



STORY 11

BRUSH UP ON YOUR INSTRUCTIONS

A soft whirring sound was heard in the corridor of Platinum Primary School. It was the start of the day and **MASKI** rolled into Mrs. Naicker's Grade 4 classroom.

He was carrying some brightly coloured toothbrushes and a few tubes of toothpaste. He had a friendly twinkle in his LED eyes and a smile on his face.

'Hello everyone. Today we are going to have some fun brushing our teeth!'

The class giggled and looked at each other.

What was **MASKI** on about ...

... they all knew exactly how to brush their teeth.

MASKI grinned at the class.

This was going to be fun.

Today we are going to have some **FUN BRUSHING** our **TEETH!**



'Your activity today is to write down very clear, step-by-step instructions, on how to brush your teeth.

After that, I will follow your instructions ... exactly as you wrote them ... and brush my teeth.'

The children laughed.

This was going to be easy peasy!

They all set to work and soon finished writing.

MASKI called Jamal to the front of the class.

Jamal's instructions said:

- 1 *Pick up the toothbrush.*
- 2 *Put toothpaste on it.*
- 3 *Brush.*

MASKI followed the instructions. He picked up the toothbrush. He put the tube of toothpaste onto the handle. He brushed - but he brushed his FACE - and the tube landed on the floor!



Everyone roared with laughter.

MASKI smiled and said, 'My cheeks feel clean and fresh. But oh dear, your instructions were not very clear.'





Next up was Lulu.

Her written instructions said:

- 1 *Open the toothpaste.*
- 2 *Squeeze.*
- 3 *Brush back and forth.*
- 4 *Spit.*

MASKI opened the toothpaste tube, aimed it at the ceiling, and squeezed.

A **big blob** of minty paste shot up, hit the ceiling and landed on Tom!

Then he brushed back and forth ... in the air.

Finally, he spat ... onto a desk!



There was a shocked silence.

'**Oh dear**,' said Mrs. Naidoo, looking a little alarmed.

The children were too busy wiping toothpaste off themselves to notice Chad, looking very pleased with himself.

Chad's instructions were **VERY** detailed:

- 1 *Hold the tube of toothpaste in your one hand.*
- 2 *Remove the tube's cap with the other hand.*
- 3 *Put the cap down and pick up the toothbrush.*
- 4 *Squeeze the tube gently and place 1.5 centimeters of toothpaste onto the bristles of the brush.*
- 5 *Put the tube down.*
- 6 *Put the brush into your mouth.*
- 7 *Brush teeth in circular motion for 2 minutes.*

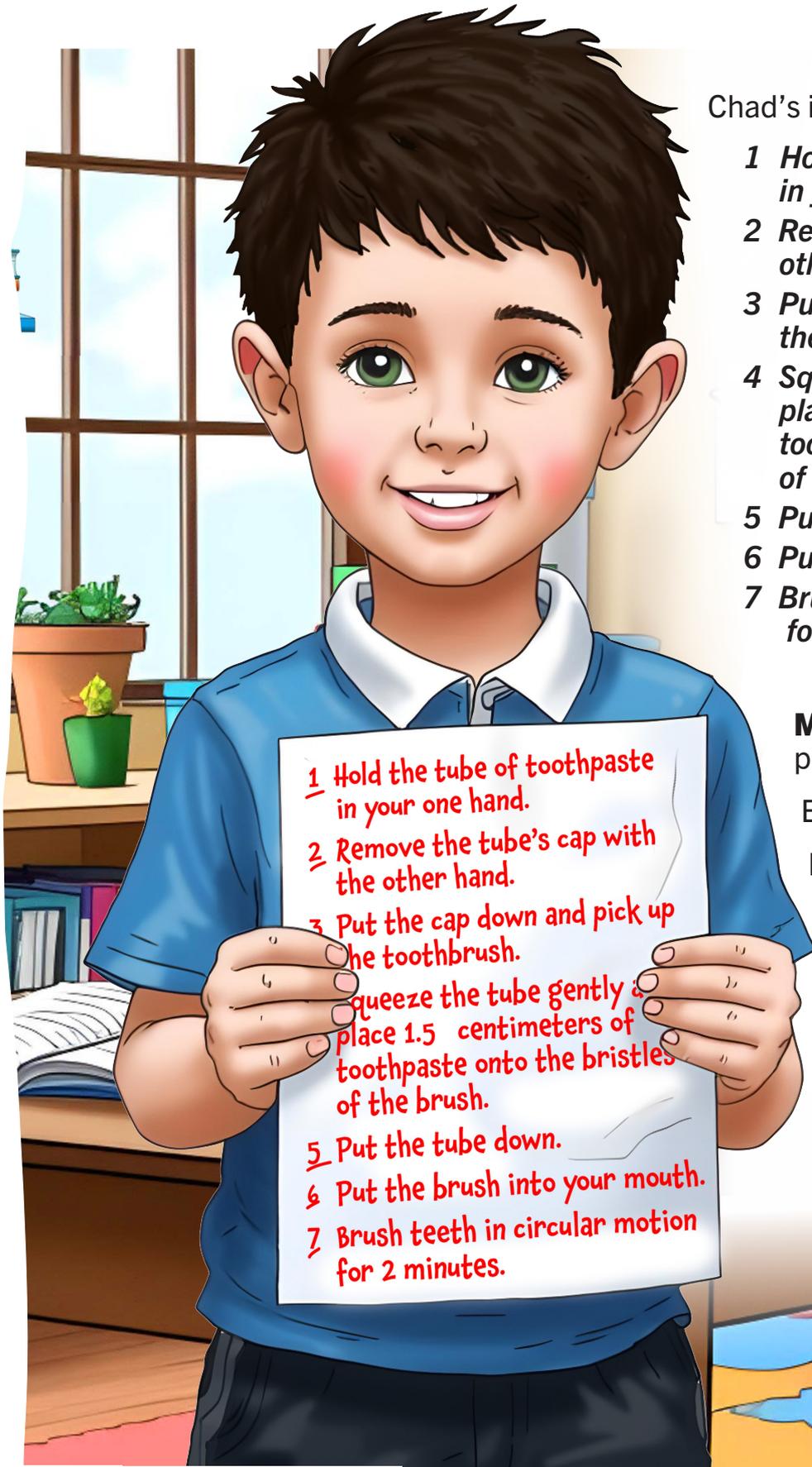
MASKI followed the steps perfectly.

