Pre-Meal Time Activities:

**Wash and Ready**: it is an activity that the residents seem to enjoy before meals. i place wash clothes in a large bowl. i pour flavoring such as vanilla, orange, mint, lemon you get the idea right. then i add very warm water clothes i wring out the fluid and pass them out to the residents to wash their faces and hands . they enjoy the warm cloths and they get to guess what scent it is. if we get at least two different guesses we have a show of hands or verbal agreements. i get to document for sensory activity, it helps me know who actually still has the function. it jogs their mind we guess what the scent reminds them on and they have cleaner hands for eating the meal.

**lunchtime trivia/reminisce.** Many residents are usually waiting in the lounge area to go into the dining room 15 or more minutes before lunch starts so I decided to use this time to engage the majority of my residents in an activity many don't usually attend or infrequently. I invite them in to the dining room 15 minutes early and while we are waiting for lunch to be served I do trivia facts, ask them trivia questions, read information/history on a variety of subjects. I have been able to get many residents to "shout out" an answer or two and am pleased to receive compliments on what I am presenting them. "Thank you, that was very interesting!" Even my low functioning residents that don't verbally participate hear what I am saying so serves as a sensory/cognitive type activity for them as well

show **a party that was videotaped** at your facility months before for reminiscing sake

**hand therapy** (which allows me to sanitize their hands before their meal),

**word games,**

**seasonal sensory** (example for Christmas I bring around ornament boxes for the residents to sort through and look at, also Smells of Christmas where I bring around different smells associated with Christmas. This allows me to start a group conversation on what smells remind them of what and how did they decorate their tree when they where kids or had kids)

**Sensory Cart.**  The sensory cart could be brought to the residents room on a daily basis.  You could place fiber optics such as butterfly's above their bed.  Sensory carts generally have but not limited to CD players, aroma therapy and fiber optics.

Play **a guess what's** for dinner/lunch game .

Pick a **topic of the day**, name colored foods, or the alphabet game (name a fruit that  
starts with A, an animal that starts with B,etc.). With these games there are no  
wrong answers, and there are several answers. Just something to keep them  
going, occupied so they arent just sitting. It is hard when you are getting the  
dining room(s) ready, moving residents back and forth, etc.

At our facility we do **a sensory activity** for our lower functioning before lunch in the main dining room.  we play soft calming music or nature sounds, allow them or assist them with washing hands and faces with a warm wash clothe, and apply lotion(we use a lotion with a food smell such as vaannila berry or cucumber to increase apppitite and also apply lemon scent to warm water{be aware of allergies})  we also do a little 1 to 1  reminiscing at the while applying hand lotion.   During our last inspection--inspectors loved this activity!!   we also do this same type of activity for our hjigher functioning residents before breakfast only it is a little more lively with some 50's music or dance music to help wake them up!

We do a **handwashing/hand massage program** - staff use two hospital pink basins, one with hot soapy water, one empty, for the used washcloths. We use disposable washcloths and give the cloths to the residents. Depending on someone's cognitive abilities, I will either wrap the cloth around their hands and treat them to a loving hand wrap rub, or I will give them the cloth and let them do it themselves. It's cool, because some folks will neatly fold the towl when they are done, and some will start wiping the table down (more sensory stim, and a clean table!). Since we do it for each meal, we can chart it as part of our grooming program and receive state reimbursement for restorative goals.

Monday thru Friday we play a different kind of **music** each day before the lunch meal, this also helps us to get some of the ones that are dont get out of bed much.  but we are sure to switch up the music each day of the week so that we play something that everyone likes at one at least one day.

Our low functioning residents are basically to the stage that their only responses is limited eye contact and maybe an occasional sound, mumble, etc. What we do with these residents is soft **music, lotion to their hands, different scents in the room, sing-a-longs, rhythm band to listen to music they would have sang in childhood.**

We have a fairly large population of eye contact only residents. In addition to hand, arm and head massages we do **range of motion with them** (as permitted by care plans) while playing music. We have also experimented with- various success levels- different types of **music** for different times of the day. Sousa's marches while moving to and from dining room, Vivaldi's four seasons and similar music during meals and Brahms lullabye and other very gentle music at bed times.

I have **"decorated**" our day area for these residents with hanging mobiles made of crystal and other shiny materials and have observed many of them looking at them and smiling.

I have found **that singing works** as a premeal activity, anything from Amazing Grace to You Are My Sunshine...We also use that time to do **orientation t**o date, time of year, weather and this date in history.  Some days we do trivia or reminisce.