



# THE DENTIST

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# Introduction

Do you like to go to the dentist? Why/why not?

What do you dislike about going to the dentist?

What is a psychopath?

Could a dentist be a psychopath? What if he was?

# The Dentist

**Michael hated it.**

He hated sitting in the chair and feeling helpless. The bright light above his head and the clean, hygienic walls that surrounded him.

***It all made him feel incredibly uneasy.***

“Michael, I can assure you, there is nothing to worry about,” said Mr Crane. He wore his dentist’s white coat and had perfect white teeth. He gazed back at Michael with a relaxed air. Like there was nothing to worry about.

It was all right for him. He wasn’t sitting in the chair. He was not about to have treatment for a new crown to be fitted.

Michael shifted his weight in the chair and grimaced.

“I’m sorry about last time,” he said. “It’s just a stupid fear I have.”

“Fear of going to the dentist?” asked Mr Crane. “Don’t worry about it. I get this all the time from patients.”

He leaned forward. “Some are a lot of trouble, I can assure you.”

***He gave Michael an encouraging smile.***

This did nothing for Michael's nerves. He would rather be anywhere else than in this dentist's chair. He could accept the pain in his tooth. That was much better than sitting here, while Mr Crane drilled into the offending tooth.

“Michael, I have something I want to show you,” said Mr Crane, going to a small tray to the side of the room. He turned and picked up a small glass vial. He raised it to show to Michael. It was filled with a clear liquid.

“This is a new anaesthetic on the market,” he went on. “It is brand new, and only my private students are allowed to have it. The company that makes it wants it to be very secret.”

Mr Crane sat on the stool next to Michael and looked down at him. "But this is an incredible formula. It is probably the best pain-killer on the market."

The dentist continued to hold Michael's gaze. “Would you like to try it?”

“I- I don't want to be any trouble,” said Michael.

But his eyes were fixed on the small vial held between Mr Crane's finger and thumb.

“It's no trouble at all,” said Mr Crane. He leaned forward and

lowered his voice. "Our little secret."

The thought of being given something so powerful that he would not experience any pain at all sent a calm, soothing feeling through Michael's nerves. He could feel himself relaxing as if he were already under the influence of the new painkiller.

"Are you sure?" asked Michael.

"No problem," said Mr Crane.

Michael lay back in the chair while Mr Crane filled the syringe from the tiny bottle. He hummed a small tune as he did it and Michael recognised it as a popular song that was on the radio.

Through the window, he could make out normal life carrying on outside. He heard a bus drive by and the sound of a bell on a bicycle.

People's voices and children laughing.

***Everything was fine. There was nothing to worry about at all.***

"Shall we?" said Mr Crane, and he raised the syringe in front of him.

Michael nodded. He would pass by all this pain and torture and not feel a thing. He was so happy. So relieved.

Mr Crane leaned forward. "You'll just feel a little jab as the needle goes in. Then, nothing to worry about."

Michael tensed as the needle entered his gum. Yes, very uncomfortable, and ice-cold, but in a few minutes nothing but deep relaxation.

“All done,” said Mr Crane. “I’ll be back in a few minutes and we can begin.”

Michael lay deeper into the chair and half-closed his eyes. The muscles of his arms, legs, his entire body felt relaxed. A warm soothing feeling washed over him and he felt as if all the worries and anxieties he had ever experienced left him for good.

His body was so relaxed that all he could do was breathe. He tried to lift the little finger of his right hand and it felt as if it moved a little but he couldn’t be sure. He forgot about it and allowed the dream-like quality of the anaesthetic to wash over him.

A little nagging thought tapped at his inner-most mind and he tried to move his little finger again.

It felt as if it moved but he could not feel it really move. It was like he imagined it moving only.

He went to move his head to the right to see his hand more clearly. He could not.

A small jab of tension cleared his mind a little, and he tried

again. Nothing.

