

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EP.115A "The Paper Trail"

By: Karen Moonah

Elinor's Question: *Where does paper come from?*

Logline: *When Elinor and her friends run out of drawing paper, they follow the 'paper trail' backwards, from the store, to the mill, to a forest - and learn where paper really comes from.*

ES 3a) Ask questions about and discuss examples of how humans use Earth's resources (including soil and water) to meet their needs.

ES 3c) Participate in simple activities to care for the environment. (Elinor and her friends discover that we use trees to make paper, and help to plant trees to replace the ones they've cut down.)

ND 4 (RTL Crosscutting concept 'Flows, Cycles and Conservation')
Appreciate the way that elements in the natural world change, interact and are re-used, and how we can organize our designed world to better fit and care for the environment. (Elinor and her friends come to understand the importance of replacing the trees we use, and of recycling paper, and protecting the forest)

Mains - Elinor, Ari, Olive, Mr. Beaver, Farmer Bear

Secondary: Ranger Rabbit, Mr. Hippo

Locations: Elinor's House, General Store, Paper Workshop, Tree Farm

Props: crayons, paper, recycling bin, papermaking equipment, wheelbarrow, axe, wagon, shovels, tree seedlings.

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ESTABLISHING. Under the shelter of a beautiful LEAFY TREE, ELINOR, ARI and OLIVE share a kid-size table. They've been drawing with crayons.

Olive and Ari nod. (The kids each hold a few drawings face-down ready to flip up.)

ANGLE ON: Ari flips up a picture he made, of the bottom half of a BIG TREE.

Ari tosses his page into a CARDBOARD BOX on the ground, which already has many sheets of discarded paper in it, and grabs a fresh sheet from a PILE OF PAPER on the table.

Olive flips up *her* drawing, of a nesting bird - then frowns.

Elinor resumes the story, holding up her own picture - it shows an OGRE in the woods.

7 ELINOR (STORYTELLING) 7
But one day, an ogre came stomping
through the forest. He wanted to
push down all the trees!

Olive and Ari stare at her picture.

8 OLIVE 8
An ogre? I thought it was going to
be a giant!

9 ELINOR 9
Is there a difference?

10 OLIVE 10
A giant's a lot bigger.

Olive holds up a picture she made, with a giant who's so big,
only his FOOT fits in the drawing beside the tree!

11 ELINOR 11
Whoa, the poor trees! Okay, I'll
draw him as a giant -

Elinor tosses her 'ogre' picture into the rather full
RECYCLING BIN. She reaches for a new sheet of paper, but
there isn't any.

12 ELINOR (CONT'D) 12
- oops. We're out of paper. Come
on, let's get some more...

Elinor gets up and heads for the house. Her friends follow.

2. INT. KITCHEN - DAY

RANGER RABBIT is chopping vegetables when the kids enter.

13 ELINOR 13
Hi Mom. Can I get some more paper
from the cabinet?

14 RANGER RABBIT 14
Sure, Elinor. Help yourself.
(to Ari and Olive)
How's it going with your storybook?

15 ARI (ENTHUSIASTIC) 15
Great! It's about a bird who has to
protect the trees from a giant.

16 RANGER RABBIT 16
Ah! Well, trees do need protecting.

Elinor breaks in, gesturing to an empty shelf in a cupboard.

17 ELINOR 17
Mom? There's no paper here.

18 RANGER RABBIT 18
Oh? We must have run out.

19 ELINOR (CONFUSED) 19
Run out? But - this is where paper
comes from. The cupboard!

Ranger Rabbit smiles, making sure not to laugh.

20 RANGER RABBIT 20
Well *before* that, it comes from a
store.

21 OLIVE 21
Yeah! Mr. Hippo's store.

22 ARI 22
 (beat) I knew that.

BACK ON Elinor, looking concerned.

23 ELINOR 23
Well, we can't finish making our
storybook without paper.

She looks hopefully at Ranger Rabbit.

24 ELINOR (CONT'D) 24
Maybe we could go to the store and
buy some more?

Ranger Rabbit reaches into a drawer for a little COIN PURSE.

25 RANGER RABBIT 25
All right. This should be enough
money for a pack of paper.

26 ELINOR 26
Thanks Mom. We won't be long!

Elinor, Ari and Olive wave good-bye as they EXIT.

