

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EP 146 Olive's Tree

By: Michael Foulke

Elinor's Question: How do we fix Olive's favorite tree?

Logline: When Olive's favorite tree falls over, her friends try to figure out how to fix it for her, but the answer may be more complicated than they thought.

Curriculum Goals:

LS4. Understand that all animals and plants have a life cycle, can reproduce, and change and grow over time. (Elinor and her friends trace the life cycle of an oak tree).

ND4: Appreciate the way that elements in the natural world change, interact and are re-used. (Elinor and her friends observe the ways the apple tree was used in the past (for shade, for climbing - and the way it is used now that it's fallen - as a home for forest creatures).

SEP 1: Asking questions (science) c. Ask and/or identify cause and effect questions that can be answered by an investigation. (Elinor and her friends investigate why the tree fell.)

SEP 6: Constructing explanations (science) a. Use back-ground knowledge experiences, and data to construct reasonable explanations and theories of natural phenom-ena (science) (Elinor and her friends conclude that the tree fell because it was old and diseased).

SEP 7: Engaging in argument from evidence

a. Engage in discussions before, during, and after investigations
b. Support thinking and argue ideas with evidence (Elinor and her friends theorize as they examine the evidence around and including the fallen tree).

MAINS: Elinor, Ari, Olive, Ranger Rabbit

SECONDARY: None

LOCATIONS: Forest, Forest clearing

PROPS: Acorns, Picnic Basket, Picnic Blanket

Outline: July 23, 2019

First Draft: August 28, 2019

Second Draft: September 20, 2019

1. EXT. FOREST -- DAY

A SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS: ELINOR, ARI and OLIVE skip through the forest. Ari begins to fidget and points at a random tree.

1	ARI	1	*
	Are we there yet?		*
2	OLIVE	2	
	No.		
	ANGLE ON: The kids then climb over a boulder.		*
3	ARI	3	
	What about now?		
4	OLIVE	4	*
	No.		*
	ANGLE ON: The kids now carefully step through a stream.		*
5	ARI	5	*
	How about now?		*
6	ELINOR	6	*
	(giggle)		*
	Not yet, Ari. Olive will tell us when we are.		*
7	ARI	7	*
	(sighs)		*
	Why does it take so long to get there?		*
8	OLIVE	8	*
	Because it's awesome! It's the biggest, bestest tree ever!		*
9	ARI	9	*
	Whoa, cool! I just have one more question.		*
10	OLIVE	10	*
	Sure! What is it?		*
11	ARI	11	*
	Are we there yet?		*
12	OLIVE	12	*
	Actually, yes! It's right up through here. Follow me!		*

13	ARI (surprised) Really?! That's never worked before.	13	
	The kids follow Olive OS.		*

2. EXT. FOREST CLEARING ON A HILL -- CONTINUOUS	*
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As the kids leave the forest, they enter a clearing, where they find one lone oak tree high up on a picturesque hill, all by itself. The sun is shining right on the tree, giving it a majestic look that the kids marvel at. <SFX: WHOA WALLA>

14	ELINOR Oh, Olive, your tree is sooo beautiful!	14	
			*
			*

We then pan over to find Ari giving the tree a big bear hug. His hands don't come close to making it all the way around.

15	ARI (in awe) This is the biggest tree I've ever seen.	15	
			*
			*
			*
			*

16	OLIVE And it's the best place in the world for playing, picnicking, climbing, napping...	16	
			*
			*
			*
			*

Suddenly, Ari pops out from behind the tree.

17	ARI Did I hear napping?	17	
			*
			*

18	ELINOR What should we do first?	18	
			*
			*

19	OLIVE Anything we want!	19	
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MONTAGE OF the kids having fun at Olive's tree:

They chase each other around, playing tag. Olive and Elinor go one way, Ari goes the other - <SFX:boo!>

They (safely) climb the tree, using its many branches to brace themselves. Olive helps Elinor up, but Ari just flutters to a higher branch.

Finally, Elinor is watching the sun going down as Olive draws in her notebook.

