

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EP.126 "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 are happily spinning a tale together...

CLOSER - Elinor and Olive sit on the ground, surrounded by CRAYONS and the COLOURFUL DRAWINGS they've made to illustrate their story. Ari hangs upside-down from a low tree branch.

Ari flips/glides down from the tree and grabs a sheet of paper from a PILE OF PLAIN DRAWING PAPER.

He flops down on the ground and gets busy drawing.

Elinor grabs a fresh piece of paper and starts a new drawing.

Elinor tosses her barely-begun 'cave' picture into a RECYCLING BIN and reaches for a fresh sheet of paper - but there isn't any more. They've used it all up.

Elinor gets up and heads inside the house.

2. INT. KITCHEN - DAY

RANGER RABBIT is doing some work at the kitchen table. She looks up as Elinor enters.

10 ELINOR 10
Hi Mom. We need more paper.

Her Mom gestures to the usual shelf - but it's empty.

11 RANGER RABBIT 11
Okay Elinor, it's right - oh! I
guess we're all out.

CUT TO Ari and Olive, now leaning in through the doorway.

12 OLIVE 12
Out of paper?

13 ARI 13
But we're in the middle of making
the *best story ever*.

14 ELINOR 14
It's about three heroes who protect
a forest from dragons.

15 RANGER RABBIT (INTERESTED) 15
Wow! Great story! Forests need
protecting. I guess we'd better get
you some more paper.

ANGLE ON Elinor, suddenly thoughtful.

16 ELINOR 16
Where does paper come from, anyway?

Before Ranger Rabbit can respond, Olive pipes up.

OLIVE

I know where. From the store.

Ranger Rabbit hands Elinor a COIN PURSE.

18 RANGER RABBIT 18

That's right, Olive. This should be enough money to buy a new pack of paper.

19 ELINOR (GRATEFUL) 19
Thanks, Mom. We'll be back soon!

Elinor waves, and she heads back OS with her friends.

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

Friendly MR. HIPPO is sweeping the aisle when they enter.

20 ELINOR 20
Hi Mr. Hippo.

21 MR. HIPPO (CHIPPER) 21
Elinor, Ari and Olive! What can I
do for you?

22 ELINOR 22
We're making a storybook, but we
ran out of paper.

23 MR. HIPPO 23
Ah, paper! Aisle two. Top shelf.

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

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

24 ARI 24
But there's none here!

Mr. Hippo approaches. He reacts with mild surprise.

25 MR. HIPPO 25
Oh I'm sorry. I must have sold out.

26 OLIVE 26
How can a store run out of paper?
This is where paper comes from!

27 MR. HIPPO 27
(chuckles) Actually, I get it from
Mr. Beaver.

The kids share a look of realization. Ah, now they get it!

28 ELINOR 28
Oh! So paper doesn't just come from
the store.

29	ARI (NODS)	29
	It comes from Mr. Beaver.	
30	ELINOR	30
	Then we'd better go see Mr. Beaver.	
31	MR. HIPPO	31
	If he has paper on hand, would you mind bringing some back for the store?	
32	ELINOR	32
	No problem, Mr. Hippo. See you later.	

The three kids rally out of the store. The door <JINGLES>.

DISSOLVE TO:

5. EXT. MR. BEAVER'S WORKSHOP

The three kids approach Mr. Beaver's workshop. (This could be a separate outbuilding, or at the back of the Beavers' home.)

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

33	MR. BEAVER (OS)	33
	Come in!	

The kids push open the door. CUT TO:

6. INT. MR. BEAVER'S WORKSHOP

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

34	MR. BEAVER	34
	Well, hello there! What brings you to my workshop this fine morning?	
35	ELINOR	35
	Paper, Mr. Beaver. We were making a storybook, but we ran out of paper.	
36	OLIVE	36
	And the store is sold out.	
37	ARI	37
	But Mr. Hippo says paper comes from you. So here we are!	

38 MR. BEAVER 38
Well, you came to the right place!

39 OLIVE 39
Great. So... where's the paper?

40 MR. BEAVER 40
I haven't made it yet.

CUT TO Elinor, as she absorbs this.

41 ELINOR 41
Made it? You have to make paper?
That's SO interesting!

Mr. Beaver smiles, pleased that she's curious about it.

42 MR. BEAVER 42
I'm glad you think so.

43 ELINOR 43
But we need more observations. How
do you make it?

44 MR. BEAVER 44
I'll show you...

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

45 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 45
It all starts with this.

46 ELINOR 46
A piece of wood? What does that
have to do with paper?

47 MR. BEAVER 47
Everything. Wood is the main
ingredient in paper!

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

48 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 48
But first, we need to grind up the
wood into little pieces.

Mr. Beaver takes the log to a HOMEMADE, HAND-CRANKED WOOD-
GRINDING MACHINE. He feeds the log into one end, like an
oversized pencil sharpener.

