></p> <p>Draw a picture of your new tooth tradition.</p> 
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## Extension- Act It Out

In pairs or small groups students can act out their new new tooth tradition for their classmates.



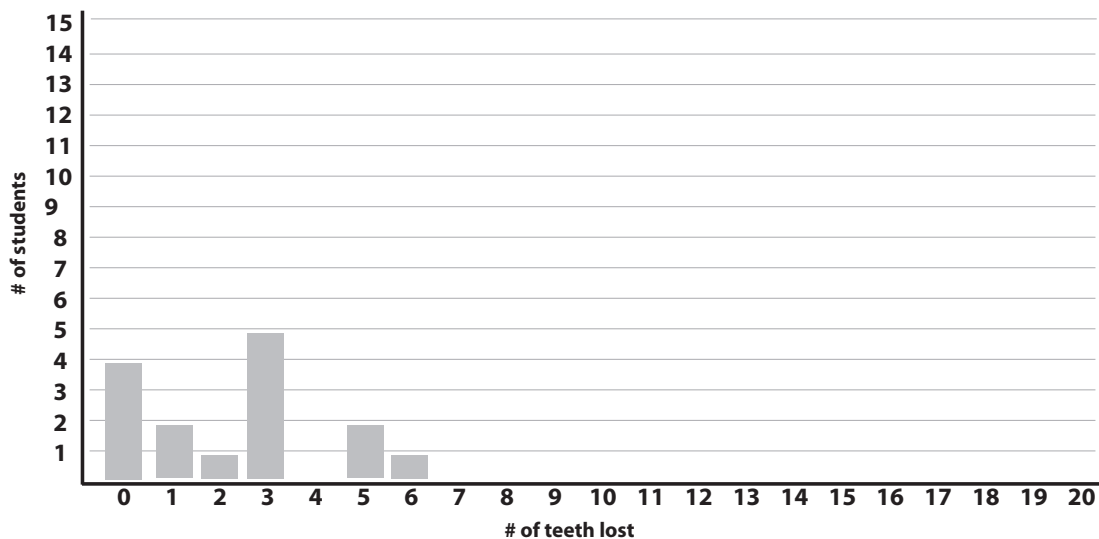
# Lesson 4 - Math

**Materials:** ~ *Third Grade Baby* by Jenny Meyerhoff  
~ templates T-3 & T-4 (located at the end of this packet)

## Go Graphy!

After reading *Third Grade Baby*, create a large graph on a bulletin board and replicate Mr. Meyers' tooth chart. Along the bottom of the graph, write the numbers from zero to twenty. This part of the graph represents the number of teeth lost. You might consider putting a picture of a tooth next to each number to keep this idea straight. (Twenty is the maximum number of baby teeth students will eventually lose, but it is unlikely any of your students will have lost twenty teeth yet. Just don't forget the zero column!) Next, along the side of the graph, number the rows from one to fifteen or more depending on the number of students in the class, starting with one at the bottom and counting up.

To complete the activity, invite students one at a time to write their names on the bulletin board in the appropriate box, just like Mr. Meyers does in the book. When your class has completed the graph, have a quick discussion about what kind of information you can extract from the data.



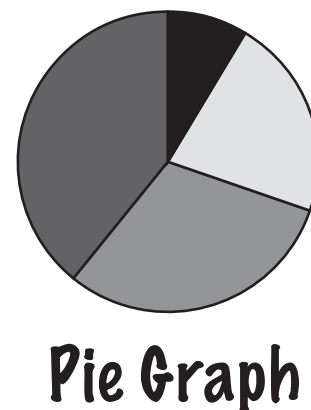
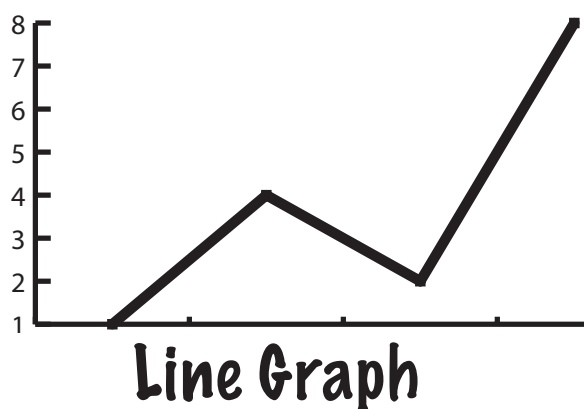
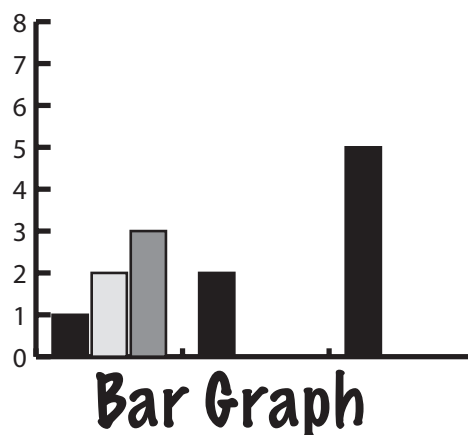
## Discussion Questions