DISSOLVE TO:

3. EXT. MAIN STREET - MR. HIPPO'S STORE

ESTABLISH Mr. Hippo's store, as the three kids hurry through the main door. A bell <JINGLES> to announce their arrival.

4. INT. MR. HIPPO'S STORE

MR. HIPPO is moving along a shelf, rapidly (and comically) pricing items with a STICKER GUN - <KA-CHUNK KA-CHUNK> when the kids enter.

27 OLIVE 27
Hi Mr. Hippo.

<KA-CHUNK> As Mr. Hippo turns to greet them, he 'prices' Ari.

28 MR. HIPPO (SINGSONG) 28
Good morning - whoops!
(after a beat)
Sorry, we're having a sale.

Ari peels off the sticker.

29 ARI (JOKES) 29
Fifty cents? Come on, I'm worth at least a dollar.

The kids and Mr. Hippo <SFX: GIGGLE>.

30 ELINOR 30
Mr. Hippo, we're making a storybook, but we ran out of paper.

31 MR. HIPPO 31
Ah, paper! You can find it in aisle two. Middle shelf.

The kids eagerly hurry down an aisle - but their faces fall.

POV - there's an empty shelf in front of them.

32 ARI 32
Huh? There's no paper.

Mr. Hippos strolls over to join them. He looks at the empty shelf and taps his chin <SFX: HMMMM...>

33 OLIVE 33
But how can a store run out of paper? This is where paper comes from.

34 MR. HIPPO 34
(chuckles) Oh, no. Stores usually don't *make* the things they sell. Everything here was made by someone else.

Elinor, Ari and Olive look at each other in surprise. They never thought about this. <SFX: SURPRISED OOOHH WALLA>

35 ELINOR 35
Then who makes the paper?

36 MR. HIPPO 36
Mr. Beaver. And it looks like I need to ask him to bring some more.

37 ELINOR 37
Why don't we go and ask him for you?
(aside, to Ari and Olive)
Then maybe we'll get to see how he makes the paper.

Ari and Olive nod in enthusiastic agreement.

38 MR. HIPPO 38
Well, that would be fine! Thank you, kids.

As the trio head out the door again - <JINGLE!> - Mr. Hippo grins. <KA-CHUNK!> He mischievously 'prices' his own arm. As he goes back then goes back to work, we...<NOTE: He does it on purpose, as a joke, if it doesn't play feel free to cut, or make it seem like a mistake.>

DISSOLVE TO:

5. EXT. MR. BEAVER'S PAPER FACTORY

The three kids approach Mr. Beaver's 'paper factory' - really more of a small workshop on the Beaver family property.

CLOSER - a PAPER-THEMED PICTOGRAM SIGN by the door confirms that this is the right place. Elinor <KNOCKS> on the door.

39 MR. BEAVER (OS) 39
Come in!

The kids push open the door. CUT TO:

6. INT. MR. BEAVER'S FACTORY

INSIDE - the kids find MR. BEAVER, amid an assortment of low-tech, PAPER-MAKING EQUIPMENT.

40 MR. BEAVER 40
Well, hi there! What brings you to my paper factory this fine morning?

41 ELINOR 41
 Hi, Mr. Beaver! We're looking for
 paper. We were making a storybook,
 but we ran out.

42 OLIVE 42
 We went to the store to buy more,
 but Mr. Hippo's out of paper too.

43 MR. BEAVER 43
 Ah, so he sent you to me! Well, you
 came to the right place. I was just
 about to make some.

44 ARI 44
 Ooh, can we watch?

45 ELINOR (EAGER) 45
 We want to know how you do it.

46 MR. BEAVER 46
 Of course! Right this way...

He beckons, and they follow him. Mr. Beaver's first stop is a
 BIN, from which he takes a SMALL LENGTH OF CUT WOOD.

47 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 47
 It all starts with this.

48 ELINOR 48
 A piece of wood? What does that
 have to do with paper?

49 MR. BEAVER 49
 Everything! Paper is MADE from
 wood.

CUT TO Elinor, Ari and Olive, who are quite amazed. <SFX:
 AMAZED WALLA>

50 ELINOR 50
 That's SO interesting! We need more
 observations.

Mr. Beaver grabs 3 pairs of SAFETY GOGGLES, and dons his own.