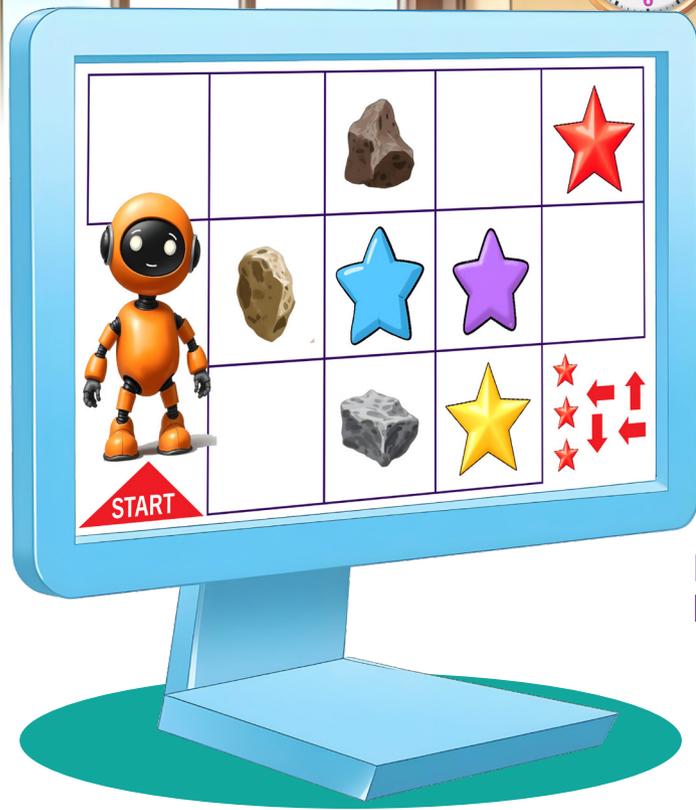
Everyone clapped.

BUT ...

MASKI had a mouth full of foam and nowhere to spit the frothy bubbles.

Lulu came to the rescue with the waste paper basket.

- 
- 1 *Hold the tube of toothpaste in your one hand.*
 - 2 *Remove the tube's cap with the other hand.*
 - 3 *Put the cap down and pick up the toothbrush.*
 - 4 *Squeeze the tube gently and place 1.5 centimeters of toothpaste onto the bristles of the brush.*
 - 5 *Put the tube down.*
 - 6 *Put the brush into your mouth.*
 - 7 *Brush teeth in circular motion for 2 minutes.*

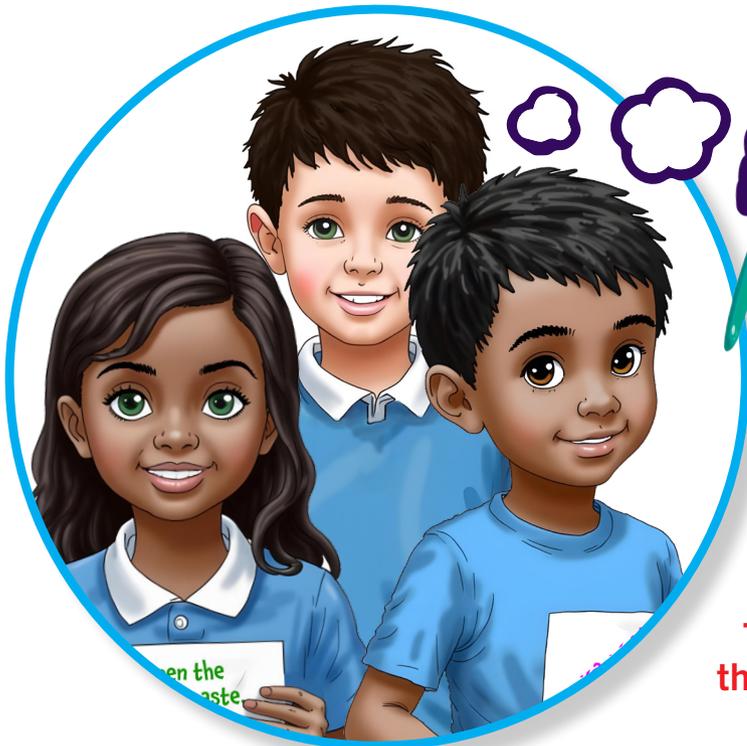


‘So you see’, said **MASKI**, ‘giving clear, step-by-step instructions is always **VERY** important. Especially when you are coding, it is important to list all the steps clearly in the right order. The computer will **ONLY** do exactly what you tell it to do. If you leave out a step it won’t know that something is missing. If you leave something out, it could be very important.’

Every step and detail is important.

‘**MASKI**, I have one last instruction for you, said Jamal.

‘Lift up your right arm and wipe your forehead. You have a big blob of toothpaste on it!’



From that day on, no one in Grade 4 ever forgot to write, or code, proper instructions.

They also thought of MASKI every time they brushed their teeth.