

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

148: SPEEDY SWIMMING

Written by
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Elinor's Question: *Why do ducks have webbed feet?*

Logline: *When the kids see Ranger Rabbit swimming speedily in the local lake, they take inspiration from a duck's webbed feet and learn why fins can help them swim fast.*

Curriculum Goals: LS2c. Compare how the external body parts of animals and plants are the same and/or different. [The kids compare their feet to the webbed feet of aquatic animals.]

LS2d. Explore how different external features of an animal help it survive in its environment. [The kids discover that webbed feet help aquatic animals move through the water.]

ET2b. Use a variety of low-tech tools including writing, drawing and painting utensils, scissors, magnifiers, balance scales, ramps, pulleys, hammers, screwdrivers, sieves, tubing, binoculars, whisks, measuring cups. [The kids use swim fins to enhance their swimming ability.]

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. [The kids discover that webbed feet and swim fins use the same principles. Swim fins give them "webbed feet" and help them push more water.]

SEP1c. Ask and/or identify cause and effect questions that can be answered by an investigation. [The kids wonder if fins help push more water, and they investigate this by running their hands through the water.]

SEP3b. Compare and contrast objects and events by describing similarities and differences in detail. [The kids compare swim fins to webbed feet.]

SEP3d. With guidance, plan and conduct simple investigations using simple tools. [Elinor runs her open hand and closed hand through the water to see which one pushes more water.]

Main Characters: Elinor, Olive, Ari, Mr. Rabbit, Ranger Rabbit (in bathing suits)

Props: Beach chair, pinecone, trophy, ducks, turtle, frog, goggles, life jackets, goggles, slipper, cookie swim fins, handmade medals

Locations: Lake shore, lake water

FIRST DRAFT: 30-Aug-19

It's a beautiful summer day. MR. RABBIT and RANGER RABBIT have taken ELINOR, OLIVE, and ARI to a new place: A lake that's perfect for swimming, with a small sandy beach leading into the shallows. (DESIGN NOTE: All are in bathing suits)

ANGLE ON: A couple of mallard ducks are resting on the shore; they slip into the water.

The kids <SFX: WOW>. Ranger Rabbit puts down her huge bag of swimming stuff. Mr. Rabbit also puts down bags and begins to unfold a beach chair.

7 RANGER RABBIT 7
Yup! Here, let me show you. It's in
my old swim bag somewhere...

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9          (A frog jumps out. With a                9
            <SFX: RIBBIT>, it hops
            away.)
            (MORE)

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RANGER RABBIT (CONT'D)

10 How'd YOU get in there?
 (She pulls out a small 10
 trophy and holds it up.)
 Aha!

CU: The trophy, which has a bronze swimming rabbit on top.
BACK ON: the kids, who are impressed.

9 ELINOR 9
 Wow! Awesome, Mom.
 (to her Dad)
 Hey Dad, have you ever won any
 trophies?

Mr. Rabbit has reclined onto the beach chair.

10 MR. RABBIT 10
 (lazily)
 Not yet. Do they give out trophies
 for "Beach Relaxing"?

The kids <SFX: LAUGH> as Mr. Rabbit stretches out comfortably
in his beach chair. Ranger Rabbit reaches into her swim bag
and takes out life jackets. (DESIGN NOTE: We can CU on the
lines below so when we widen they have their life jackets
on).

11 ELINOR 11
 I'm gonna swim really fast, just
 like you, Mom.

12 ARI 12
 Me too. Fast as a dolphin.

13 OLIVE 13
 I'm gonna swim as fast as TWO
 dolphins in a dolphin race and I'm
 gonna win a TROPHY!

The kids, now in their life jackets and goggles <SFX:
GIGGLE>. (NB: The kids can stay in their life jackets for the
rest of the Ep. They can keep their goggles on and move them
to their foreheads when necessary - whatever is easiest)
Ranger Rabbit puts on her goggles.

