

# **ELINOR WONDERS WHY**

EP 106B Feathers

By: Jorge Cham and Daniel Whiteson

Elinor's Question: Why do birds have feathers?

Logline: The kids learn that birds' feathers help them fly and keep warm and give them color.

Curriculum Goals:

- LS2d: Explore how different external features of an animal help it survive in its environment (The function of birds' feathers)
  - ND2: Begin to understand that systems developed in our world often work in similar ways to systems found in the natural world (feathers and clothes work in similar ways)
  - SEP1a: Demonstrate curiosity about the greater world outside of their local environment [ why do birds have feathers?]
- SEP4a: a. Collect, describe, and record observations in greater detail and in various ways.

MAIN CHARACTERS - Elinor, Ari, Olive, Ms. Mole

SECONDARY CHARACTERS - None.

PROPS: Feather, cap, sand-castle, three jackets for Elinor, Ari and Olive, Notebook

FIRST DRAFT: 19-Feb-19

SECOND DRAFT: 06-March-19

POLISH 19-March-2019

**RECORD DRAFT: 22-March-2019**

It's a typical clear morning in the forest. We open on some BIRDS chirping and hopping from branch to branch in the treetops. They are singing to each other cheerfully when, suddenly, they hear a faint whistling coming from the distance. The birds get curious and look over to see what is making that sound.

As Ari walks, he spots a low branch and jumps up, doing a loop-de-loop around the branch and then launching himself up into the air. He flaps a few times and glides down.

Suddenly, Ari hears a rustling up in the tree overhead. <SFX: Rustling leaves/branches>. He freezes.

He looks up to see what's there. At first, we don't see anything, but then something flutters away in the branches and out into the sky. We get a good glimpse of the bird, more than Ari does.

He looks at the feather more closely. He blows on it and it flutters up - he watches it drift down and catches it on his palm.

5 ARI (CONT'D) 5  
 <GIGGLES> You're my new lucky  
 feather!

He sticks the feather in his cap, thinking it's pretty awesome.

|   |                                        |   |
|---|----------------------------------------|---|
| 6 | ARI (CONT'D)                           | 6 |
|   | I can't wait to show Elinor and Olive! |   |

He walks the rest of the way to school with a happy swagger.

## 2. EXT PLAYGROUND - DAY

Open on Elinor playing in the sandbox with Olive. They are building a sand castle together. School hasn't started and kids are playing in the playground. ELINOR is wearing a RAINCOAT. Elinor pats down the last little bit of sand unto the center tower of their sand castle as Olive leans back and brushes off her hands.

|   |        |   |
|---|--------|---|
| 7 | ELINOR | 7 |
|   | There! |   |

|   |       |   |
|---|-------|---|
| 8 | OLIVE | 8 |
|   | Nice! |   |

They both stand up and take a step back to admire their work.

|   |                           |   |
|---|---------------------------|---|
| 9 | ELINOR                    | 9 |
|   | What do you think, Olive? |   |

|    |                                                       |    |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 10 | OLIVE                                                 | 10 |
|    | I think our sand castle came out pretty well, Elinor. |    |

|    |                                            |    |
|----|--------------------------------------------|----|
| 11 | ELINOR                                     | 11 |
|    | Hmm, although... it doesn't look done yet. |    |

|    |         |    |
|----|---------|----|
| 12 | OLIVE   | 12 |
|    | Really? |    |

At that moment, we see Ari enter the playground in the background. We switch to his perspective as he scans the playground. He spots Elinor and Olive and gets excited.

|    |                 |    |
|----|-----------------|----|
| 13 | ARI             | 13 |
|    | There they are! |    |

He runs over to the sandbox. BACK ON: Elinor and Olive discussing their castle.

|    |                             |    |
|----|-----------------------------|----|
| 14 | OLIVE                       | 14 |
|    | What do you think it needs? |    |

15 ELINOR 15  
I don't know... I just feel like  
it's missing something.

Ari comes up to within a few paces of the sandbox, then stops so he can make a proper entrance. He checks the feather and adjusts his hat just so, then strolls nonchalantly in front of Elinor and Olive's view.

