

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EW156: The Litterbug

By Michael Foulke

Elinor's Question: Who is the Animal Town litterbug?

Logline: Elinor and her friends help Mrs. Hippo, the Animal Town custodian try to find a litter bug, who is leaving trash all over Animal Town.

Curriculum Goals:

ES3: Understand that things people do to live comfortably can affect the world around them, but they can make choices that reduce their impacts on the land, water, air, and other living things: b. Demonstrate an awareness of and the ability to discuss in simple terms the need for conservation, recycling, and respect for the environment c. Participate in simple activities to care for the environment (Elinor and her friends pick up the litter in Animal town and the determine to find the source.)

SEP4: Analyzing and interpreting data a. Collect, describe, and record observations in greater detail and in various ways b. Use the 5 senses and simple tools to gather and record data c. Record observations to describe patterns and/or relationships in the natural and designed world(s) in order to answer scientific questions and solve problems. d. Talk about and reflect on what happened during an investigation or when solving a problem, and why it might have happened

MAINS: Elinor, Ari, Olive

SECONDARY: Mrs. Hippo, Mrs. Llama, Mr. Raccoon

LOCATIONS: Animal Town Main Street, Park, Mrs. Llama's Restaurant

PROPS: Golf Cart, Trash, Trash Bags, Old Food, Compost, Hose

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We see Animal Town Park on a beautiful spring day. All is quiet, until ELINOR and ARI can be heard in the distance.

Confused, the kids look around and the park looks great.

8	ARI	8	
	Litter? You mean, like trash on the ground? But... I don't see any litter.		*
9	MRS. HIPPO	9	
	That's because I already cleaned up this part of the park. But, I still have lots to do.		*
10	ELINOR	10	
	Keeping all of Animal Town clean must be a big job, Mrs. Hippo.		*
11	MRS. HIPPO	11	
	Oh, you betcha! And it's an important one.		
12	OLIVE	12	
	I wish we could help, but we're just kids. What could we do?		

As Elinor and Olive think, Mrs. Hippo steps up with some garbage bags. *

13	MRS. HIPPO	13	
	Plenty! Anyone can help keep their town clean. Even the smallest things can make a difference.		*
14	ELINOR	14	
	Really? Can we help you?		
15	MRS. HIPPO	15	
	Of course! The more, the merrier. Let's go clean up the park!		*

Mrs. Hippo grabs some claw sticks and they all go off excited <SFX: AWESOME/COOL>, we: *

DISSOLVE TO:

2. EXT. ANIMAL TOWN PARK -- DAY

Now holding litter bags, the kids walk around the park with Mrs. Hippo, picking up any litter they find on the ground (with the claw sticks) and putting it in big, paper bags. (NOTE: The litter is colorful and not gross). (ANOTHER NOTE: It's very important kids don't touch the garbage directly, it might make sense for design to give them gloves). *

16	ARI	16	
	Got one!		

Ari picks up a paper cup and throws it in his bag. As they walk, they find random candy wrappers or cans around.

17 ELINOR 17
Where did all this litter come from?

18 OLIVE 18
Yeah, everyone loves Animal Town. Why
would they leave litter around like
this? *

19 MRS. HIPPO 19
Even towns as wonderful as Animal
Town can have litter. Sometimes, *
people drop litter by accident or it
falls out of trash cans or it may get *
blown around by the wind...

Suddenly, a paper bag blows through frame and Olive catches it (with her claw).

20 OLIVE (O.S.) 20
I see what you mean.

As Elinor picks up a candy wrapper off the ground with her claw and puts it in her bag, she looks around and doesn't see any more litter.

21 ELINOR 21
I don't see any more litter around
here, Mrs. Hippo. Where to next?

22 MRS. HIPPO 22
Actually, Elinor, we're all done
cleaning up the park. You kids were
such a huge help, we finished early.

23 ARI 23
Aww... but I really liked helping
clean up Animal Town.

24 MRS. HIPPO 24
Don't worry, there's always plenty to
do. But since we finished early, I *
thought I might take my helpers on a
cart ride around town! Whaddya think?

The kids all celebrate as they run towards the nearby cart!
<SFX: YEAH! WHOO-HOO WALLA> Everyone puts their bags on the
back of the golf cart, which are not completely closed, as
we:

CUT TO:

3. EXT. ANIMAL TOWN - VARIOUS (MONTAGE)

We see a musical montage of the ecstatic kids (with seat-belts) riding around Animal Town with Mrs. Hippo.

- They zig-zag through trees in the park.
- Drive down the sidewalks in town, waving to the townspeople, who wave right back.
- They go past their clubhouse, where kids play in the BG.
- Finally, they are back in the park, <LAUGHING> as they zoom around the paths of the park, leaning into each other with every turn!

