



I Have an Idea (🧠 A Cognitive Health Story) (Pre-K – 4-5 yrs.)

This story explains how the brain gets information from the senses and puts that information together – like a puzzle – to come up with thoughts and ideas.

- 🧠 Your 5 senses get information from the world and send that information to your brain.
- 🧠 Your brain takes all that information, which is like pieces of a puzzle, and puts it together. This is how ideas and thoughts are born.
- 🧠 Thoughts and ideas can (and should) change based on the information that the brain gets from the senses.

♥SLIDE #1 - INTRODUCTION:

Good Morning (or Afternoon) (or Hello)!

My name is _____ and I (describe who you are and give your relation to neuroscience – ex. you are a Neuroscientist, you study neuroscience, you have a friend that is a neuroscientist or you have recently been learning a lot about neuroscience).

Neuroscience, that's a really big word! But, a neuroscientist is a person who knows a lot about the brain.

I am here today to talk to you about how you can help make your brain healthy. Healthy means feeling good. It is REALLY easy to have a healthy brain and anyone can do it.

I love to talk about Brain Health because it's SPECTacular!!! SPECTacular means "GREAT!" When your brain is feeling SPECTacular, you are a happy and healthy person.

This story is about Cognitive Health – which is the C in SPECTacular. Cognitive Health is about thinking...and not just when you are in school. Cognitive is a big word that means being able to think.

Your brain thinks all the time, that is something you do inside of your head.

It is your brain's job to think and by thinking you are making your brain healthy.

So, let's see how you can keep your brain healthy.

SLIDE #2 – I HAVE AN IDEA

Today, we are going to talk about things that are going on inside our heads.

As I said, inside your head, your brain is ALWAYS thinking.

When you think, you ask questions and then you come up with ideas or answers to those questions.

We are going to talk about **why** your brain is always thinking and about **how** that works.

♥SLIDE #3 – BRAIN’S JOB

The main job of your brain is to keep you healthy. It keeps you healthy by helping you do the behaviors that help to keep you alive.

Let’s think about this....

What if you one of the things that you like to do is to pet the neighbor’s cat?

You like to do this because you think that cats are cute and they are soft.

Your brain helps you to pet a cat.

QUESTION: Have you have ever petted a cat? Did you like it?

I love petting cats. They are so soft and sometimes they purr to tell me they like it.

♥SLIDE #4 – BRAIN’S JOB

Now, let’s say you go to the zoo and you see a lion. The lion is so cute, it looks like a big cat. You think to yourself...Hmmm...I wonder if the lion has soft fur like a cat.

You think, maybe I will try to get into the lion’s house and I will pet the lion.

QUESTION: Do you think you should pet the lion?

Of course not! A lion is a wild cat it is not a kitty cat like your neighbor’s cat or your friend’s cat.

Most likely, Mr. Lion would take a bite out of you – or have you for dinner.

♥SLIDE #5 – BRAIN’S JOB

It turns out that it is your brain that had already “told” you not to pet the lion.

You thought about it and you remembered that lions have big teeth.

You also thought that where the lion lived, it would be hard to get at the lion to pet it.

The people at the zoo probably put the lion in a place where it could not hurt anyone, so the lion did not eat people.

All these thoughts that you had was your brain making sure that you did not pet the lion, so you could stay alive.

♥SLIDE #6 – SENSES

Now, in order to stay alive, your brain needs to get information about the world around you. You get that information from your senses.

Your senses include being able to smell, see, feel, hear, and taste.

QUESTION: How does your brain get information about smelling, seeing, feeling, hearing and tasting?

That is right...you get the information from your nose, eyes, hands, ears and mouth.

You get all kinds of information about things that are in the world outside of your body.

♥SLIDE #7 – PUZZLE PIECE

The information that you get from your senses is like a puzzle piece.

Let's say that I showed you this picture and your eyes saw fur.

Fur is your first piece of the puzzle.

QUESTION: What kind of animals have fur?