***He could not move his head at all.***

He took a deep breath of air into his lungs and automatically tried to lift both of his hands. But they stayed on the armrests of the chair like they were glued there.

No resistance. No feeling.

He simply could not move his arms or head at all.

He kicked out, and neither foot moved.

Michael sucked in a chest full of air and went to call out to Mr Crane. No sound came.

He could not move. And he had lost the power to make any sound.

***He was paralysed. Stuck to the chair, but wide awake.***

A shadow appeared beside him.

“We should be about ready by now,” said Mr Crane.

His voice sounded like an echo and far away.

And where was the nurse? The dental assistant?

There was usually a young woman helping. It was just him and Mr Crane. Why was he alone with him?

The dentist’s face loomed up in front of Michael.

“Shall we see if this new drug has taken effect yet?” he asked.



***He had a bright, shiny scalpel in his hand.***

Michael tried to scream but no sound came. He just lay in the chair unable to move.

Mr Crane opened Michael's mouth and jabbed the scalpel against his tongue. A dagger of pain soared through Michael's mouth and into his brain.

Inside his head, he let out a scream.

***"Let's get to work then," said Mr Crane, closing the blind of the window.***

# Reading Comprehension Questions

Where is Michael?

How does he feel being there?

What specific aspects of the dentist's office make Michael uneasy?

Describe Mr Crane's demeanour as a dentist.

What is Michael's concern regarding his dental treatment?

What does Mr Crane think about Michael's feelings? What expression does he use to try to calm him?

Is this Michael's first visit to see Mr Crane?

Where does Michael want to be instead?

What does Mr Crane show Michael?

Does Mr Crane want Michael to try the new anaesthetic?

What kind of patients usually use this anaesthetic?

Why does Michael agree to try the new anaesthetic?

What can Michael hear outside the window?

How does Michael feel immediately after Mr Crane gives him the injection?

What effect does the anaesthetic have on Michael's body and

mind?

What part of his body does Michael try to move?

What does he try to move next?

Describe Michael's initial reaction when he realizes he can't move.

Why does Michael become increasingly panicked?

How does Michael attempt to communicate his distress?

What was Michael's first clue that something might be wrong with Mr Crane's intentions?

Is there a nurse to help the dentist?

What actions does Mr Crane take after Michael's paralysis becomes apparent?

What realization dawns upon Michael about the situation?

What does Mr Crane have in his hand?

What does he do with this object?

What is Michael's reaction?

How does Mr Crane react to Michael's initial attempts to move and call out?

What does Mr Crane do next after realizing the drug has taken effect?

What does Mr Crane do next?

Why does Mr Crane close the blind of the window?

# True or False

**Go over all the sentences below and say if they are true or false.**

The correct answers can be found at the end of the lesson plan.

Michael is at the dentist.

Michael loves going to the dentist.

Michael feels comfortable and at ease while sitting in the dentist's chair.

Mr Crane wears a white coat and has perfect white teeth.

Michael's fear of going to the dentist is uncommon and rarely experienced by other patients.

Mr Crane doesn't know Michael.

Michael needs a new filling for his tooth.

Mr Crane shows Michael a little vial.

Mr Crane introduces a new tooth cleaner to Michael.

Michael doesn't want to try this new medicine.

It is during the daytime at the dentist's.

Mr Crane lets Michael use the syringe on himself.

Michael feels relaxed and relieved of all worries and anxieties.

Michael can move his head and little finger after the painkiller is administered.

Michael cannot speak.

The nurse helps Mr Crane.

Mr Crane taps Michael's gum with his finger.

Mr Crane closes the blind of the window to let more light into the room.

Michael becomes increasingly panicked and tries to scream for help.

Mr Crane expresses concern and tries to assist Michael when he realizes something is wrong.

Michael is able to call out to Mr Crane for help when he is paralysed.