51 MR. BEAVER 51
 Then you better put on your
 'observation' goggles, for safety.

The kids put on the goggles, giggling at how funny they look.
 <SFX: GIGGLE WALLA>

52 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 52
First, I grind up the wood into
little pieces...

Mr. Beaver takes the log to a WOOD-GRINDING MACHINE. He feeds the log into it, and a <GRINDING NOISE> erupts.

CUT TO the kids - covering their ears at the loud sound!

WOOD SHAVINGS shower out the other end, into a box. MR. Beaver takes a big <SFX: SNIIIF>

53 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 53
(to himself rapturously
ala Homer Simpson)
Mmmmmmmmm. Wood chips.

Mr. Beaver takes the box of wood shavings, and dumps this into a big TROUGH of STEAMING HOT WATER.

54 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 54
Then I mix the wood chips with
water... and cook it.

He grabs a VERY LONG-HANDLED LADLE and starts stirring. Elinor watches with astonishment.

55 ELINOR 55
Cook it? Like... wood soup?

56 MR. BEAVER (CHUCKLES) 56
Exactly! Until the wood gets all
soft and mushy... then it's called
pulp.

Mr. Beaver turns to a SECOND TROUGH, spoons up some of the mushy pulp, and pours it over a framed screen.

57 MR. BEAVER (AMUSED) (CONT'D) 57
Now I pour the wood pulp over a
screen...

Water pours off into a basin, below. Mr. Beaver picks up the screen full of wood pulp and puts it down on a flat mat. Then he lays a big flat board over it.

58 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 58
Squish out all the water...

He presses on the board - then lifts it up to REVEAL a damp sheet of HOMEMADE PAPER.

59 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 59
TA-DA! One piece of slightly wet
handmade paper. Go ahead, peel it
off!

Elinor gingerly peels the fresh paper off the screen, and
holds it up to show her friends. <SFX: KIDS AMAZED WALLA>

60 ARI 60
That's so cool!

61 MR. BEAVER 61
I'll hang it up to dry.

Mr. Beaver hangs the wet sheet of paper from a low string,
like wet clothing on a clothesline.

62 ELINOR 62
I can't believe I thought paper
just came from the cabinet.

63 MR. BEAVER 63
(chuckle) Just about everything we
use is made somewhere else. And
it's all made out of something.

64 OLIVE 64
Like wood!

Mr. Beaver puts his safety glasses back up on his forehead,
looking thoughtful. (OS, the kids remove theirs too.)

65 MR. BEAVER 65
Right! I know you came for paper
but unfortunately that was my last
piece of wood. I need to ask Farmer
Bear to send over some more.

Elinor gets an idea.

66 ELINOR 66
We know where Farmer Bear's farm
is. If you want, we can go and ask
her right now?

67 MR. BEAVER 67
Well, that would be a big help!

68 ARI 68
We're on it, Mr. Beaver. See you
later!

As Ari sets off, still waving good-bye, Mr. Beaver warns -

69 MR. BEAVER 69
Watch out for the -

<WET SMACK!> Ari has walked right into the sheet of wet paper he just hung up! Ari peels it off, cringing.

70 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 70
- (chuckle) Wet paper.

71 ARI (SHEEPISH) 71
Heh. Sorry.

As Ari wipes his face and follows the girls OS, we

DISSOLVE TO:

7. EXT. FARMER BEAR'S TREE FARM - MINUTES LATER

FARMER BEAR uses a SHOVEL to dig a small hole, at the edge of a woodlot. She hums happily as she works. SFX: HAPPY HUMMING>

Then she takes a perky TREE SEEDLING from her SUPPLY WAGON and plants it in the hole. As she tamps down the earth -

72 ELINOR (OS) 72
Hi, Farmer Bear!

The farmer looks up to see Elinor, Ari and Olive approach.

73 FARMER BEAR (CHEERFUL) 73
Well, if it isn't Elinor, Ari and Olive! What are you sprouts doing here?

74 ELINOR 74
Mr. Beaver sent us. See, we need more paper to finish our storybook -

75 OLIVE 75
- but Mr. Beaver can't make the paper without wood.

76 ARI 76
(nodding)
So we came to help you pick more wood!

Farmer Bear raises an eyebrow, puzzled.