Suddenly, Ari's upside down head pops down from the top of frame. As he talks, we pull out to reveal he is hanging upside down from a branch.

20	ARI	20	
	Whatcha doing now, Olive?		
21	OLIVE	21	
	Drawing a picture of my special tree.		
	I do a new one every time I come up		*
	here. I've been here so many times		
	I've almost filled up this whole		
	book!		
22	ARI	22	
	Cool. I wanna seeeeee... Aah!		*
	Ari falls off the branch, but flutters down safely to the		*
	ground and pops back up into frame.		*
23	ARI (CONT'D)	23	*
	I'm ok--		*
	Suddenly, an acorn falls and <SFX: BOPS> him on the head.		*
24	ARI (CONT'D)	24	*
	Well, I'm kinda okay. Is your tree		*
	mad at me or something?		*
25	OLIVE	25	*
	Noooo. It's just dropping a seed on		*
	the ground.		*
26	ELINOR	26	*
	Trees have seeds?		*
	Ari picks up the acorn, he looks at it and shows it to		*
	Elinor.		*
27	OLIVE	27	*
	Uh-huh. My Mom told me acorns are oak		*
	tree seeds - and this is an oak tree.		*
28	ELINOR	28	*
	Wow, Olive, you sure know a lot about		*
	trees.		*
29	OLIVE	29	*
	Yeah. My Mom and I really love trees.		*
	We come here all the time. And my Mom		*
	used to come here when she was little		*
	and HER mom too, when SHE was little.		*

Now carrying the acorn, Ari goes to sit down next to Olive,
but she stops him.

*
*

30 OLIVE (CONT'D) 30
Wait, Ari! Don't sit there, you'll
shmush that tree!

*
*
*

Olive points to a little sprout coming out of the ground as
Ari and Elinor lean down to examine it.

*
*

31 ARI 31
Are you sure that's a tree? It looks
like a little weed to me.

*
*
*

32 OLIVE 32
(proud of her knowledge)
Nope, that's what a tree looks like
when it first pops out of the ground.
Here, take a look.

*
*
*
*
*

Olive pulls out Elinor's magnifying glass. MAGNIFIED POV: as
she and her friends get on the ground to look at the sprout.

*
*

33 ELINOR 33
So this little one is a baby tree?

*
*

34 OLIVE 34
Yep. My mom said trees start out as
seeds, then they become little
sprouts like this one and finally,
big grown-up trees - like this!

*
*
*
*
*

Olive gestures to her big tree!

*

35 ARI 35
Wow, it's so neat to think that this
giant tree came from a tiny acorn.

*
*
*

36 ELINOR 36
Yeah, but if trees come from seeds,
and seeds come from trees - how did
this big, giant tree get all the way
out here all by itself? There are no
other big trees around.

*
*
*
*
*
*

37 ARI 37
Oh, I know!

*
*

A THOUGHT BUBBLE above Ari's head as he imagines how the tree
began, which starts with a walking acorn.

*
*

38 ARI (CONT'D) 38
Maybe the acorn walked up to the top
of the hill all by itself?

*
*
*

39	OLIVE	39	
	Acorns don't have legs, Ari. Someone must have brought it up here.		
	Ari now imagines pirates burying the acorn.		*
40	ARI	40	
	Riiight. Maybe pirates thought the acorns were treasure and buried them.		
	The pirates turn to squirrels, but still dressed as pirates.		*
41	ELINOR	41	
	Or maybe one of Philbert's squirrel-friends did. Squirrels love acorns.		*
42	OLIVE	42	
	It's wasn't a squirrel, it was my Grandma!		*
			*
	The THOUGHT BUBBLE bursts.		*
43	ARI	43	
	Really?		*
44	OLIVE	44	
	My Mom's mom planted an acorn way up on this hill a really long time ago when she was a little kid - like us.		*
			*
			*
			*
45	ELINOR	45	
	Wow, I can't believe your Grandma planted this, Olive. What a special tree.		*
			*
	Olive admires her beloved tree.		*
46	OLIVE	46	
	That's my I love it. And so does my Mom.		*
			*
	As the wind blows, Elinor crosses her arms with a <BRRRR>.		*
47	ELINOR	47	
	Brrr, This wind is cold. Let's head home. We don't want to be late for dinner.		*
			*
			*
48	ARI	48	
	Dinner?! Wait, I'm coming!		
	In his hurry, Ari puts his hands on a branch to pull himself up and we hear the SFX: CREAK of wood breaking as the branch snaps and falls to the ground with an SFX: THUD!		*
			*

Luckily, Ari flaps his wings and safely glides to the ground.