# Essential Vocabulary

relaxed air	loomed up	scream
crown	vulnerability	vivid
grimaced	intentions	realistic
assure	scalpel	muscles
anaesthetic	dental assistant	tune
private students	shiny	assistance
pain-killer	cavity	crisis
nerves	blinds	anxiety
relaxation	hummed	paralysed
jab	soothing	wide awake
influence	tension	sensory details
torture	impact	sinister

## Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

**Relaxed air** — *a calm and easygoing atmosphere or demeanour, promoting comfort and informality.*

**Scream** — *a noun and verb that refers to a loud and high-pitched vocal expression of intense emotion, often conveying fear, excitement, or distress.*

Then write a sentence of your own that uses the new word or phrase correctly.

***I entered the room of the party and was glad to see that the place had a very relaxed air.***

***The woman let out a scream when the man outside banged on the door.***

Do this with all the vocabulary and, over time, this will help improve all your English skills — reading, writing, speaking and listening.



## Discussion Questions

Have you ever had a similar experience at the dentist, where you felt nervous or uneasy? Can you share your story?

What is Michael's feeling about going to the dentist?

Why does he feel like this?

Put yourself in Michael's shoes. How would you feel and react if you were in his situation?

Describe the dentist, Mr Crane, and his attitude towards Michael. Does he seem like a nice person?

Has Michael been to visit Mr Crane before? What happened last time, do you think?

Is Mr Crane used to people being afraid? How do you know?

Mr Crane shows Michael a new anaesthetic. What is really in this little vial, do you think?

What do you think is the significance of the new anaesthetic being described as a "secret formula"?

Why do you think Michael decides to try the new anaesthetic despite his fear?

Why is there no nurse to help the dentist today?

Is Mr Crane a psychopath?

Or is Michael imagining it all?

Discuss the idea of trust in the story. Why does Michael initially trust Mr Crane, and how does this trust change over time?

Imagine you are one of the characters in the story — either Michael or Mr Crane. How would you describe your thoughts and feelings during the crucial moments?

What emotions and thoughts might have gone through Michael's mind when he realized he couldn't move or make a sound?

Why do you think Mr Crane chose to close the blind of the window before proceeding with his actions?

What do you think about this story?

Do you think it is realistic? Why/why not?

Do psychopaths live within our normal society? What do they do? What kind of jobs do they have?

# Role Play

**This is a role play exercise.**

This role has two characters:

1. Michael
2. Mr Crane

Take all the existing dialogue and use this as a basis for your role play.

You can add your own lines of dialogue if you wish, and you can change all the dialogue if you really want to, but in the end, you should have a complete role play to show the class.

***Take some time to prepare and when you are ready, perform your role play in front of the class.***

# Survey

**This is a survey activity.**

Look at the questions below and ask these questions in class.

Try to evaluate the responses and talk about the outcomes.

For example; *most people feel comfortable going to the dentist.*

Or; *some people hate seeing the dentist.*

1. How frequently do you visit the dentist for regular check-ups and cleanings?
2. What is the main reason you typically schedule a dental appointment? (e.g., routine check-up, specific dental issue, cleaning)
3. How do you feel about visiting the dentist? (Very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, neutral, somewhat uncomfortable, very uncomfortable)
4. Have you ever experienced dental anxiety or fear before a dental appointment?
5. If yes, can you briefly describe what aspects of visiting the dentist make you anxious or fearful?
6. What strategies, if any, do you use to cope with dental

anxiety or fear? (e.g., deep breathing, listening to music)

7. How important is the demeanour and communication style of the dentist and dental staff to make you feel comfortable during your visit?
8. Are there specific amenities or features in a dental office that help alleviate your anxiety or make you feel more comfortable? (e.g., soothing music, comfortable waiting area)
9. How well-informed do you feel about the procedures and treatments your dentist recommends?
10. Have you ever postponed or cancelled a dental appointment due to anxiety or fear?
11. If yes, what could have been done differently to encourage you to keep the appointment?
12. How likely are you to ask questions or voice your concerns to your dentist during a visit?
13. Have you ever sought professional help, such as therapy or counselling, to address dental anxiety or fear?
14. Do you find that the overall environment and decor of the dental office influence your comfort level?
15. How would you rate your overall dental experience in terms of comfort and anxiety level? (Very positive, somewhat

positive, neutral, somewhat negative, very negative)