49 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 49
Olive, can you crank the handle for
me?

Olive obligingly takes hold of the handle, and cranks it.
This moves the log through the grinder...

50 ARI 50
(laugh) It looks like you're
sharpening a pencil.

...until WOOD SHAVINGS shower out the other end, into a box.

51 MR. BEAVER 51
(sniff) Ah, I love the smell of
wood chips in the morning.

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

52 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 52
Next, we mix the wood chips with
water... and cook it.

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

53 ELINOR 53
Cook it? Like... *wood porridge*?

54 MR. BEAVER (CHUCKLES) 54
Pretty much! But it's not to eat.
We cook it to make the wood soft
and pasty.

55 ARI 55
That doesn't look like paper. When
does it get flat?

56 MR. BEAVER (AMUSED) 56
Right now. Once it's all soft and
pasty, I pour it onto this screen.

Mr. Beaver takes back the spoon, and ladles the watery wood
pulp over a FRAMED SCREEN, which sits flat over a basin.

Elinor crouches for a better look.

57 ELINOR 57
The water's draining off, but the
wood stuff is staying on top.

Mr. Beaver takes the screen full of wood pulp aside onto a
mat and lays a big flat board over it. He presses on this -

58 MR. BEAVER 58
 (with effort)
 Now, I squish it flat, to squeeze
 out most of the water, and...

- then lifts it up to REVEAL a damp sheet of HOMEMADE PAPER.
 He peels this carefully off the screen, and holds it up.

59 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 59
 TA-DA! One piece of slightly wet
 handmade paper, just for you.

The kids are appreciative - but they still have concerns.

60 ELINOR (AWKWARD) 60
 Thanks Mr. Beaver. But um, we
 actually need *more* than one sheet
 of paper to finish our book.

Mr. Beaver shrugs agreeably.

61 MR. BEAVER 61
 Then I'll just have to make more.

Elinor, Ari and Olive look excited. Finally! But Mr. Beaver
 suddenly hesitates.

62 MR. BEAVER (CONT'D) 62
 Only thing is - that was my last
 piece of wood.

The kids deflate.

63 ARI 63
 I *knew* there'd be a catch.

64 MR. BEAVER 64
 I'd better head over and get some
 more wood, from Farmer Bear.

Elinor is very curious.

65 ELINOR 65
 Wood comes from a *farm*? I wonder
 what that looks like...

IMAGINATION BUBBLE - Elinor imagines Farmer Bear watering a
 line of crops with a watering can. Only the 'crop' is a whole
 furrow full of CUT WOOD PLANKS, growing like corn.

BACK TO SCENE - Elinor looks excited.

66 ELINOR (CONT'D) 66
 Can we come with you?

Mr. Beaver shrugs agreeably.

67	MR. BEAVER	67
	Sure! Grab that wheelbarrow, and let's get going. We have paper to make!	

Elinor trots over to get the empty wheelbarrow he indicated -
<SFX: YEAH/WHOO-HOO WALLA> - and Mr. Beaver leads the excited
kids OS.

DISSOLVE TO:

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

FARMER BEAR pulls a wagon full of supplies (AN AXE, SOME
SHOVELS, TREE SEEDLINGS) up to a row of trees. She stops to
put a measuring tape around a (safe-sized, NOT huge) Tree to
check its girth.

68	FARMER BEAR	68
	(happy humming)	

69	MR. BEAVER (OS)	69
	'Morning, Farmer Bear.	

Farmer Bear looks up to see Mr. Beaver approaching, pushing
the empty wheelbarrow and with Elinor, Ari and Olive in tow.

70	FARMER BEAR (CHEERFUL)	70
	Mr. Beaver! I wasn't expecting you today. And you brought friends.	

71	MR. BEAVER	71
	Yes, I ran out of wood a little early this week, but I have a very important paper order to complete.	

He smiles fondly at the kids, who nod eagerly.

72	ARI	72
	We need paper to finish our book.	

73	OLIVE	73
	But paper's made from wood -	

74	ELINOR	74
	- and we wanted to see where the wood comes from.	

Farmer Bear smiles and spreads her arms.

75 FARMER BEAR 75
And here it is!

76 ELINOR (CONFUSED) 76
Here? But - this is a forest.

77 FARMER BEAR 77
Not exactly. Do you notice anything
unusual about these trees?

POV - as the kids take another, more careful look.

78 ELINOR 78
They're all in rows.

79 FARMER BEAR 79
That's because it's not a natural
forest. I planted these trees, for
their wood!

The Farmer pats the trunk of the big tree she just measured.

CUT TO Elinor as it finally 'clicks'.

80 ELINOR (ASTONISHED) 80
Wood comes from TREES?

81 FARMER BEAR 81
You bet! People use this wood to
make all sorts of things, like
houses, furniture -

Ari points to the WOODEN-HANDLED SHOVEL in the WAGON.