4. EXT. ANIMAL TOWN PARK -- DAY

As the music fades, they come back to where they started.

25	ARI	25	
	Wow, Mrs. Hippo. My mom makes me clean my room all the time, but it's NEVER this much fun!		* *
26	MRS. HIPPO	26	
	Oh, thanks a bunch, Ari. You kids really made cleaning easy today. I've never been done so fast.		
	Suddenly, Olive notices something.		
27	OLIVE	27	
	Uh... I'm not so sure we're done.		
	Elinor now sees it too as they all step out of the cart. We see what the kids see: the park now has new pieces of litter here and there all around!		*
28	ELINOR	28	
	Oh, no! What happened?		
29	OLIVE	29	
	There's more litter in the park!		
30	MRS. HIPPO	30	
	But we haven't been gone very long. I wonder where it all came from.		

CU a piece of litter on the ground as Ari steps into frame and picks it up (with his claw), examining it closely. He seems very serious all of the sudden.

31	ARI	31
	There's only one explanation for how all this litter got here so fast... (dramatic pose) Animal Town has...a litterbug!	
32	ELINOR	32
	A litterbug?	
33	ARI	33
	Yeah! Someone who leaves litter on the ground.	
34	MRS. HIPPO	34
	A litterbug? No sirree. I mean, who would do such a thing?	
	Olive then steps up in dramatic fashion.	
35	OLIVE	35
	Dun, dun, duuuun... it's a MYSTERY!	
	Elinor shakes her head, refusing to believe that.	
36	MRS. HIPPO	36
	Well, hold on, kiddos! Maybe whoever left this litter did it by accident and doesn't know they did it.	
37	ELINOR	37
	You're right, Mrs. Hippo! And if they don't know they're doing it...	
38	ARI	38
	They could still be doing it!	
39	OLIVE	39
	We need to figure out where all this litter came from, and fast.	
	Mrs. Hippo pulls out a garbage bag.	*
40	MRS. HIPPO	40
	Great idea! Let's work as a team. I'll pick up the litter here and you kiddos look around town for clues about where the litter might be coming from.	*
	She uses a claw to start picking up trash.	*
41	ELINOR	41
	You got it, Mrs. Hippo. We'll find out where this litter is coming from. (MORE)	

ELINOR (CONT'D)
(then, to Olive)
So... where should we start?

They look around and see a sparse trail of litter leading to town.

42 OLIVE 42
I know! If you wanna find out where
the litter is coming from, follow the
litter. Let's go!

As the kids follow the trail of litter, they pick up each piece and put it in a bag as they head to town.

DISSOLVE TO:

5. ANIMAL TOWN MAIN STREET -- DAY

As the kids arrive on Main Street in town, they continue to pick up litter, which still lines the sidewalk.

43 ARI 43
Looks like the litterbug came this
way.

44 ELINOR 44
Sure does.

Suddenly, the kids stop as Mz. Llama walks out of her shop with a big bag of kitchen scraps and dumps it right into a pile on the ground!

45 OLIVE 45
Look, there's Mz. Llama! What is she
doing?

46 ELINOR 46
Is she... she looks like she's
putting her litter on the ground!

47 ARI 47
(gasps)
Could Mz. Llama be the litterbug?!

The kids all run over.

6. EXT. BACK OF MZ. LLAMA'S RESTAURANT -- DAY

As the kids run over, Mz. Llama is just finishing dumping her bag of trash into the pile as three old, half-eaten tomatoes hit the pile with an SFX: PLOP, PLOP, PLOP.

With each plop, our three kids' heads each pop up behind Mz. Llama, one by one in unison with the PLOPS.

As Mz. Llama finishes, she turns and smiles at the kids. *

48 ELINOR 48
Hi, Mz. Llama. May we ask what you're doing?

49 ARI 49
Yeah, it looks like you're putting litter on the ground.

50 MZ. LLAMA 50
Oh, hello, kids. Oh, goodness gracious, no Ari. This isn't litter, it's scraps of food for composting. See? *

Mz. Llama shows the kids her compost pile, which is surrounded by three walls to keep the compost in place. *

51 ELINOR 51
Composting?

52 MZ. LLAMA 52
Yes! Whenever I have leftover fruits or vegetables or bread from my restaurant, I dump it here instead of in the trash. (mixing the compost pile with a shovel) After a while, all this old food turns into nice soil for my garden. *

<SFX: KIDS OOOOH WALLA> Mz. Llama opens a drawer on the bottom of her compost pile and dark, rich compost comes out.

