

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EP.115 "Elinor Stops the Squish"

By: Karen Moonah

Elinor's Question: *How do animals and plants protect themselves?*

Logline: *Elinor worries that the cupcake Olive wants to bring to school for Ms. Mole will get squished - so she comes up with a nature-inspired way to protect it.*

ET 1b) - Define a problem that can be solved by the design of a new or improved tool or technology. (Elinor and her friends define the problem of the fragile cupcake that needs protection).

SEP 6a) - Constructing Explanations. Use background knowledge experience and data to construct reasonable explanations and theories of natural phenomena. Elinor works out that 'hard outsides' protect 'soft insides'.

SEP 6d) - Designing Solutions (Engineering) Use evidence to support a theory or solution to a problem. (Elinor and her friend observe how animals and plants in nature are protected by shells, and decide that a shell will protect their cupcake).

LS2 - Understand that animals have different body parts that are used in different ways to meet their needs, and that plants have different parts that help them survive and grow. Elinor observes the tough skin and shells of animals and plants that protect them.

ND3 - Understand that structures and materials in the natural world can be used or can inspire the engineering of structures with similar function in the designed world. Elinor and friends make a cupcake carrier out of a coconut.

OUTLINE: January. 17, 2019

FIRST DRAFT: February 5th, 2019

SECOND DRAFT: February 27, 2019

1. EXT. ELINOR'S SCHOOL - DAY

It's another clear day at Elinor's school. As we TRUCK IN, we hear Ms. Mole, just wrapping up 'circle time'.

1	MS. MOLE (OS)	1	*
	...and that brings us to the end of		*
	circle time.		*
	(as we transition)		*
	Which means, it's the <i>beginning</i>		*
	of... SNACK TIME!		*

2. INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

The kids sit in a semi-circle on the floor. Ms. Mole is stepping away from the chalkboard, dusting off her hands.

2	ALL KIDS	2	*
	Yay! / Woo hoo! / Snack time!		*

Her students get up and happily hurry to get their snacks from their bags. Ms. Mole looks on, as the cloud of chalk dust from her hands builds up.

3	MS. MOLE	3	*
	Ah... Ahhh... Ah-CHOO! (sniffs)		*
	Mm. I could use a snack too.		*

ARI and ELINOR have their SNACK BAGS in hand as they settle into side-by-side chairs at a TABLE, saving a spot for Olive. Ari does a jazzy little wiggle as he opens his bag.

4	ARI	4	*
	<i>Snack time, snack time...</i> I loooove		*
	snack time! Let's see what I got...		*
	I got...		*

He pulls out CARROT STICKS. He looks mildly disappointed.

5	ARI (CONT'D)	5	*
	Hm. Carrot sticks.		*

6	ELINOR (EXCITED)	6	*
	Ari, you got carrot sticks! I LOVE		*
	carrot sticks, they're my favorite!		*
	Let's see what I got...		*

Elinor pulls out a BAG OF RAISINS. She looks mildly disappointed.

7	ELINOR (CONT'D)	7	*
	Hm. Raisins.		*

8	ARI	8	*
	Elinor, you got raisins! That's awesome, raisins are MY favorite!		*
			*
	They both look at their respective snacks, not too excited. Suddenly, they both realize the obvious solution.		*
9	ELINOR/ARI (UNISON) <GASP!> WANNA TRADE??	9	*
			*
	The kids happily trade and excitedly start snacking.		*
	Elinor looks OFF towards the cloakroom area.		
10	ELINOR	10	
	Olive? Did you find your snack?		
	CLOAKROOM AREA - Olive is still digging deep in her bag. She takes out SEVERAL HARDCOVER BOOKS, a JUMBO BOX OF CRAYONS...		
11	OLIVE	11	
	It's in here somewhere... aha!		
	Found it.		
	Olive finally pulls out a SMALL BROWN BAG and heads back to join them. On the way, she passes an oversized WALL CALENDAR, with pictograms on special days. She double-takes.		
	ZOOM IN on a BIRTHDAY CAKE pictogram, with Ms. Mole's face.		*
	Olive brightens! She hurries to join her friends.		
12	OLIVE (LOW, URGENT) (CONT'D)	12	
	Elinor! Ari! Did you notice? It's Ms. Mole's birthday tomorrow!		*
13	ARI	13	
	<i>Teachers</i> have birthdays?		
14	ELINOR (CHUCKLING)	14	
	Of course they do. Let's do something nice for her!		
15	OLIVE	15	
	We could make her a picture?		
	CUT TO Ms. Mole, who is busy cleaning the chalkboard, beside a whole wall-full of KID-DRAWN PICTURES of herself.		*
16	ARI (UNSURE)	16	*
	She already has a <i>lot</i> of pictures.		*
17	ELINOR	17	
	How about a craft?		

3. EXT. TOWN - DAY

After school, Elinor, Ari and Olive walk home together, brainstorming a solution to their cupcake conundrum.