16 OLIVE 16  
What if we add a tower?

17 ELINOR 17  
Mmm, I don't think we need another  
one.

Ari makes it to the other side, but Elinor and Olive don't seem to notice him. He seems a bit disappointed but then rallies to try again. This time, he walks with his head tilted towards them, and he takes big waltzing steps, sweeping his arms back and forth.

18 ELINOR (CONT'D) 18  
Maybe we could add more windows?

19 OLIVE 19  
Hmmm...

Still nothing. Ari makes it to the other side and puts his hands on his hips. BACK ON: Olive and Elinor.

20 ELINOR 20  
Or maybe we need a flag?

21 OLIVE 21  
That would be nice! Something  
bright and colorful?

Suddenly, Ari runs back in frame, and uses a flap of his wings to make a dramatic TA DA! Landing right in front of them. He shakes his head in their direction, pointing at his hat with his fingers.

22 ARI 22  
AHM!

23 ELINOR 23  
Oh, hi Ari!

24 OLIVE 24  
When did you get here?

25                                 ARI                                 25

I... <beat> Nevermind. Hi, Elinor!  
Hi, Olive! Notice anything extra  
cool about me today?

26                                ELINOR                                26  
Is that a new shirt?

DESIGN NOTE: It's NOT a new shirt.

27                                 OLIVE                                 27  
It's a nice color.

ARI

No, you guys! Look! On my hat!

29 ELINOR 29  
Whoa... Is that a feather?

30 OLIVE 30  
Cool! It's so bright and colorful.  
Where did you get it?

31                               ARI                               31  
Well, let me tell you!

Ari recreates the earlier scene, with dramatic flair.

ARI (CONT'D)

I was walking in the forest, when suddenly, I heard something moving up in the trees! And THEN, this feather came floating down, and it landed right on my head!

33                         OLIVE                         33  
                        Wow, how lucky! A bird feather!

34                               ARI                               34  
It IS lucky! I call it my lucky  
feather!

35                                ELINOR                                35  
Can I see it?

Elinor puts it between her ears, holding it there by pinching her ears together and doing a twirl. She <GIGGLES>.

36 OLIVE 36  
Ooh, my turn!

Olive holds it with her trunk and pretends to write with it.  
The kids <LAUGH>.

37 ELINOR 37  
It's really pretty.

Olive blows the feather up in the air with her trunk and it settles in Elinor's hands.

SCIENCE CU MOMENT: We zoom into the feather and see its intricate structure and shape and colors.

38 ELINOR (CONT'D) 38  
Wow, it looks like it has little hairs when I brush it with my finger!

She runs her finger along the edge of the feather, and we see the different hairs part.

39 ARI 39  
I didn't notice that!

40 ELINOR 40  
That is SO INTERESTING!

41 OLIVE 41  
And the colors are so beautiful!

Ari takes a closer look at his own fur.

42 ARI 42  
It would be cool if WE had feathers.

Olive and Elinor look at their skin/fur too.

43 ELINOR 43  
I wonder, why DO birds have feathers?

Olive takes the feather to get a closer look.

44 OLIVE 44  
Good question, Elinor. Hmmm...

The kids ponder for a second.

45 OLIVE (CONT'D) 45  
I know! Maybe birds use their feathers to tickle each other?

A THOUGHT BUBBLE forms next to Olive, and we see a bird tickling another bird with their wing feather.

The bubble pops and Olive uses the feather to tickle Elinor gently. Elinor <GIGGLES>.



You can show a little bit of discord, where the kids are running around independently and criss-crossing each other, since later they will be coming up with different hypotheses.

55 ELINOR/OLIVE/ARI 55

Why do birds have feathers?  
Let's find out together!

*We'll find some birds,  
and take a look  
We'll draw what we notice  
In our book!*

Why do birds have feathers?  
Let's find out together!

*Flying high,  
and singing loud!  
We'll find answers  
all around!*

Why do birds have feathers?  
Let's find out together!

Oh, oh yeah.

As the song wraps up, we see each kid going off in a different direction (but they are within eyeshot of each other and the playground).

END SONG.

#### 4. EXT. FOREST - ARI'S CORNER OF THE WOODS, CONTINUOUS

Ari walks around, looking around for birds. He sees a bird on a branch of a nearby tree. He runs and flaps his wings to fly up to the branch on the opposite side of the tree.