77 FARMER BEAR 77
Pick the wood?

78	ARI	78
	Yeah! Doesn't wood grow on trees?	
THOUGHT BUBBLE - Ari imagines SMALL WOOD PLANKS like the one Mr. Beaver had, dangling from tree limbs like fruit. The farmer plucks one off, and puts it into a bushel basket.		
(END THOUGHT BUBBLE)		
79	FARMER BEAR (AMUSED)	79
	Mmm, not exactly, Ari. Wood doesn't grow ON trees. Trees are MADE of wood.	
Elinor looks confused. This isn't making sense yet.		
80	ELINOR	80
	Wait. What do you mean?	
81	FARMER BEAR	81
	Wood comes from the trunks and branches of big trees. We have to cut them down to get the wood.	
Elinor's eyes widen. She looks to Elinor and Ari, who look astonished too.		
82	ELINOR	82
	You have to <i>cut down</i> trees to get wood?	
83	FARMER BEAR	83
	Yes! But don't worry. For every tree I cut down, I plant two new ones. That way, there will be plenty of trees in the future.	
She gestures to the row of seedlings she's just planted.		
84	FARMER BEAR (CONT'D)	84
	I guess you could say I'm planting some 'wood' right now.	
Elinor is thinking about what she just heard, while Olive and Ari try to get a handle on all of this.		
85	OLIVE	85
	Let me get this straight. To get paper, first you get wood from a tree -	
86	ARI	86
	- then the wood goes to a factory to be made into paper -	

87 OLIVE 87
 - then the paper goes to a store,
 where we buy it and take it home?

Farmer Bear nods.

88 FARMER BEAR 88
 That's it! It sounds like you
 figured out the whole paper trail.

<MUSIC UP> as Farmer Bear launches into a -

SONG MOMENT - "THE PAPER TRAIL"

(As she sings, Farmer Bear digs a new hole. Elinor helpfully puts a seedling into it, and tenderly covers it with soil.)

89 FARMER BEAR (SINGS) (CONT'D) 89
*You're on the trail of paper
 And this is what you found
 It all starts when a tiny tree
 Is planted in the ground*

The farmer pats the thick trunk of the nearest mature tree.

90 FARMER BEAR (SINGS) (CONT'D) 90
*The tree grows tall and mighty
 Until we bring it down
 And then we make some nice wood
 and take it into town*

As the three kids listen, we DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. MR. BEAVER'S PAPER FACTORY

QUICK CUTS to recap the papermaking process, as Mr. Beaver grinds up the log, 'cooks' the wood into pulp, and pours it out onto a screen.

*The wood goes to a factory
 To grind and mix and blend*

100 ANGLE ON Elinor, the moment she peels wet paper off a screen, 100
 and holds it up in wonder.

*Whoever knew that paper would
 Come out the other end?*

BACK TO SCENE - the kids now march behind Farmer Bear as she pulls her SUPPLY WAGON along as she sings:

*The paper travels to a store,
 From there we take it home.
 (MORE)*

FARMER BEAR (SINGS) (CONT'D)

*Oh, every piece of paper has
A story of its own!*

(END SONG.)

Farmer Bear has stopped her wagon near a MID-SIZED TREE.

91 FARMER BEAR (CONT'D) 91
Well, I guess I'd better get some
wood for Mr. Beaver.

She reaches for an axe in the wagon.

ANGLE ON Elinor - her eyes grow wide, and she gestures for
the Farmer to stop.

92 ELINOR (BLURTS) 92
Wait! Farmer Bear, I know that
having paper is good, and that we
have to cut trees to get it, but...
Maybe we *don't* need more paper yet.

Ari and Olive look surprised.

93 OLIVE 93
What? But how else can we finish
our storybook?

94 ELINOR 94
I think I know another way...

Off Olive and Ari's puzzled looks, we DISSOLVE TO:

8. EXT. ELINOR'S HOUSE

WIDE ON the yard, with its <CHIRPING> birds, and shady tree.
The crayons and recycling bin are right where they left them.