- 1 How many people have lost six teeth?
- 2 What is the most common number of lost teeth in your class?
- 3 Advanced question: What is the average number of lost teeth?

# Lesson 4 - Math (con't)

After completing the graph activity, have a discussion about graphs and why they are useful. They help compare and keep track of information. The type of graph you made is a bar graph. A bar graph makes a comparison between two "variables". In the classroom example, you compared the number of students and the number of lost teeth.

For an explanation of different types of graphs go to:  
[www.ais.msstate.edu/AEE/Tutorial/graphictypes.html](http://www.ais.msstate.edu/AEE/Tutorial/graphictypes.html)



For the next activity, students will select their own variables and create their own bar graphs. Give each student a copy of template T-4 and instruct them to think of two variables. (For the first graph, you might suggest that all children use number of students as one of their variables.) Possible graphs include, number of students by bedtimes or number of students by shoe type. See page T-3 for an example of a student made graph.

## Extension- Graphs Gone Wild

If you do math centers in your classroom, a graphing center, with copies of the template on a set of clipboards will quickly become one of the most popular activities.



# Lesson 5 - Health

**Materials:** ~ *Third Grade Baby* by Jenny Meyerhoff  
~ disclosing tablets (liquid or tablets)  
~ toothbrushes & toothpaste (from home)

**Pre-Requisite:** Read chapter 10 in *Third Grade Baby*

## Proper Tooth Brushing

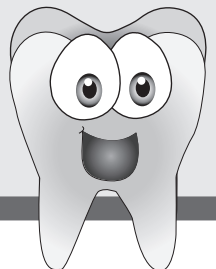
# Discussion & Demonstration

Martha Molar, most likely the school nurse dressed in costume, visits Polly's class to talk about proper oral hygiene. Tell your students that today they will get to replicate the activity that Martha did with Polly and Zachary.

Using the toothbrushes they brought from home, have your students brush their teeth the way they normally would. Then give each student a disclosing tablet and have them follow the instructions on the package for use. When they have finished, the dye will have stained the plaque on your students teeth to show where students missed when they brushed. Next, tell students they will brush again, this time using proper brushing technique.

## Proper Brushing Technique

- 1 Start at the top of your tooth, near the gum line.
- 2 Make sure the tooth brush is at a 45 degree angle.
- 3 Gently brush back and fourth over the outer surface of 2-3 teeth several times. Move to the next group of 2-3 teeth and repeat.
- 4 Brush inner surface of teeth using same pattern.
- 5 Tilt brush vertically behind the front teeth and brush with an up and down motion.
- 6 Brush the biting surfaces of the teeth with a back and forth scrubbing motion.