82 ARI 82
- and tools?

83 OLIVE (BRAINSTORMING) 83
Violins. Toothpicks. Baseball bats.

84 ELINOR 84
- and *paper*.

Farmer Bear takes an axe from her wagon.

85 FARMER BEAR 85
Okay, folks. Stand back, and get
ready to yell 'timber'!

Mr. Beaver and the kids step back to a safe distance, and
Farmer Bear starts to <CHOP> a notch in the trunk of the (NOT
very big) tree she just measured. Soon, we hear a <CRACKLING>
sound...

86 ARI / OLIVE / MR. BEAVER 86
 TIMBER!!!

87 ELINOR 87
 Oh, no! The TREE!

...and the tree <CRASHES> down. Elinor watches, wide-eyed. As the Farmer lowers her axe, she sees Elinor looking solemn.

88 FARMER BEAR 88
 You okay, Elinor?

89 ELINOR (GLUM) 89
 Wellllll, I *know* we need wood to
 make things... but I wish we didn't
 have to cut down trees to do it.

90 ARI 90
 Yeah, we're supposed to PROTECT the
 forest.

91 OLIVE 91
 Forests need protection, that's
 what Ranger Rabbit said.

Farmer Bear nods kindly.

92 FARMER BEAR 92
 Well, Ranger Rabbit is right.
 That's why, for every tree I cut
 down, I plant TWO new ones.

Farmer Bear gestures to her supply wagon.

ON THE WAGON - it holds a bunch of healthy TREE SEEDLINGS in small pots. The farmer gently picks one up.

93 FARMER BEAR (CONT'D) 93
 Want to help me plant some baby
 trees, before you go?

Elinor smiles, somewhat cheered.

94 ELINOR 94
 Yes, please!

Olive and Ari nod too.

Farmer Bear starts handing out seedlings and trowels. Elinor looks at the seedling in her hands with a new understanding.

95 ELINOR (TO HERSELF) (CONT'D) 95
 So *this* is where paper comes from.

As Elinor, Ari and Olive get busy helping Farmer Bear dig holes and plant seedlings, the kids launch into a -

SONG MOMENT - "THE PAPER TRAIL" (MONTAGE)

96

ELINOR / OLIVE / ARI (SING)

96

*We're on the trail of paper
And this is what we found
It started when a tiny tree
Was planted in the ground*

DISSOLVE TO LATER: They wave goodbye to Farmer Bear as Mr. Beaver wheels his wheelbarrow back to his workshop, now laden with small logs. The kids stride alongside him.

*The tree grew tall and mighty
The farmer cut it down
And then the wood that came from it
Is taken into town*

DISSOLVE TO QUICK CUTS as they sing, in Mr. Beaver's Workshop, to recap the papermaking process.

- a log is being ground up by Ari
- Mr. Beaver 'cooks' the wood shavings
- Olive peels wet paper off a screen
- Elinor takes paper from a drying rack and holds it up.

*The wood goes to a factory
To grind and mix and blend
Whoever knew that paper would
Come out the other end?*

DISSOLVE TO LATER: The kids march proudly into Mr. Hippo's store, each carrying a finished package of paper to place on Mr. Hippo's shelf.

*The paper travels to a store,
From there you take it home.*

Elinor keeps one pack. She carries it to the check-out desk.

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

We END SONG, as Elinor places the package on the counter and takes out her change purse.

97

ARI (JUBILANT)

97

*Finally, we'll have paper to finish
making our book.*

Suddenly - Elinor hesitates.

98 OLIVE 98
What's wrong, Elinor?

99 ELINOR 99
I was just thinking. I'm not sure
we need to buy more paper yet.

ANGLE ON Ari and Olive, looking surprised.

100 OLIVE 100

What? But how else can we finish
our book?

Elinor closes her change purse.

101 ELINOR 101
I think I know another way...

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

11. 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 as Elinor leads Olive and Ari to the recycling bin, and leans down to take a piece of paper out of it.

102 ELINOR 102
Look, we still have LOTS of paper
in the recycling bin.

Ari points out the half-drawn dragon on it.

103	ARI	103
	But it's <i>used</i> .	

104 ELINOR 104
Only on one side. The other side is
still good.

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

105 ELINOR (CONT'D) 105
Now that we know paper comes from
trees... maybe we could use a
little less of it?

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

106 OLIVE 106
We can do that.

Elinor grins, and raids the recycling bin, handing out a few sheets to each of her friends. They settle in under the tree.

107 ARI 107
So... where were we?

108 ELINOR (GRINS) 108
Protecting the forest.

109 OLIVE 109
(laughing) Oh yeah!

As they pick up the thread of their storybook adventure, we slowly TILT UP to the canopy of the tree above them...

110	ELINOR (PART OS)	110
	So the heroes get the dragon to dive into the lake.	

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111                                ARI                                111
    And that puts out his dragon
    fire...
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112	OLIVE	112
	And the tree are SAVED!	

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