

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EP 146 Olive's Tree

By: Michael Foulke

Elinor's Question: Why did Olive's tree fall down?

Logline: When Olive's favorite tree falls over, she and her friends learn that the tree has just moved on to the next stage of its life cycle.

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 phenomena (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

Polish Draft: October 22, 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	*
	Uh-uh.		*
	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're there.		*
7	ARI	7	
	(sighs)		*
	Why does it take so long?		*
8	OLIVE	8	*
	We're almost there, Ari. You'll see,		*
	it's the best spot in the whole		*
	forest.		*
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!		*
13	ARI	13	
	(surprised)		
	Really?! That's never worked before.		

14	OLIVE	14	*
	It's just over here here. Follow me!		*
	The kids follow Olive OS.		*
	2. EXT. FOREST CLEARING ON A HILL -- CONTINUOUS		*
	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 (not too far from Animal Town, which we can see in the near-distance). The sun is shining right on the tree, giving it a majestic look that the kids marvel at. <SFX: WHOA WALLA>		*
15	OLIVE	15	*
	Welcome to my tree!		*
16	ELINOR	16	*
	Oh, Olive, it's sooo beautiful!		*
	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.		*
17	ARI	17	*
	(in awe)		*
	This is the biggest tree I've ever seen.		*
18	OLIVE	18	*
	Yeah, it's pretty special. My mom and I come here all the time. And she used to come here when SHE was little, just like me.		*
	THOUGHT BUBBLE shows Olive coming to the tree with her mom, which crossfades to Olive's mom when she was little playing around the tree.		*
19	ELINOR:	19	*
	Wow... this tree must be really old.		*
20	OLIVE	20	*
	Yep, and it's the best place in the world for playing, climbing, napping, picnicking...		*
	Suddenly, Ari pops out from behind the tree.		*
21	ARI	21	*
	Did I hear picnicking?		*
	The kids <SFX: GIGGLE> as Ari smacks his lips and rubs his tummy.		*

22	ELINOR	22	*
	What should we do first, Olive?		*
23	OLIVE	23	*
	Anything we want!		
 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 beginning to set as Olive writes 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.			*
24	ARI	24	
	Whatcha doing now, Olive?		
25	OLIVE	25	
	Drawing a picture of my special tree.		*
	I draw a new one every time I come up		*
	here. I've been here so many times		
	I've almost filled up this whole		
	book!		
26	ARI	26	*
	Cool. I wanna see!		
Ari does a loop-de-loop as he hops down to a lower branch, which shakes the tree, causing an acorn to fall and <SFX: BOP> Ari on the head.			*
27	ARI (CONT'D)	27	*
	Yow! I'm okay, but something hit me.		*
28	ELINOR	28	*
	It fell off the tree.		*
29	ARI	29	*
	Is the tree mad at me?		*
30	OLIVE	30	*
	Noooo. It's just dropping a seed on		*
	the ground.		*
31	ARI	31	*
	Trees have seeds?		*

Ari picks up the acorn, he looks at it and shows it to Elinor.

*
*

32 OLIVE 32
Uh-huh. My Mom told me acorns like
this one are oak tree seeds - and
this is an oak tree.

*
*
*
*

33 ELINOR 33
Wow, Olive, you sure know a lot about
trees.

*
*
*

34 OLIVE 34
Yeah. My Mom and I really love trees.

*
*

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

*
*

35 OLIVE (CONT'D) 35
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.

*
*

36 ARI 36
Are you sure that's a tree? It looks
like a little weed to me.

*
*
*

37 OLIVE 37
(proud of her knowledge)
Nope, that's what a tree looks like
when it first comes out of the seed.
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.

*
*

38 ELINOR 38
So this little plant is a baby tree?

*
*

39 OLIVE 39
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!

*

40 ARI 40
Wow, it's so neat to think that this
giant tree came from a tiny acorn.

*
*
*

Ari hops up on the tree again, putting 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. *

41 ELINOR 41
Oh, no! Are you okay, Ari? *

42 ARI 42
Yeah. I'm fine. *

Olive checks on Ari, then looks up at where the branch used to be. *

43 OLIVE 43
I wonder what happened to the branch. *

44 ARI 44
I don't know. It just broke. *

45 OLIVE 45
Aww, poor tree. *

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

46 ELINOR (O.S.) 46
It'll be okay, Olive. Your tree has lots of branches. *

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

47 OLIVE 47
Yeah, I guess you're right. And this branch looks kinda weird anyway. I've been a little worried about the tree lately. The bark is getting crumbly and falling off in spots. *

She points to a patch of brittle bark. *

48 ELINOR 48
I'm sure it's ok. We can come check the tree again some other day. *

At that moment, the wind blows, Elinor crosses her arms with a <BRRRR>. *

49 ARI 49
Brrr... it's getting windy. We should probably head home. *

50 ELINOR 50 *
Yeah. I think it's almost time for *
dinner. *

51	ARI	51	*
	Did you say dinner? Let's go!		*

Elinor and Ari <SFX: GIGGLE> as they head off. Olive stays a
little behind and puts a comforting hand on the tree.