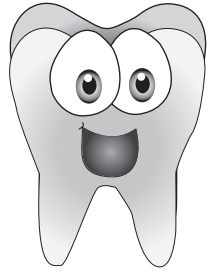


Visit this website for a video demonstration of brushing technique:

[www.colgate.com/app/Colgate/US/OC/information/interactiveGuides/BrushTool.cvsp](http://www.colgate.com/app/Colgate/US/OC/information/interactiveGuides/BrushTool.cvsp)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_



**New Tooth Traditions**

Name of your country:

\_\_\_\_\_

**How does your country commemorate lost teeth?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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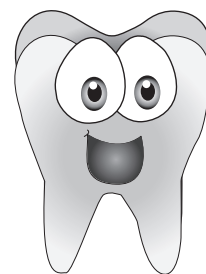
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**New Tooth Traditions**

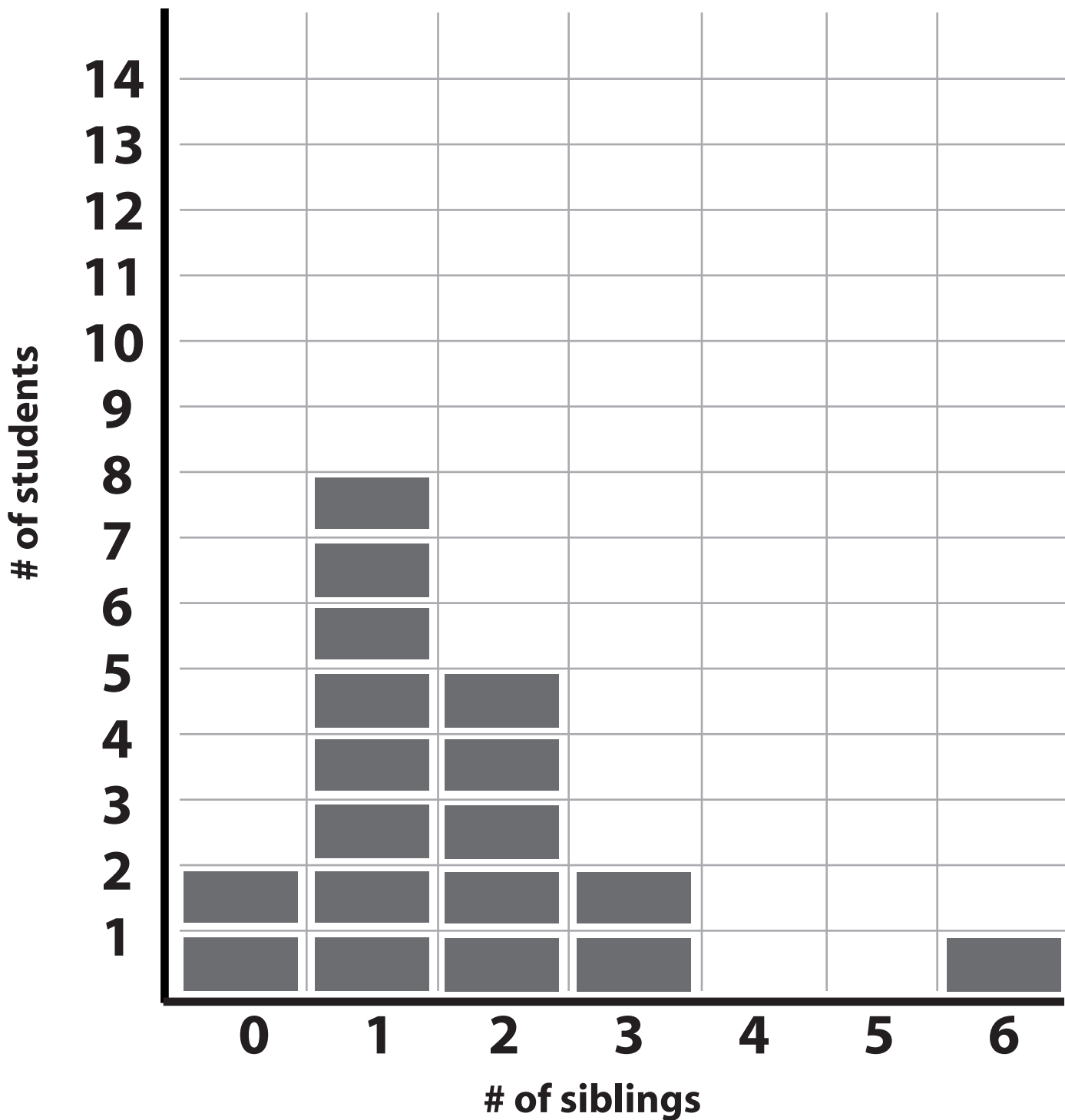


**Draw a picture of your new tooth tradition.**

A large empty rectangular box for drawing.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