16. Are there specific dental procedures that cause you more anxiety than others? If so, please specify.
17. How important are online reviews and recommendations when choosing a new dentist?
18. Have you ever had a particularly positive or calming experience at the dentist? If yes, could you describe it briefly?
19. What suggestions do you have for dental offices to create a more comfortable and anxiety-free environment for their patients?
20. Overall, how satisfied are you with your current dentist and the care you receive?

# Quiz — Are You a Psychopath?

This is just for fun! Or maybe not... Answer all the questions and find out if you or any of your classmates are psychopaths!

1. Do you never feel fear?
2. Do other people like you a lot?
3. Do you like to act spontaneously?
4. Do you lose interest in people and new interests quickly?
5. Do you think the idea of falling in love is silly?
6. Are you good at charming others?
7. Do you think money is the most important thing in the world?
8. Do you sometimes pretend to be nice to people, even though you don't want to?
9. Do you think you are better than others?
10. Do you have the ability to be very polite when needed?
11. Do you find other people to be a little stupid sometimes?
12. Do you get bored easily?
13. Do you get jealous of other people sometimes?

14. Do you tell many lies?
15. Do you sometimes spend money on foolish things?
16. Have you ever cheated your family or friends?
17. Do you feel indifferent when people are sad?
18. If you get caught doing something wrong, do you feel no sense of shame or guilt?
19. Are you good at manipulating and/or exploiting others to get what you want?
20. Do you think you are an aggressive person?
21. Do you have few friends in your life?
22. Do you like to take risks?
23. Do you laugh at inappropriate moments?
24. If you answer 'Yes' to most of the questions, then you could be a psychopath!

Now discuss in the class.

Which people answered yes to most of the questions?

***Do these people seem like psychopaths to you?***



# Writing

**This is a creative writing exercise.**

You are going to write a short story. It is a continuation of the story you read at the beginning of the lesson plan. The title of the story is:

## **The Dentist From Hell**

Use the questions below to help you come up with some ideas.

Does Mr Crane try to kill Michael?

Is the pain all inside Michael's head? If so, why?

What does Mr Crane do when he finds that Michael cannot move or speak?

Does someone come to help Michael?

**Now write your story.**

When you have finished writing, you can read it out loud in front of the class.

***Or hand it to your teacher for review.***

## True or False — Answers

These are the correct answers below.

***How many did you get right?***

Michael is at the dentist. True.

Michael loves going to the dentist. False.

Michael feels comfortable and at ease while sitting in the dentist's chair. False.

Mr Crane wears a white coat and has perfect white teeth. True.

Michael's fear of going to the dentist is uncommon and rarely experienced by other patients. False.

Mr Crane doesn't know Michael. False.

Michael needs a new filling for his tooth. False.

Mr Crane shows Michael a little vial. True.

Mr Crane introduces a new tooth cleaner to Michael. False.

Michael doesn't want to try this new medicine. False.

It is during the daytime at the dentist's. True.

Mr Crane lets Michael use the syringe on himself. False.

Michael feels relaxed and relieved of all worries and anxieties. True.

Michael can move his head and little finger after the painkiller is administered. False.

Michael cannot speak. True.

The nurse helps Mr Crane. False.

Mr Crane taps Michael's gum with his finger. False.

Mr Crane opens the blind of the window to let more light into the room. False.

Michael becomes increasingly panicked and tries to scream for help. True.

Mr Crane expresses concern and tries to assist Michael when he realizes something is wrong. False.

Michael is able to call out to Mr Crane for help when he is paralysed. False.

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