52	OLIVE	52	*
	Okay. See you later, tree!		*

As the kids walk away in the distance, the WIND suddenly
kicks up, pushing the branches around with an SFX: HOWL. We
see a piece of the bark fall off.

DISSOLVE TO: *

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

We see the sun set over Animal Town as the wind continues to blow overnight. Then the sun rises again - another 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. Each of the kids picks up something off the ground: Olive grabs a branch, still full of leaves as Ari jumps over a whole group of branches. At the same time, Elinor thinks as she examines the jagged, broken end of a branch.

53 ELINOR 53 *
Did the wind really blow down all of *
this, Mom? *

54	RANGER RABBIT	54	*
	It sure did. There were some very		*
	strong winds last night.		*

55	ARI	55	*
	Strong enough to knock branches off		*
	of trees?		*

Ranger Rabbit nods <SFX: MM-HMM>. *

56 ELINOR 56 *
Mom, can the wind blow over a whole *
tree? *

57	RANGER RABBIT	57	*
	Well, trees have roots that go into		*
	the ground, and that helps keep them		*
	from getting blown over. But...		*
			*
	If the wind is strong enough, it		*
	could blow over a whole tree.		*
	At this, Olive looks to Elinor, concerned.		*
58	OLIVE	58	*
	(gasp)		*
	My tree!		*
59	ELINOR	59	*
	(to Mom)		*
	Mom, we have to go and check Olive's		*
	tree.		*
	The kids all excitedly run off as Ranger Rabbit follows		*
	closely behind.		*
	4. EXT. FOREST CLEARING -- DAY		*
	Elinor, Olive and Ari all head up the clearing.		*
60	ELINOR	60	*
	I'm sure your tree is ok, Olive.		*
61	ARI	61	*
	Yeah, I can't wait to climb--		*
	Suddenly, Olive interrupts Ari, as she exclaims:		
62	OLIVE	62	
	<GASP!> My tree!		
63	ARI	63	
	Exactly! I can't wait to climb your		
	tree.		
64	OLIVE	64	
	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 on its side with its roots exposed, as if it had been		*
	pushed over.		
65	ELINOR	65	*
	Oh, no! Poor tree.		*

66	OLIVE	66	
	What happened? It looks like it		*
	just... fell.		*
67	ELINOR	67	
	It was the wind! The wind must have		*
	pushed the tree over last night!		*
68	ARI	68	
	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.		*
69	ARI (CONT'D)	69	
	Nope. Not happening.		*
	Meanwhile, Olive is very worried about her tree.		*
70	OLIVE	70	
	(worried)		*
	But we have to do something! My tree		*
	can't stay on the ground.		*
	Suddenly, Ranger Rabbit comes through the clearing.		*
71	RANGER RABBIT	71	
	What's going on kids?		*
72	ELINOR	72	
	Mom! You're just in time! We have to		*
	put Olive's tree back up.		*
	Ranger Rabbit notices the tree and realizes what happened		*
	<SFX: UH OH>.		*
	Ranger Rabbit inspects the fallen tree, looking at the wood		*
	and the bark as the kids stand by, watching hopefully.		*
73	ELINOR (CONT'D)	73	
	Can you fix it, Mom?		*
74	RANGER RABBIT	74	
	I'm sorry, kids, it looks like this		*
	tree was very old. It must have		*
	gotten sick.		*
75	OLIVE	75	
	Trees get sick?		
76	RANGER RABBIT	76	
	They do, Olive. Sometimes you can		*
	tell when a tree is sick.		*