14 RANGER RABBIT 14
 Okay, kids. I'm going to go swim in
 the deep part of the lake. You stay
 in the shallow part. Mr. Rabbit
 will watch over you.

Mr. Rabbit waves, he's on the case. The kids all <SFX: YAY>
as they scramble into the water.

2. EXT. LAKE WATERS - A MINUTE LATER

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The kids are about waist-deep in shallow water.

15	ELINOR	15
	Okay, who's ready to swim really fast? On your marks... get ready... get set... GO.	

The kids jump in and swim a bit, with flailing and <SFX: SPLASHING>. Then they stand up.

16	OLIVE	16
	Hmm, we didn't get very far.	

17	ARI	17
	I don't think we went very fast, either.	

ANGLE ON: Elinor, who looks thoughtful and turns to watch her Mom swim. PAN to Ranger Rabbit, who's swimming speedily in the deeper part of the lake.

18	ELINOR (O.S.)	18
	Wow. Look at Mom go. She sure is speedy.	

BACK ON: The kids. A flock of 2-3 ducks paddle into view and swim swiftly in front of them.

19	OLIVE	19
	She's not the only speedy swimmer. Look at these ducks go.	

CU: The ducks paddling along. We can't see their feet.

20	ELINOR	20
	They look like they're just floating on top of the water. How do they swim so fast?	

21	ARI	21
	(loudly) Hey ducks, what's your secret?	

A duck <SFX: QUACKS> as it goes by.

22	OLIVE	22
	Hmm. Quack quack. Maybe they're telling us to eat some crackers?	

23	ELINOR	23
	We need to figure out how to go fast, or we'll NEVER win a trophy.	

ANGLE ON: Mr. Rabbit waving at the kids.

24	MR. RABBIT	24
	Hey speedy swimmers, are you ready for a snack break?	

BACK ON: the kids, who <SFX: YEAH>. They run towards the sand.

3. EXT. LAKE SHORE - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Rabbit meets the kids with towels so they can dry off. Elinor rubs herself so vigorously with the towel that her goggles come flying off. ANGLE ON: the goggles land in the sand next to a resting duck. The duck stands up and shuffles aside, <SFX: QUACKING> in alarm.

25	ELINOR	25
	Oops, sorry, duck.	

Elinor runs over to get the goggles. As she bends down, she looks more closely at the duck and is immediately distracted. CU: the duck's webbed feet.

26	ELINOR (CONT'D)	26
	Hey. This duck's feet are SO INTERESTING. The toes are connected together by some skin. I wonder why the duck has connected toes.	

27	MR. RABBIT (O.S.)	27
	Come have your snack, Elinor!	

Elinor grabs the goggles.

28	ELINOR	28
	Oops. Coming.	

ANGLE ON: The kids and Mr. Rabbit sitting on a towel, eating a healthy snack of veggies and dip.

29	ARI	29
	These veggies are so tasty.	

30	OLIVE	30
	(good-humoured)	
	Too bad we can't swim as fast as you can eat snacks, Ari.	

Elinor comes running over.

31 ELINOR 31

Olive! Ari! I just saw a duck
standing on the sand, and its feet
were AMAZING. The toes were
connected by skin.

Olive holds up her foot, her toes separated, and wiggles her toes.

32 OLIVE 32
 Hmm. MY toes don't seem to be
 connected by skin.

Elinor also sticks up a foot and wiggles.

33 ELINOR 33
Mine aren't either.

Ari does the same.

34 ARI 34

These toes look pretty separate,
too. Hmm, maybe I should check the
other foot?

He lifts his other foot too, and falls backwards, sending a carrot flying into the air. <SFX: WHOOPS WALLA>

The kids all <SFX: GIGGLE>. PAN follows the carrot arcing through the air and landing in the sand next to a frog, which croaks and hops about a foot away.

35	OLIVE	35
	Hey, what about that frog? Does it have connected toes?	

The kids get up and go look at the frog. CU: the frog, which hops again.