49 ELINOR 49
Oh, no! Are you okay, Ari? *

Oh, no! Are you okay, Ari?

50 ARI 50
Yeah. I'm fine. *

Yeah. I'm fine.

51	OLIVE	51
	But what about my tree? It broke its	*
	branch.	*

But what about my tree? It broke its branch.

Olive puts a comforting hand on the tree, but Elinor, in turn, puts a comforting hand on her.

52 ELINOR (O.S.) 52
It'll be okay, Olive. It has lots of *
branches, so it won't miss just one.

It'll be okay, Olive. It has lots of branches, so it won't miss just one.

Olive grimaces as she inspects the branch, whose wood is
oddly dark on the inside.

53	OLIVE	53
	Yeah, I guess you're right. And this	*
	branch looks kinda weird anyway.	*

Yeah, I guess you're right. And this branch looks kinda weird anyway.

54	ELINOR	54	
	I'm sure it's fine, but just to make		*
	double-sure, we'll come back to check		*
	on your tree tomorrow. Okay?		*

I'm sure it's fine, but just to make double-sure, we'll come back to check on your tree tomorrow. Okay?

Olive takes a satisfied <SIGH>. *

55	OLIVE	55	*
	Okay. See you later, tree!		*

Okay. See you later, tree!

As the kids start walking back, Olive once again puts a
comforting hand on her tree. As she walks away, we push in a
bit on the tree as we see a piece of the bark fall off.

As the kids walk away in the distance, the WIND suddenly
kicks up, pushing the branches around with an SFX: HOWL.

DISSOLVE TO:

3. EXT. ANIMAL TOWN -- NIGHT TO MORNING *

As the wind continues to blow furiously, we see the sun set
over Animal Town, then rise again - another beautiful, calm,
sunny day!

We push in on the PARK, where Elinor, Olive and Ari walk around, helping Ranger pick up the fallen branches that lay all over.

56 ELINOR 56 *
Did the wind really make all this *
mess, Mom? *

57 RANGER RABBIT 57 *
It sure did. There were some very *
strong winds last night. *

58 ARI 58 *
Strong enough to knock branches off *
of trees? *

59 RANGER RABBIT 59 *
Yes, in fact, sometimes wind is so *
strong it can knock over a whole *
tree. *

At this, Olive looks to Elinor, concerned. *

60 OLIVE 60 *
A whole tree? *

61 ELINOR 61 *
(to Mom) *
We have to go and check Olive's tree. *

62 RANGER RABBIT 62 *
Okay, I have to do a forest patrol. *
I'll meet you later. *

63 ELINOR 63 *
Thanks, Mom. Let's go! *

The kids all excitedly run off. *

4. EXT. FOREST CLEARING -- DAY *

Elinor, Olive and Ari all happily head up the clearing, now carrying a picnic basket.

64 ELINOR 64 *
I'm sure your tree is fine, Olive. *

65 ARI 65 *
Yeah, I can't wait to climb-- *

Suddenly, Olive interrupts Ari, as she exclaims:

66 OLIVE 66
<GASP!> My tree!

67 ARI 67
Exactly! I can't wait to climb your tree.

68 OLIVE 68
No, my tree! Look!

The kids all look up to see that Olive's tree has fallen down! They all quickly run to inspect the scene to find the tree has fallen over and it's roots are exposed, as if it was pushed over. *

69 ELINOR 69 *
Oh, no! Poor tree. *

70 OLIVE 70
What happened? Did it just...fall? *

71 ELINOR 71
All that wind last night must have pushed it over. *

72 ARI 72 *
Okay, then let's push it back up. I got this. I'll just... *

<SFX: GRUNTING> Ari gives pushing it back into place a shot, but quickly realizes that's not happening. *