77	ELINOR	77	*
	Mom! Yesterday, one of the branches		*
	broke, and it looked really dark		*
	inside.		*
78	ARI	78	*
	And the bark looked kinda funny in		*
	some spots.		*
79	OLIVE	79	*
	Does that mean that the tree was		*
	sick?		*
80	RANGER RABBIT	80	*
	Yes, it looks like it's been sick for		*
	a while. See?		*
	The kids look at the bottom of the tree and see that there is		*
	a big hole in the middle of the tree.		
81	ELINOR	81	*
	There's a big hole in the tree.		*
	Ranger Rabbit nods.		*
82	RANGER RABBIT	82	*
	When a tree gets sick like this, it		*
	becomes weak and can't hold itself up		*
	very well. The wind last night must		*
	have been strong enough to just push		*
	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, looking sad. 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.		*
			*
	Olive takes out her notebook, and looks around longingly as she reads and points out certain locations around the tree as a thought bubble appears above her, showing what she describes.		*
			*
			*
88	OLIVE (O.S.) (CONT'D)	88	*
	One time, my Mom and I counted the stars all night, then slept under our tree.		*
	(then)		*
	And one time we spent all day raking up my tree's leaves and then I jumped in the pile.		*
	(then)		*
	And this... was the branch we used when my mom taught me how to climb.		*
			*
	(sad)		*
	But now the tree fell down and we won't be able to climb it again.		*
			*
	Olive puts her head in Ranger Rabbit's shoulder and they share a hug. Ari and Elinor also get in on this hug.		*
89	RANGER RABBIT	89	*
	I know, Olive, and I understand why that would make you sad.		*
90	ELINOR	90	*
	Mom... what happens to trees when they fall down?		*
91	RANGER RABBIT	91	*
	That's a good question, Elinor. And I think the answer might help make you all feel a little better.		*
			*
	Olive looks up at Ranger Rabbit.		*
92	RANGER RABBIT (CONT'D)	92	*
	Your special tree will still be around for many more years. It's going to become 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. Come here,		*
	I'll show you.		*
	The kids follow Ranger Rabbit out as we crossfade to the next		*
	scene.		*
	EXT. FOREST -- DAY		*
	The group arrives at a decaying wildlife tree, covered in		*
	moss and already starting to break down.		*
100	ELINOR	100	*
	So this is a wildlife tree?		*
101	RANGER RABBIT	101	*
	It sure is, Elinor. This is a tree		*
	that fell down a long time ago, and		*
	now it's a very important part of the		*
	forest. Wildlife trees are homes to		*
	lots of different types of creatures.		*
102	ARI	102	*
	Look! A lizard!		*
	Ari points to the tree and the kids turn to see a lizard		*
	crawling on the wildlife tree.		*

103 OLIVE 103 *

And look! A bird made a nest in the *

tree. *

The kids then observe a mama bird feeding her babies in a *

nest. *

104 ELINOR 104 *

That's SO interesting. *

105 RANGER RABBIT 105 *

Yes. And as the tree gets even older, *

it's going to break down and become *

part of the soil, helping new plants *

and trees grow in its place. *

As Ranger Rabbit speaks, we see a **THOUGHT BUBBLE** that *

illustrates a tree breaking down and enriching the soil, *

which grows new, healthy plants. *

106 OLIVE 106 *

Wow, so even if a tree falls down, *

it's still a part of the forest. *

Ranger Rabbit nods <SFX: MM-HMM>. We take a last look at the *

wildlife tree, still full of life and at home in the forest. *

As Olive thinks about this, we... *

DISSOLVE TO: *

EXT. FOREST CLEARING -- DAY *

Back with her favorite tree, Olive is still deep in thought. *

107 OLIVE 107 *

I know that my tree is going to help *

lots of plants and creatures, but... *

I'm still gonna miss seeing it stand *

up big and tall.

Elinor stands beside her friend and puts her arm around her. *

108 ELINOR 108 *

It was a really nice tree, Olive. *

Maybe we can still come visit all the *

time. *

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

109	ARI	109	
	Yeah, think of all the new kinds of fun we can have with it now that it's a wildlife tree. Maybe we'll meet some new creatures.		* * * *
110	OLIVE (finally accepting)	110	
	I guess it will be pretty cool to see what kinds of animals and plants make my tree their home.		*
111	RANGER RABBIT	111	
	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> As Olive finally cracks a smile, music rises. The kids sing a song while dancing around the wildlife tree.			
112	OLIVE/ELINOR/ARI	112	
	<i>A tree can grow both big and small No matter the size, we love them all! We climb their branches and they give us shade! Trees are the best things ever made!</i>		* * *
	<i>ELINOR: It starts with a seed planted in the ground That becomes a sprout, they're all around!</i>		* *
	<i>ARI: It grows bigger, as big as me But real soon, it's a full grown tree!</i>		*
	<i>OLIVE: Then one day, it's a wildlife tree Just as important I hope you'll see Because it helps new plants to grow And it's a home to animals we know!</i>		* *
	<i>ALL: A tree can grow both big and small No matter the size, we love them all! We climb their branches and they give us shade! Trees are the best things ever made!</i>		* * * *

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 as Ari, Elinor and Ranger Rabbit walk over to her.

113 ELINOR 113
How are you feeling now, Olive?

114 OLIVE 114
Better, thanks. My mom's gonna be sad
that the tree fell down, but I think
she'll be happy to know it's still a
part of the forest.

115 ARI 115
And Olive, don't forget one thing...

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

116 OLIVE 116
The sprout! You're right, Ari. I
forgot this tree sprout is going to
grow into a big, big tree!

117 RANGER RABBIT 117
Hmm, there are no other trees around,
so this sprout must be from an acorn
that fell off your tree, Olive.

The kids <SFX: GASP/AWW>. Olive goes to pat the old wildlife tree.

118 OLIVE 118
Don't you worry one bit, old tree.
I'll take care of your sprout so it
grows up big and tall, just like you.

Elinor peeks at the remaining pages in Olive's notebook.

119 ELINOR 119
I think you're gonna need another
notebook, Olive.

As everyone smiles and <SFX: LIGHT GIGGLES> Olive takes a seat on the stump of her wildlife tree, we:

FADE OUT.