53 ARI 53
It's compost! Whoa, that's amazing. *

54 MZ. LLAMA 54
(laughing)
Yes it is. And compost is wonderful for my vegetable garden. Would you kids like to help me spread it around? *

55 ARI 55
Hmm... sounds messy. I'm in.

56 OLIVE 56
Me too. Every little bit helps.

As Mz. Llama takes a shovel full of compost from the bottom of her compost pile and dumps it in the garden, the kids get down in the garden and spread the compost around on the soil using nearby garden tools.

57	ELINOR	57	
	I can't believe all that food can go right back into the dirt like this.		
58	OLIVE	58	*
	Yes, and it makes less trash because we're re-using the old food.		
	Mz. Llama agrees <SFX: MM-HMMM!>.		*
59	ARI	59	
	Phew... And here I thought you might be the litterbug, Mz. Llama.		*
			*
	Mz. Llama looks confused <SFX: HUH?>.		*
60	ELINOR	60	
	Someone has been leaving litter around Animal Town.		
61	OLIVE	61	
	Yeah, and we want to find out where it's coming from.		
62	MZ. LLAMA	62	
	Oh, no. Well, maybe whoever is doing it doesn't realize they're leaving litter around. It isn't me, though. I always reduce, reuse and recycle. After all, we all have to do our part.		*
63	OLIVE	63	
	Yup! It's up to all of us to take care of our town.		
64	ELINOR	64	
	Like Mz. Llama! Composting all this old food makes less litter!		
	Elinor and friends put down their garden tools as they finish spreading all of the compost.		
65	ARI	65	
	Um... speaking of less litter, we still need to find the litterbug.		

66 MZ. LLAMA 66
Oh, right! You kids better get back
to it. I can finish up here. Thanks
for your help!

67 ELINOR 67
Bye, Mz. Llama.

The kids walk out and Mz. Llama kneels in her garden as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

7. EXT. ANIMAL TOWN MAIN STREET -- DAY

As the kids walk away, they spot more litter down the street
a bit, leading away from Mz. Llama's shop.

68 ELINOR 68
Look! There's more litter on the
ground.

69 ARI 69
Let's go!

The kids pick up the remaining litter and look around, but
that's everything. The street is once again clean.

70 ELINOR 70 *
Well, I think we got it all. This is
the last piece.

The kids look up and they are standing down the sidewalk from
Mr. Raccoon's shop. *

71 OLIVE 71 *
The litter ended near Mr. Raccoon's
shop. Maybe he saw something?

As the kids look over, they see Mr. Raccoon standing next to
his shop and using a hose on the sidewalk. There is a big,
overflowing bag of litter next to him on the ground. *

72 ELINOR 72 *
There he is. What's he doing?

73 OLIVE 73 *
He's got a bag of litter. A BIG bag
of litter!

74 ELINOR 74
And it looks like he's pouring water
all over the sidewalk.

75 ARI 75
(gasp)
Could Mr. Raccoon be the litterbug?

76 ELINOR 76
(not convinced)
Hmm... Let's go ask him.

77 ARI 77
Mr. Raccooo...

As Ari calls out, Mr. Raccoon turns and accidentally sprays him with a little bit of water (NOT on his face), causing Ari to turn around as water drips off of him. A very apologetic Mr. Raccoon then runs over to the kids.

78 MR. RACCOON 78
OH, I am so sorry, Ari! I didn't even
see you there! Here you go! *

Mr. Raccoon grabs a towel off his apron and gives it to Ari to dry off.

79 ELINOR 79
Hi, Mr. Raccoon! We're trying to
figure out who is leaving litter
around Animal Town.

80 MR. RACCOON 80
Ah yes, I saw a lot of litter here in
front of my shop. It took me a while
to pick it all up. That's what's in
this bag. *

81 OLIVE 81
Well, that explains why the litter
ends at Mr. Raccoon's shop.

82 ARI 82
Oh, I thought maybe you were the
litterbug, Mr. Raccoon.

83 MR. RACCOON 83
Oh, not me. I always try to keep
everything clean. That's why I'm
spraying down my sidewalk, to clean
up where this litter used to be. But
don't worry, I'm using rain water
from my rain barrel. *

The kids all look up at the clear, blue sky.

84 ELINOR 84
But... it's not raining. *

85 OLIVE 85
What's a rain barrel? *

Mr. Raccoon gestures to a rain barrel on the side of his shop that the hose is connected to. The kids go over and check it out. As Mr. Raccoon explains how a rain barrel works, we see a **THOUGHT BUBBLE** over his head. *

86 MR. RACCOON 86
Here, take a look. The rain barrel collects water every time it rains, and saves it for later. That way, when I wash my sidewalks or water my grass, I'm not wasting new water. I'm re-using rain water. Saving water is one way we help keep our town clean. *

Meanwhile, as they walk back to the front of the store, Ari is relieved that Mr. Raccoon is clearly not the litterbug.