36 ELINOR 36
Yes, it has connected toes. Wow!
This is so interesting. We need
MORE OBSERVATIONS. Let's go find
some more animals and check out
their toes.

The kids separate to look. ANGLE ON: Olive stands under a tree where a robin is perched.

OLIVE

There's a robin. Hmm. Lets see.

CU: the robin.

38 OLIVE (O.S.) (CONT'D) 38
Its toes aren't connected.

Elinor notices a turtle basking on a rock in the water. She crouches down next to it.

39 ELINOR 39
Oh, a turtle.

CU: the turtle.

40 ELINOR (O.S.) (CONT'D) 40
Its toes are connected!

BACK ON: Elinor, crouched, thinking hard.

41 ELINOR (CONT'D) 41
I wonder why.

42 ARI (O.S.) 42
Elinor, Olive! I found an animal
with really weird toes.

47 Elinor and Olive rush over to Ari, who's crouched down, 47
looking at a worm.

43 OLIVE 43
(giggling)
Ari, it's a worm.

44 ARI 44
(silly)
I know. It's toes are
INVISIBLE...becuase it doesn't have
any - get it!

The kids <SFX: LAUGH>.

45 ELINOR 45
Okay some animals have connected
toes and some don't. But why?

46 OLIVE 46
Let's make a list and see if we can
figure it out.

The kids <SF: YEAH> and run back to the towel. ANGLE ON: The kids clustered around Olive. She pulls out her nature book. CU: Olive's list. She draws two columns, one with a webbed foot at the top and one with an un-webbed foot.

47 OLIVE (CONT'D) 47
Okay. Which animals have connected
toes?

59 OLIVE 59
Or maybe they use those wide toes
to scoop up more dip for their
carrots? I can never get enough
dip.

The kids <SFX: GIGGLE>.

60 ELINOR 60
I've never SEEN frogs high-fiving
each other or dipping carrots. We
need more observations.

Elinor, Olive and Ari excitedly run back to the water.

4. EXT. LAKE WATERS - A MINUTE LATER

The kids are standing in the water, observing the creatures
around them. A few ducks glide into view.

61 ELINOR 61
Here come some ducks. Let's DUCK
under the water and see what
they're doing with those amazing
feet.

The kids pull their goggles over their eyes and duck their
heads under the water.

UNDERWATER POV: They watch ducks swim by. The ducks are
paddling their webbed feet. The kids lift their heads above
the surface.

62 ARI 62
Those ducks aren't just floating
along. They're pushing the water
with their feet. That's so cool.

A frog pokes its head out of the water nearby.

63 OLIVE 63
I see a frog. Let's hop to it!

The kid wade over to the frog then duck their heads under the
water again.

UNDERWATER POV: They see the frog swim past them, kicking its
webbed feet. The kids look amazed. Then a turtle swims by,
doing the same thing. The kids point excitedly. They surface
again.

64 OLIVE (CONT'D) 64
Amazing. That turtle and that frog
were kicking their connected toes,
too. It looks like they use their
special feet to SWIM.

65 ARI 65
Hmm. Why are connected toes good
for swimming?

66 ELINOR 66
I'm not sure...let's investigate!

Elinor holds up her hand and spreads her fingers apart.

67 ELINOR (CONT'D) 67
I don't have connected fingers or
toes. If I spread out my fingers
and run my hand through the water,
the water goes between my fingers.

She runs her hand through the water. It makes a small splash.
Then she holds up her hand again, bringing her fingers
together.

68 ELINOR (CONT'D) 68
But what if I close my fingers
together so there's no space
between them?

She runs her hand through the water. It makes a much bigger
SFX: SPLASH, hitting Ari.

69 ELINOR (CONT'D) 69
Whoops, sorry Ari. If there's no
space between my fingers, I push
more water and make a bigger
splash.

70 ARI 70
You sure do.

71 OLIVE 71
Let me try!

Olive does the same thing. She also <SFX: SPLASHES> Ari.