73 ARI (CONT'D) 73 *
Nope. Not happening. *

Meanwhile, Olive is very worried about her tree. *

74 OLIVE 74
(despondent)
But we have to do something! My tree can't stay on the ground! *

Suddenly, Ranger Rabbit comes through the clearing. *

75 RANGER RABBIT 75 *
What's going on kids? *

76 ELINOR 76 *
Mom! Just in time! We have to put Olive's tree back up. *

Ranger Rabbit notices the tree. *

77	RANGER RABBIT	77	*
	Uh-oh.		*
	Ranger Rabbit inspects the fallen tree, looking at the wood and the bark as the kids stand by, watching hopefully.		*
78	ELINOR	78	*
	Can you fix it, Mom?		*
79	RANGER RABBIT	79	*
	Sorry, kids, but it looks like this tree was very old and over time, it just got sick.		*
			*
80	OLIVE	80	
	Trees get sick?		
81	RANGER RABBIT	81	*
	They do, Olive. And it looks like this one has been sick for a while. The inside was starting to hollow out. See?		
	The kids look at the bottom of the tree and see that there is a big hole in the middle of the tree.		
82	RANGER RABBIT (CONT'D)	82	
	Once the tree got sick, it became too weak to support itself and all that wind last night just pushed it over.		*
			*
	As Ranger Rabbit talks, this all begins to sink in for Olive.		
83	OLIVE	83	*
	So...we can't put my tree back up... ever?		
84	RANGER RABBIT	84	
	I'm afraid not, Olive.		
85	OLIVE	85	*
	(realizing)		*
	Oh...		*
	Olive sits down next to the tree, and is quite upset. Ranger Rabbit puts her arms around her.		*
86	RANGER RABBIT	86	
	I'm so sorry Olive. Elinor told me this was your special tree. It sounds like you had a lot of really fun times here.		*
			*
			*

87	OLIVE	87	*
	Yeah, I did. Me and my Mom and my Grandma too.		*
			*
	As Olive sits on the trunk of the fallen tree, she opens her sketch book and looks at her memories as Ranger Rabbit and the other kids gather around her.		*
			*
88	OLIVE (O.S.) (CONT'D)	88	*
	This was the time my mom and I camped out right here. We counted the stars all night, then slept under our tree.		*
	(then)		*
	And this was the time we spent all day here raking up my tree's leaves and then I jumped in the pile.		*
	(then)		*
	And this... was the very first time my mom brought me here and taught me how to climb.		*
			*
	As Olive says that, she gets a little sad.		*
89	OLIVE (CONT'D)	89	*
	And now we'll never climb it again.		*
	Olive buries her head in Ranger Rabbit's shoulder and they share a hug. Ari and Elinor also get in on this hug.		*
90	RANGER RABBIT	90	*
	I know, Olive, and I understand why that would make you sad. But, can I tell you something that might make you feel a little better?		*
			*
	Olive looks at Ranger Rabbit seriously.		
91	OLIVE	91	
	Uh-huh.		
92	RANGER RABBIT	92	*
	Your special tree will be around for many more years. It's going to be what we Park Rangers call a wildlife tree.		
93	OLIVE	93	*
	A wildlife tree?		
94	RANGER RABBIT	94	*
	Yes. A wildlife tree is the very last step in a tree's life cycle.		*