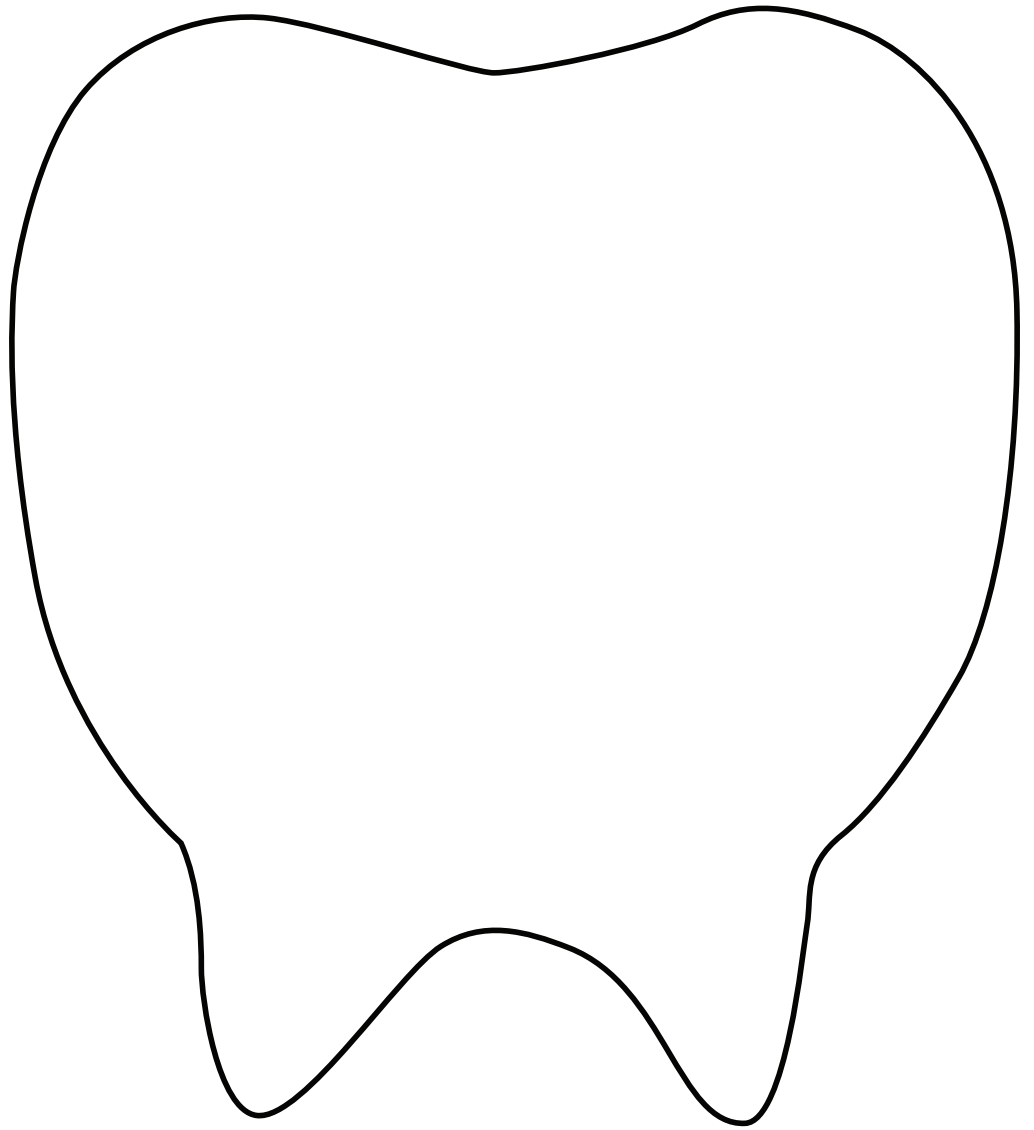
## Go Graphy Example



On the left side of the graph next to the numbers, label what you are counting. In this example, we are counting the number of students. On the bottom of the graph, fill in the squares with the other variable, number of siblings. Each square represents a student and the number of siblings they have.



Can be used  
in Lesson 2



Use these cut outs for  
activities and graphs.