87 ARI 87
Phew! I'm glad you're not the litterbug, Mr. Raccoon.

As they reach the front of the store, Olive spots another piece of litter on the sidewalk.

88 OLIVE 88
Hey, there's new litter on the sidewalk!

89 ARI 89
But the sidewalk was just clean. That means it must be the litterbug!

90 ELINOR 90
Whoever is leaving this litter must be nearby. See you later, Mr. Raccoon!

91 MR. RACCOON 91
Good luck, kids. Great job keeping Animal Town clean.

92 ARI 92
Thanks, Mr. Raccoon!

As the kids run off, they pick up the litter from in front of Mr. Raccoon's store, then see a few more up the street.

93 ELINOR 93
The litter is coming from that way!

Suddenly, another piece of litter flutters down the street from around the corner. The kids follow it around the corner just in time to see another piece fall off of something and onto the ground.

94 ARI 94

Oh, we're so close! Come on. It looks like the litterbug is...

As the kids come around the next corner they see Mrs. Hippo driving the cart, then see a piece of litter fall off the back of the cart.

95 ELINOR 95
(confused)
Mrs. Hippo?

Mrs. Hippo turns to see the kids and stops the cart. When she stops, another piece of litter falls off because the litter bags aren't closed up properly, but Mrs. Hippo has no idea.

96 MRS. HIPPO 96
Oh, hey kiddos! I've been looking all
over for you, dontcha know. Did you
figure out where all that litter is
coming from?

97 ELINOR 97
I think we did, Mrs. Hippo. It's
coming from... all of us.

Mrs. Hippo is in disbelief.

98 MRS. HIPPO 98
Us? But, what do you mean?!

Olive, Ari and Elinor walk to the cart to show Mrs. Hippo the opened bags. As Olive explains, a **THOUGHT BUBBLE** appears above her head of the kids driving around and litter falling off the back of the truck.

99 OLIVE 99
It looks like we didn't close the
litter bags properly.

100 ELINOR 100

So when we drove around town, the
litter fell out and went everywhere.

101 MRS. HIPPO 101
Oh, I didn't know we were spreading
more litter around.

102 ARI 102
It's okay, Mrs. Hippo. We just made a
mistake. Don't worry, I make 'em all
the time.

Suddenly, Ari trips over and falls behind the cart. A beat
later, he pops up, just fine.

103 ARI (CONT'D) 103
See?

Mrs. Hippo starts to tie the bags up tight.

104 MRS. HIPPO 104
Well, it won't happen again. From now
on, these bags will be tied up tight!

Elinor then steps in to help Mrs. Hippo tie the bags.

105 ELINOR 105
Here, Mrs. Hippo, I'll help you.
After all, we can all help make our
town cleaner. *

106 MRS. HIPPO 106
You can sure say that again.

Elinor smiles as the music fades up and the ditty begins.
During the song, the kids demonstrate the various ways they
saw in the episode to help the environment.

107 ELINOR/ARI/OLIVE 107
*ELINOR: To keep your world nice and
green,
You just have to keep it clean,
Follow these steps and you will see
Helping is easy as can be.*

*OLIVE: When you're done with fruit
don't throw it away,
Compost that all night and day,
It makes less litter and that doesn't
hurt,
'Cause compost really helps the dirt!*

*ARI: When watering plants don't use a
hose,
There's a better way that everyone
knows,
Catch some rain as it falls from the
sky,
And use that water when your plants
get dry!*

(MORE)

ELINOR/ARI/OLIVE (CONT'D)

*ELINOR: Here's one more thing that
you can do,
To keep the world looking good as
new.
When you see litter on the ground,
Throw it in the cans that are all
around!*

*ALL: To keep your world nice and
green
You just have to keep it clean
Follow these steps and you will see
Helping is easy as can be!*

8. EXT. ANIMAL TOWN PARK -- DAY

As the song ends, the kids walk back through the very clean park with Mrs. Hippo.

108	MRS. HIPPO	108
	Thanks again, kids. You helped me clean up, and reminded me to keep my litter in the trash bag.	

109	OLIVE	109
	No problem, Mrs. Hippo. We love to help keep Animal Town clean.	

110	ELINOR	110
	Yeah, because no matter how old you are, EVERYONE can do their part to keep their town beautiful!	

Just as Mrs. Hippo says that, a snack wrapper falls onto the ground right near Mrs. Hippo and the kids. As they look over, they see Ari standing next to the wrapper, munching on a snack. A sheepish Ari then picks up the wrapper and puts it in a nearby trash bin.

111	ARI	111	
	Whoops! Sorry, I dropped some litter. But don't worry, I'm doing my part.		* *

As the kids laugh, we:

FADE OUT.