95	ELINOR	95	*
	What's a life cycle, Mom?		*
96	ARI	96	*
	I know. My mom has one of those in		*
	the garage. She loves to exercise.		*
97	RANGER RABBIT	97	*
	(smiling)		*
	That's a different kind of cycle,		*
	Ari.		*
98	OLIVE	98	*
	Wait, I think I know. Is the life		*
	cycle like how this tree started as		*
	an acorn, then grew all the way up		*
	from a sprout to a big tree?		*
99	RANGER RABBIT	99	*
	That's right, Olive! And becoming a		*
	wildlife tree is the very last step		*
	in a tree's life cycle. It's also a		*
	very important step because wildlife		*
	trees are homes to many creatures in		*
	the forest.		
100	OLIVE	100	
	So, my tree is going to become a home		
	for lots of creatures...on the		
	ground?		*
101	RANGER RABBIT	101	
	Yes. And as your tree slowly breaks		*
	down over the years, it will give		*
	food to the soil, which will help new		
	plants and trees grow in its place.		
Olive sits down on her tree.			
102	OLIVE	102	
	I know that's a good thing, but I'm		*
	still gonna miss seeing it stand up		
	big and tall.		
Elinor sits beside her friend and puts her arm around her.			
103	ELINOR	103	
	It was a really pretty tree, Olive.		*
	But just think of all the new kinds		
	of fun we can have with it now that		
	it's a wildlife tree.		

Ari sits on the other side and puts his arm around Olive too.

104	ARI	104
	Yeah, we'll still come visit all the	*
	time. Who knows what creatures might	*
	come and live here?	*

105 ELINOR 105
It'll be soooo interesting. And we'll
make LOTS of observations.

106 OLIVE 106
 (finally accepting)
I guess it will be pretty cool to see
what kinds of creatures make my tree
their home.

107 RANGER RABBIT 107

I don't think you're going to have to
wait very long to find out. Look!

*

Ranger Rabbit points. The kids look over and see a salamander crawl up inside a hollowed out section of the tree's trunk and curl for a nap. <SFX: WHOAA/AMAZING WALLA>

108 OLIVE 108

You're right, Elinor. A wildlife tree
might be kinda interesting after all. *

*

As Olive finally cracks a smile, music rises. The kids sing a song while dancing around the wildlife tree.

109	OLIVE/ELINOR/ARI	109	*
	A tree can grow both big and small		
	No matter the size, we love them all!		
	They clean the air and give us shade!		
	Trees are the best thing nature ever		
	made!		

ELINOR: It starts with a seed planted
in the ground
That becomes a sprout, they're all
around!

ARI: Next it's a sapling, as big as me *
But real soon, it's a full grown
tree!

OLIVE: Then one day, it's a wildlife
tree
Just as important I hope you'll see
Because it helps new plants and trees
to grow
And it's a home to lots of creatures
we know!

*

(MORE)

OLIVE/ELINOR/ARI (CONT'D)

*ALL: A tree can grow both big and
small
No matter the size, we love them all!
They clean the air and give us shade!
Trees are the best thing nature ever
made!*

*

5. EXT. FOREST CLEARING -- DUSK

*

After the song, as the sun sets in the distance again, Olive draws in her notebook, sitting on the ground with her back against the wildlife tree as Ari, Elinor and Ranger Rabbit walk over to her.

110 ELINOR 110
How are you feeling now, Olive?

111 OLIVE 111
Better, thanks. But now I have to go
and tell my Mom that our tree fell
down. *

112 RANGER RABBIT 112
Aww, I know your Mom loves this tree
as much as you do. How about if we go
and tell her what happened together? *

113 OLIVE 113
Thanks, Ranger Rabbit. She's gonna be
sad that there won't be a big, tall
tree here anymore! *

114 ARI 114
But Olive, I think you're forgetting
about one thing... *

Ari then leads the kids over to the sprout they observed
earlier. The kids excitedly crowd around. *

115 OLIVE 115
The sprout! You're right, Ari. I
forgot this tree sprout is going to
grow into a big, big tree! *

116 ELINOR 116
And there are no other trees around,
which means...

117 OLIVE 117
This sprout is from an acorn that
fell off *my* tree!
(Olive gets up and pats
the wildlife tree.)
(MORE) *

OLIVE (CONT'D)

Don't you worry one bit, tree. I'll
come back every day to visit and take
care of your sprout, so that one day
it'll grow up big and tall, just like
you.

*

*

118

ELINOR

118

Looks like you're gonna need another
sketchbook, Olive.

As Olive smiles and takes a seat on the stump of her wildlife
tree, we:

FADE OUT.