27 ELINOR 27
 Maybe you could carry the cupcake
 on a plate?

OLIVE

I could... but what if I trip?

THOUGHT BUBBLE - Olive imagines herself carrying a plate with a cupcake on it, as she hikes down a path full of exaggerated obstacles. Rocks, tree roots, banana peels...

29 OLIVE (CONT'D) 29
Whoa... whoa... OOF!

Olive slips on a banana peel, and falls forward. <SQUISH!>

BACK TO SCENE. Ari nods, agreeing.

30 ARI 30
That would squish it all right.
What if I fly it to school?

THOUGHT BUBBLE - Ari imagines himself holding the cupcake as he flies. But since Ari's paw is connected to his wing, the cupcake goes up and down as he flies. Up, down, up, down, UP -

[illegible]

- he loses his grip, and the cupcake arcs through the air!

IN THE SCHOOLYARD - It lands on Ms. Mole's head. <SPLAT!>

BACK TO SCENE. Elinor cringes, just thinking about it.

32 ELINOR 32
That might squish the cupcake
too...

By now, they're passing a PARK. Suddenly, a big soft playground ball comes bouncing across their path.

33 ROLLIE (OS) 33
 Heads up!

The ball misses them, but it does bounce over and <BONK> -

- A TURTLE, who was creeping along at the side of the path. He quickly pulls his head and limbs inside his shell.

34	ELINOR (DISMAYED) Oh, no! Poor turtle!	34	*
	Elinor rushes over, with Ari and Olive close behind. At the same time, ROLLIE (an ARMADILLO) enters.		*
35	ROLLIE Sorry about that! Is the turtle okay?	35	*
	ANGLE ON the turtle - who slowly peeks his head out. Then his legs pop out, and he looks up at the kids, seemingly unfazed.		*
36	ARI Yeah, he's okay.	36	*
37	OLIVE (chuckle) He hardly even noticed!	37	*
	The turtle resumes its leisurely walk. Rollie is relieved.		*
38	ARI <PHEW> He's a tough little guy.	38	*
	ON Elinor, relieved but also very curious.		*
39	ELINOR (TO HERSELF) But <i>how</i> did the turtle <i>not</i> get hurt?	39	*
	Meanwhile, Rollie retrieves his ball from the bushes.		*
40	OLIVE What are you playing, Rollie?	40	*
41	ROLLIE (CASUALLY) Oh, my sister and I are just bumping the ball back and forth.	41	*
	Rollie tosses the ball in the air and playfully <BOUNCES> it off the shell on his upper back.		*
42	ELINOR (SURPRISED) Doesn't <i>that</i> hurt?	42	*
43	ROLLIE Nah. I have protective shell, see?	43	*
	He <TAPS> on his own armour plates.		
44	ROLLIE (CONT'D) Nice and hard! (shrugs) It's an armadillo thing. Anyway, I gotta roll. See you later!	44	*

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54 MRS. GORILLA 54
Oh! But - coconuts are a bit
different than oranges...

But Olive is already squeezing the hard-shelled coconut over a cup as hard as she can, with her hands, then her trunk. *

55 OLIVE 55
(strain) Wow. The outside is *hard*!

56 ARI (CONFIDENT) 56
I think you have to peel it first.
Like this!

Ari takes the coconut, and pries at it - with no luck.

57 ARI (CONT'D) 57
(strains) How're you supposed to
get into this thing?!

Mrs. Gorilla smiles.

58 MRS. GORILLA 58
You have to get through the shell.
I'll show you! *

She takes the coconut back, and pokes a hole on the hard shell with an MALLET and an AWL, then pours out the coconut water into three small CUPS. *

59 ELINOR 59
So *that's* how you get coconut water
out. *

60 OLIVE 60
It's delicious! *

61 ARI 61
Yeah! *

While Olive and Ari talk to Mrs. Gorilla, Elinor curiously examines the coconut shell. *

62 MRS. GORILLA 62
And what brings you to the park
today, kids? *

63 OLIVE 63
Well, Mrs. Gorilla, we're trying to
figure out how to stop the squish! *

64 MRS. GORILLA 64
The squish? *

65	ARI	65	*
	Olive wants to bring a cupcake tomorrow for Ms. Mole's birthday, but everything Olive puts in her bag gets squished!		*
66	OLIVE	66	*
	(smiling) I like to carry a lot of things.		*
67	MRS. GORILLA	67	*
	I see! That IS a hard problem. Or... a soft and squishy problem?		*
	Just then, Elinor has a realization.		*
68	ELINOR	68	*
	Hey, that is SO INTERESTING. It isn't just turtles and armadillos that have shells to protect their insides. Coconuts do too!		*
69	ARI	69	*
	Huh! That IS pretty cool.		*
70	MRS. GORILLA	70	*
	That's right, Elinor! Lots of things in Nature have shells to protect them. Would you like me to show you?		*
71	ELINOR	71	*
	Yeah! We need MORE OBSERVATIONS!		*
	As Elinor and her friends rally around Mrs. Gorilla we hear the beginning of a song...		*
	5. EXT. TOWN - SONG MOMENT - "A SHELL"		*
	We FOLLOW Mrs. Gorilla, Elinor, Ari and Olive as they step away from the stand and pass through town, encountering a few other creatures with 'tough outsides'.		*
72	MRS. GORILLA/ELINOR/OLIVE/ARI	72	*
	(sing) <i>ALL: A shell, a shell Protected by a shell A shell is such a clever way To keep you safe and well</i>		*
	Just then, Elinor sees -		*