56 ARI 56

Hey, little birdie! We're trying to figure out what your feathers are for. Can you tell me?

The bird chirps at him <SFX: Bird chirping> and flies away to the next tree. Ari follows.

57 ARI (CONT'D) 57

Hold up!

The bird chirp again and opens its wings to fly away again. Ari opens his wings to fly also then stops, realizing something. He looks closer at the bird's wing and see that it is made out of feathers.

58                   ARI (CONT'D)                   58

      Hmm, you have wings just like I do.  
      But yours are made out of feathers.

          (he gets excited)

      I think I figured it out! Birds  
      have feathers to help them fly!

          (He flaps his wings and  
           hovers a little)

      I can't wait to tell Elinor and  
      Olive!

5. EXT FOREST - OLIVE'S CORNER, CONTINUOUS

Cut to Olive, who is standing under a tree watching two Bluejays. The ribbon on her head is a bit untied. The birds are preening themselves, arranging their feathers.

59                                 OLIVE                                 59  
You two birds are really colorful!  
I wonder if you like being blue.  
It's MY favorite color.

She notices that the ribbon on her head has come undone a bit, so she ties it back up with her trunk.

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60                                OLIVE (CONT'D)                                60
Oops, there we go. That looks
better.
    (She looks back up at the
     blue jays)
You wear blue on your head too!
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Olive looks like she's had an idea, and doodles in her notebook.

61 OLIVE (CONT'D) 61  
I think I figured it out! Feathers  
are for being colorful - just like  
my bow! I can't wait to tell Ari  
and Elinor.

## 6. EXT FOREST - ELINOR'S CORNER, CONTINUOUS

Cut to Elinor: who is watching some ducks coming out of a small pond.

62                                ELINOR                                62  
Ooh, pretty ducks!

She gets closer and sees that there are duck parents and duck babies.

63 ELINOR (CONT'D) 63  
It's a whole duck family!

She crouches down near the ducks.

64 ELINOR (CONT'D) 64  
Hello, duck family! Can you tell me  
why birds have feathers?

A baby duck waddles over closer to Elinor. We see that the babies have cozy soft feathers. The parents have shiny colorful feathers above and cozy feathers underneath.

65 ELINOR (CONT'D) 65  
That water must be cold, but you  
all look so nice and warm with  
those soft and cozy feathers.  
(realizing)  
I think I figured it out! Birds use  
feathers to stay warm! I can't wait  
to tell Ari and Olive!

# 7. EXT PLAYGROUND - DAY

Open on the playground with different kids in the background and MZ. MOLE to one side. Elinor, Ari and Olive all run into the scene and at the same time.

66 ARI/ELINOR/OLIVE 66  
Hey guys, I figured it out!

They all pause in surprise and then say:

67 ARI/ELINOR/OLIVE (CONT'D) 67  
Feathers are for flying / Feathers  
are for staying warm/ Feathers are  
for color!

68 ELINOR 68  
Wait guys, one at a time!

Mz. Mole walks closer so that she can listen.

69 ARI 69  
Ok, I'll go first. I think birds  
need feathers to help them fly!  
Their wings are made of feathers!

70 ELINOR / OLIVE 70  
Yeah. / That makes sense.

Mz. Mole is listening closely.

71 OLIVE 71  
 But wait. I have a different idea.  
 I saw birds that had bright blue  
 feathers. I think birds use  
 feathers so they can be colorful.

She points with her trunk to the ribbon on her head.

72 ELINOR / ARI 72  
 Right / Mmmm hmmm.

Mz. Mole nods to herself.

73 ELINOR 73  
 But I have a different idea, too! I  
 saw a duck family coming out of the  
 water, and their feathers were like  
 a snuggly coat. I think birds use  
 feathers to stay warm.

74 OLIVE / ARI 74  
 Ok / That also makes sense.

Mz. Mole smiles at that.

75 ARI 75  
 But definitely flying is the MOST  
 important. That MUST be why birds  
 have feathers.

76 OLIVE 76  
 But if birds didn't have colorful  
 feathers they would all look the  
 same! I think birds have feathers  
 to have color.

77 ELINOR 77  
 I don't know. If they didn't have  
 feathers, they would get so cold!  
 So I think feathers are to stay  
 warm.