A bunny, a raccoon, a beaver, a squirrel, a cat, a dog, lion, bear...there are lots of animals that have fur.

♥SLIDE #8 – ANOTHER PUZZLE PIECE

Now, let's say that I told you to listen with your ears because this is what the animal sounded like.

You listen and your ears hear barking.

Barking is the 2nd part of the puzzle.

QUESTION: What kind of animal barks?

Let's see...dogs, wolves, coyotes, seals, and foxes actually all bark.

These animals also all have fur – yup, even a seal has fur.

So, can we figure out the puzzle yet? No, we still do not know what kind of animal it is.

♥SLIDE #9 – SOLVING THE PUZZLE

So, we know that the animal has fur and that the animal barks.

So, can we figure out the puzzle yet? No, we still do not know what kind of animal it is.

♥SLIDE #10 – SOLVING THE PUZZLE

Now, what if I showed you a bigger picture of where the animal lives and you could see that the animal lives in a place that has a room with a couch and a chair and a television set.

QUESTION: What kind of room do you think this is?

That's right, it is a room in a house – probably a living room or family room.

So, that is the next piece of the puzzle. The animal is in a place that has a room - probably in a house.

♥SLIDE #11 – SOLVING THE PUZZLE

So, putting the pieces of the puzzle together – here are the animals that have fur and bark.

QUESTION: Which one of the animals (dogs, wolves, coyotes, seals, and foxes) do you think live in a house?

That's right...it must be a dog. Because even though other animals have fur and can bark, none of the other animals we talked about would be in a house!

♥SLIDE #12 – HOW YOU SOLVED THE PUZZLE

You put the puzzle pieces together and came up with the **idea** that the animal was a dog.

By putting the pieces of the puzzle together, you are **thinking** about the information that your senses give you.

You are also thinking about things that you already had in your head.

♥SLIDE #13 – INFORMATION IN YOUR HEAD

To be able to figure out the puzzle, your brain needed to get information from your senses AND you also needed to get information about things you already know.

You had learned about what animals have fur.

You had learned about what animal's bark.

You also knew that you had never seen a seal or a wolf in a house.

These were things that you already had in your head because you had learned about them before.

You put this information together with the information your senses gave you and you figured out the "puzzle".

The animal was a dog.

♥SLIDE #14 – IDEAS

When you have a question, thinking about information that your senses and that you have in your brain helps you to come up with **ideas**.

♥SLIDE #15 – IDEAS CAN CHANGE

Getting more information (or different puzzle pieces), can change the idea (or what the puzzle looks like).

When we knew the animal had fur and barked – the animal could have been a dog, wolf, seal...lots of different animals.

But, when we found out that the animal was in a house – then we **KNEW** that the animal had to be a dog.

BUT, what if we saw that the animal that had fur, barked and was in the ocean?

Then, the animal probably was a **SEAL!!!**

Our brain always has to be getting information and then thinking about what the information means and then come with ideas.

♥SLIDE #16 – GOOD AND BAD IDEAS

When it comes to ideas, some ideas that you get are good ideas, some ideas are not such good ideas.

Remember before, we talked about petting a cat? Petting a cat is a good idea.

But, is it a good idea to pet a lion?

If you had said “yes” that would be a bad idea.

Bad ideas are bad because someone can get hurt.

So, saying “no” to petting a lion is a good idea.

You need to use what you know to make good decisions about what you should do.

This is how thinking and coming up with ideas can help us to stay alive.

♥SLIDE #17 – CONCLUSION

Thank you all for letting me talk to you about how you get ideas.

I have enjoyed spending time with you today talking about the brain. I hope that you have had some fun and learned something about your brain.

REMEMBER, you get information from the world around you with your senses (seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting). You also have information from things you learned in your head. You use this information to come up with ideas that help you to stay alive. That is the job of your brain. When your brain does its job, your brain stays healthy and that is SPECTacular.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR ALL OF YOUR HELP!!! Brain Health is not just SPECTacular...it is FUN!!!