- A JUNE BUG in flight! Suddenly, it bumps into the side of a building and loses altitude - *

ELINOR- There's a beetle, *
ARI -Look how small! *
OLIVE - Oops - it bumped into a *
wall! *

- but the bug quickly recovers and they watch it fly away. *

ELINOR -But see? It didn't hurt at *
all, *
It has a kind of shell *

They walk onward, singing - *

ALL: A shell, a shell *
Protected by a shell *
A shell is such a clever way *
To keep you safe and well *

Ari points to a SNAIL, climbing up a sturdy plant stalk. A bird hops closer... *

ARI: You see that snail? I have a *
hunch *
A bird would like him for her lunch *

...but when the bird tries to snap up the snail, its beak glances off the hard shell. The bird gives up and moves on. *

OLIVE: But shells are much too hard *
to crunch *
ELINOR: That's why it has a shell! *

The three friends and Mrs. Gorilla skip onward through town and back to the fruit stand, singing - *

ALL: A shell, a shell *
Protected by a shell *
A shell is such a clever way *
To keep you safe and well *

The SONG ENDS. By now, Mrs. Gorilla and the kids have circled back to their original positions at the fruit stand. *

OLIVE *
Wow, Mrs. Gorilla, I never knew so *
many things in Nature had hard *
covers to protect their insides! *

74 MRS. GORILLA 74 *
Oh yes, Olive. Shells are very good *
protection. *

ON Elinor, as she picks up a coconut and has a brainstorm. *

75 ELINOR 75 *
And I just got an idea for how to *
protect Ms. Mole's cupcake! *

Off Elinor's excited look, we DISSOLVE TO:

6. EXT. SCHOOL - DAY *

WIDE on the schoolyard, the next morning. Ms. Mole supervises *
as her STUDENTS arrive and greet each other. *

76 VARIOUS STUDENTS 76 *
(school yard walla)

CLOSER - Ari, Olive and Elinor huddle around Olive's bag. *
They are wrapping something inside the bag. *

77 OLIVE (LOW) 77 *
Hold the ribbon tight, Ari. I've *
never gift-wrapped something like *
this before. *

78 ELINOR (LOW) 78 *
Hurry, here comes Ms. Mole! *

79 OLIVE (LOW) 79 *
Okay, ready? *

ANOTHER ANGLE - as they all turn towards their teacher. Ari *
is holding their gift in his hands: a coconut, with a bow *
tied around it! *

80 OLIVE / ELINOR / ARI (IN UNISON) 80 *
Happy birthday Ms. Mole! *

Ms. Mole reacts with surprise and delight! But as Ari holds *
up the gift a little higher - *

81 ARI 81 *
We got you a birthday - *
(tugging efforts) *
- gift - *

- he realizes that something is wrong. *His finger* *
accidentally got tied into the bow! *

82 ARI (CONT'D)Huh? Hey! 82 *

Surprised, Ari yanks his hand around, with the coconut still *

83 tied on. He finally shakes it off - 83
but accidentally throws the coconut!

84 OLIVE / ELINOR 84
Oh no! / Look out!

It flies in an arc, right to Ms. Mole - who catches it like *
an outfielder catching a pop fly.

85 MS. MOLE (CHUCKLING) 85 *
My goodness! You kids are so *
thoughtful! What do we have here? *

Elinor, Olive and Ari come closer, sharing a worried look.

86 ELINOR (NERVOUS) 86
Uh. Better open it, and find out.

ANGLE ON Ms. Mole, as she slowly and dramatically opens the *
split-in-half coconut to reveal *

- a perfectly INTACT CUPCAKE! The kids beam with relief. *

87 ELINOR (CONT'D) 87
The coconut shell worked! The *
cupcake didn't get squished! *

She tugs the cupcake from its snug, carved-out coconut 'meat' *
niche to better admire the coconut itself. *

88 MS. MOLE 88 *
Thank you, kids! Why, that's the *
nicest cupcake I've ever seen. And *
how in the world did you know about *
my coconut shell collection? *

Elinor looks blank. *

89 ELINOR 89
Your *what*?

For a moment, Elinor looks in amazement at her friends - then *
they all crack up <SFX: ELINOR, ARI, OLIVE LAUGHING> *

As the class <SFX: CLASSROOM LAUGH AND CHEER> we PULL BACK *
and...

FADE OUT.