78 ARI 78  
 We have three good ideas!

79 OLIVE 79  
 Which one is the real reason why  
 birds have feathers?

80 ELINOR 80  
 Hmm... How can we figure it out?

At that moment, Mz. Mole chimes in.

81 MS MOLE 81  
Do you little scientists mind if I  
ask you a few questions?

82 ELINOR 82  
Sure, Ms Mole!

83 MS MOLE 83  
Ari, that's a nice hat. Why did you  
pick that one today?

He looks a bit confused by the change in topic but is happy  
to brag about his hat.

84 ARI 84  
Um.... Thanks! It's my favorite and  
it keeps me warm!

85 MS MOLE 85  
So you chose your hat to keep you  
warm?

86 ARI 86  
Yeah. Also, it has a secret pocket  
for snacks!

He pulls a small fruit out of a hidden pocket.

87 MS MOLE 87  
Olive, what about you? Why did you  
choose that shirt and that skirt?

Olive looks down at her blue outfit.

88 OLIVE 88  
Well, blue is my favorite color, of  
course!

89 MS MOLE 89  
So you chose your clothes because  
of the color?

90 OLIVE 90  
Mmm-hmm. I love blue!

91 MS MOLE 91  
And what about you Elinor? Why did  
you choose that jacket?

92 ELINOR 92  
It looked like it might rain this  
morning, so I picked this raincoat.

|                                     |                                                                                                                                                     |     |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 93                                  | MS MOLE                                                                                                                                             | 93  |
|                                     | So you chose it to stay dry?                                                                                                                        |     |
| 94                                  | ELINOR                                                                                                                                              | 94  |
|                                     | That's right, Ms Mole.                                                                                                                              |     |
| 95                                  | MS MOLE                                                                                                                                             | 95  |
|                                     | Good. Now tell me, what's the reason we wear any clothes at all?                                                                                    |     |
| 96                                  | ELINOR                                                                                                                                              | 96  |
|                                     | To stay dry!                                                                                                                                        |     |
| 97                                  | ARI                                                                                                                                                 | 97  |
|                                     | To stay warm!                                                                                                                                       |     |
| 98                                  | OLIVE                                                                                                                                               | 98  |
|                                     | To show colors!                                                                                                                                     |     |
| 99                                  | MS MOLE                                                                                                                                             | 99  |
|                                     | So, which is it? Is there just one reason?                                                                                                          |     |
| The kids look like they understand. |                                                                                                                                                     |     |
| 100                                 | ARI / ELINOR / OLIVE                                                                                                                                | 100 |
|                                     | They are ALL good reasons!                                                                                                                          |     |
| 101                                 | MS MOLE                                                                                                                                             | 101 |
|                                     | That's right! Sometimes there's more than one reason for something! Your clothes help you in many ways, just like feathers help birds in many ways. |     |
| 102                                 | ELINOR                                                                                                                                              | 102 |
|                                     | I get it!                                                                                                                                           |     |
| 103                                 | OLIVE                                                                                                                                               | 103 |
|                                     | There's more than one reason why birds have feathers!                                                                                               |     |
| 104                                 | ARI                                                                                                                                                 | 104 |
|                                     | Yeah! Birds have feathers to fly AND to be colorful AND to stay warm.                                                                               |     |
| 105                                 | ELINOR                                                                                                                                              | 105 |
|                                     | We ALL figured it out!                                                                                                                              |     |
| 106                                 | MS MOLE                                                                                                                                             | 106 |
|                                     | Alright, alright, alright!                                                                                                                          |     |

The kids are excited and dance around to celebrate their moment of understanding. As Ari dances, the feather flies out of his cap and lands on his hands. Suddenly, he realizes something.

|     |                                                             |     |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 107 | ARI                                                         | 107 |
|     | Wait, I thought of one more thing<br>feathers are good for. |     |

He runs off screen, and Olive and Elinor follow him.

We cut to a close up of Elinor and Olive's sand castle, and zoom out to see Ari putting the feather right smack on the top of the center tower. It looks great!

108                   ARI (CONT'D)                   108  
They're also good for finishing  
sand castles!

The kids and Mz. Mole all have a good <LAUGH> as we pull out and pan up to see some birds flying by as we...

FADE OUT.

**THE END.**