72 OLIVE (CONT'D) 72
Oops. Sorry again, Ari.

73 ARI 73
Hey! I think we've done enough
investigation already.

82 RANGER RABBIT 82
You're absolutely right! We call
their special feet "webbed feet"
because the skin stretches between
their toes like a spider's web.

83 OLIVE 83
(saying the words carefully)
Webbed feet. Webbed feet. I like
those words.

84 RANGER RABBIT 84
Oh, I almost forgot! I have a
special surprise for you in my swim
bag. Do you want to see what it's
like to have webbed feet too?

The kids <SFX: GASP> and say <SFX: YEAH>. Ranger Rabbit
kneels down and rummages in her swim bag. She pulls out a
fluffy slipper.

85 RANGER RABBIT (CONT'D) 85
How'd that get in there?
(She pulls out a chocolate
chip cookie.)
Ooh, this is probably stale, it's
been in there since I was a little
girl.

She pulls out a pair of kids' swim fins and holds them
triumphantly in the air.

86 RANGER RABBIT (CONT'D) 86
Aha! Here they are!

87 OLIVE 87
What are THOSE?

88 RANGER RABBIT 88
These are called swim fins.

CU: the swim fins.

89 ARI (O.S.) 89
Ooh. They look like a duck's feet.
They're wide and flat.

90 ELINOR (O.S.) 90
Yeah. And they have long thin parts
that look a little like toes.

91 OLIVE (O.S.) 91
And they have webs between the
toes.

BACK ON: the kids and Ranger Rabbit. Ranger Rabbit holds out the swim fins.

92 RANGER RABBIT 92
Yes. These swim fins are a lot like webbed feet. And if you put them on your feet, they'll help you swim faster. Do you want to give them a try?

93 ELINOR 93
Yes please!

Elinor takes the fins. With a <SFX: YEAH>, the kids run into the water.

6. EXT. LAKE WATERS - A MINUTE LATER

Excited, the kids stand in the water.

94 OLIVE 94
Can I try them first, Elinor?

Elinor hands Olive the fins.

95 ELINOR 95
Sure. Have fun. I mean, fun.

The kids <SFX: GIGGLE>.

96 OLIVE 96
Hmm, how do I put these on?

UNDERWATER POV, we see Olive put the fins on each foot and tighten the straps. Then we go back above the water. NOTE: if it's too tricky to design fins that fit on three such different feet, maybe we don't have to show them actually going on - cartoon logic!)

97 OLIVE (CONT'D) 97
Okay. I'm ready to swim like a dolphin. Or at least, like a duck.

98 ELINOR 98
Let's race! On your marks... get ready... get set... GO.

The kids jump in and swim. This time, Olive is much faster, and she pulls out ahead. As they stop and stand up again, they all <SFX: WOW>.

99 OLIVE 99
That was fin-tastic!

Mr. Rabbit meets the kids with towels. Ranger Rabbit has her hands behind her back - she's hiding something.

105 MR. RABBIT 105
How were the swim fins?

106 ELINOR 106
Fin-credible! If we keep
practicing, maybe we'll win a
trophy some day.

107 MR. RABBIT 107
Well, your Mom has a special
surprise for you.

Ranger Rabbit brings her hands out from behind her back.
She's holding three round "medals" made of bark and string.
They have "question marks" on them

108 RANGER RABBIT 108
I just made these awards for the
three best question-askers in the
whole town. You're the MOST CURIOUS
kids I know!

The kids <SFX: WOW> as Ranger Rabbit puts a medal around each
kid's neck.

109 MR. RABBIT 109
Now who wants to see who can get
home the fastest?

The kids are all yawning and looking tired.

110 ELINOR 110
I think I've had enough speed for
one day. Can we walk home like slow
snails instead?

111 MR. RABBIT 111
That sounds more my speed!

Mr. Rabbit begins to walk along comically, as if in slow
motion. The kids <SFX: GIGGLE> and join him in walking slo-mo
while Ranger Rabbit rolls her eyes.

END.