CLOSER - Elinor leads Olive and Ari to the brimming recycling
bin. She picks it up and puts it on top of the table.

95 ELINOR 95
Look, we still have LOTS of paper
in the recycling bin.

Ari takes out a sheet, and holds the already-used side
towards Elinor.

96 ARI 96
But it's *used*.

97 ELINOR 97
Only on one side. We can still draw
on the other side!

She turns the paper around to show the fresh reverse side.

98 ELINOR (CONT'D) 98
Now that we know paper comes from
trees... maybe we shouldn't waste
so much of it?

CUT TO Ari and Olive. They look up at the big, friendly tree overhead - and share a smile.

99 OLIVE 99
Good idea. We can do that.

Elinor grins, and raids the recycling bin, handing out a few sheets to each of her friends.

100		ARI	100
		So... where were we?	

101 ELINOR (GRINS) 101
Protecting the forest.

102 OLIVE 102
(laughing) Oh yeah!

They settle in at the table, flip their paper over to the blank side, and resume their brainstorming, crayons poised.

103 ELINOR 103

What if the bird takes one of her
feathers, and sneaks up on the
giant -

104 ARI 104

- Oh! And tickles the giant's feet!
The giant laughs so hard, that he
doesn't want to push down the trees
anymore.

He holds up a foot and tickles it with a crayon. The kids
<SFX: GIGGLE>. SLOWLY, we start to TILT UP to the leafy tree
canopy above...

105	OLIVE (OS)	105
	And they all live happily ever	
	after - including the trees.	

<SFX: COOL, AWESOME WALLA>...as we FADE OUT.

SEGMENT 2.

1. EXT PARK -- DAY

Ari and Elinor are sitting together working on a project we can't yet see. Sr. Tapir approaches them.

106 SR. TAPIR 106
Hey kids, what are you doing?

We see that they are holding some folded paper.

107 ELINOR 107
We are making animals out of paper.

108 SR. TAPIR 108
Excellent! You know, this reminds me of a story I heard about the invention of paper.

109 ARI 109
What? Paper was INVENTED?

110 SR. TAPIR 110
Yes! And you'll never guess where the idea came from!

Sr Tapir starts to strum his guitar and sings. We TRANSITION to a simpler style of animation that describes what he is singing.

2. INT CHINESE HOUSE -- DAY

We see Cai Lun sitting at his desk, writing on sticks of bamboo.

Ref: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bamboo_and_wooden_slips

111 SR. TAPIR 111
*Long, long ago
and far, far away.
People didn't have
paper like we use today

People would write
on plants and sticks
but it was rough
and kind of thick*

Cai Lun has trouble, his drawings and letters look choppy.

*They say an inventor
(MORE)*

SR. TAPIR (CONT'D)
*named Cai Lun [spoken:TS-EYE LOON]
wanted to write
on something smooth*

He tosses his work out, looks frustrated. He decides to go for a walk.

[Chorus]
*Sometimes the best ideas
can be found
When you go outside
and search around*

While walking outside, he sees some wasps.

*Lun saw some wasps
Make their nest
by chewing up plants
then getting them wet*

He watches them closely, gets an idea.

Ref:https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/1a/Wasp_colony.jpg/1024px-Wasp_colony.jpg

*When the nest dried
it was very smooth
Was this an idea
he could use?*

He gathers pieces of plants from a mulberry bush or hemp plants.

Ref:https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/1008/4432/products/Black_Mulberry_3.jpg?v=1543343770

*He chopped some plants
and poured water in
Squeezed it, dried it
To make paper, smooth and thin!*

He makes paper.

Ref: https://res.cloudinary.com/dk-find-out/image/upload/q_80,w_960,f_auto/Screen-dipping_L-3_fxbais.jpg

[Chorus]
*Sometimes the best ideas
can be found
When you go for a walk
and search around*

He writes happily as a wasp flies in and lands next to his paper.

3. EXT PARK -- DAY

112 ELINOR 112
 Wow, that's amazing! I didn't
 realize wasps made paper nests.

Ari shows his handiwork: an origami wasp.

113 ARI 113
 And check this out: a paper wasp!

114 SR. TAPIR 114
 Haha! Bravo!

THE END.