

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EP 159 "Ears to You"

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Logline: One day at the lake, Elinor and her friends notice that certain animals don't appear to have ears and they wonder how they can hear without them.

Curriculum Goals:

LS2: Understand that animals have different body parts that are used in different ways to meet their needs. (The kids observe and experiment to discover that different animals have unique hearing depending on their needs and environment)

SEP1: Ask more complex questions about observable phenomena (Elinor wonders how various animals can hear when they don't appear to have ears)

MAIN CHARACTERS: Elinor, Olive, Ari, Mz. Mole

PROPS: Towels, misc. beach props (water bottles, hats, beach toys, etc.), Olive's satchel and Nature Book, swim suits, green frog, brown frog x2, fish, inflatable water lounger, family of ducks

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1 1. EXT. LAKE - SHORE, BY THE TOWELS - DAY

1

One afternoon at the lake, MZ. MOLE relaxes on a TOWEL near several other STUDENTS' TOWELS AND ITEMS (BAGS, WATER BOTTLES, HATS, BEACH TOYS, ETC.) and OLIVE'S SATCHEL. ELINOR, ARI, and OLIVE run across the sand wearing SWIM SUITS (AND LIFE VESTS?), while other STUDENTS swim, make sand castles, play, or read. <WHOO-HOO!! EXCITED WALLA>

1 MZ. MOLE

1

Enjoy the afternoon, kids. Don't stray too far.

Elinor and her friends stop running and look around eagerly.

2 ELINOR

2

What should we do? Play in the water?

3 OLIVE

3

Build sand castles?

Suddenly, a GREEN FROG hops by, getting the attention of the gang. They watch the frog hop past <RIBBIT RIBBIT>.

4 ARI

4

I know what we can do...

(he crouches down)

Let's play Follow That Frog. Ribbit!

Olive and Elinor fall in line behind Ari, crouching into their own frog poses.

5 ELINOR

5

(Giggles) Great idea.

6 OLIVE

6

Ribbit! Ribbit!

Ari hops after the frog, followed by Elinor and Olive. The kids happily bounce along the beach, <RIBBITING AND LAUGHING>. The frog notices them and starts to speed up, gradually gaining distance on them.

7 ARI

7

Hop faster, it's getting away.

The kids speed up as the frog leads them across the shore and turns towards the surrounding GRASS. It stops on a LOG and lets out a pronounced <RIBBIT> before bounding off and disappearing into the vegetation. The kids arrive on top of the log and land in a row, one after the other. They scan their surroundings, searching for the frog.

8 OLIVE 8
Ribbit! That's one speedy frog.

9 ELINOR 9
I've *never* hopped faster and it
still got away. Where'd it go?

10 ARI 10
I dunno. I didn't see where it went.

As the kids scan the beach and the lake, they hear an unexpected <RIBBIT> from somewhere behind them.

11 ARI (CONT'D) 11
Did one of you just ribbit?

12 ELINOR 12
Wasn't us. Must be the frog.

Olive ears perk up when another <RIBBIT> is heard.

13 OLIVE (POINTING) 13
It's that way, let's go!

Following the source of the sound, the kids bound off the log and run towards the edge of the grass surrounding the lake.

14 OLIVE (CONT'D) 14
I heard a ribbit from around here
somewhere, but I don't see a frog.

Another <RIBBIT> gets their attention. Elinor perks up her ears towards the vegetation.

15 ELINOR 15
It's in the grass somewhere. Follow
That Frog! Ribbit!

Elinor drops into a crouch and bounds off into the grass, followed by her friends, all happily <RIBBITING>.

2 **2. EXT. TALL GRASS - CLEARING - CONTINUOUS** 2

The kids hop into the clearing and again stop, looking and listening for the frog.

16 ELINOR 16
Now where is it?

A <RIBBIT> from behind a nearby ROCK is heard. Ari perks up his ears and looks at the rock.

17 ARI 17
I think I can hear our little
froggy friend behind that rock.

The kids approach the rock and peer around it, spotting the green frog sitting on A LOG with TWO BROWN FROGS. The kids are out of the frogs' ear shot and can't be heard.

18 ARI (CONT'D) 18
Here he is! Check it out, they're
having a frog party.

19 OLIVE 19
Oooo fun... are we invited?

Elinor and Ari <GIGGLE>.

20 ELINOR 20
We found the frog by listening with
our ears instead of looking with
our eyes? Isn't that cool?

21 OLIVE 21
Even when it was far away, I could
still hear it because of my bog
ears.

Elinor perks up her ears and rotates them left and right.

22 ELINOR 22
My ears are tall and I can turn
them left and right, so I can hear
sounds coming from almost anywhere.

Ari wiggles his ears up and down proudly.

23 ARI 23
Ok... but can you do *this*?

Olive and Elinor <GIGGLE>, and are interrupted by a <RIBBIT>. Elinor looks back at the frogs and notices something.

24 ELINOR 24
Hmmm... I've never really noticed
this before, but it doesn't look
like frogs *have* any ears at all.

Elinor and Ari look closer. **CLOSE UP** on the frog reveals it, indeed, doesn't have any noticeable ears!

25 ARI (AMAZED) 25
You're right. They don't have big
ears like Olive, tall ears like
Elinor, or...
(MORE)

ARI (AMAZED) (CONT'D)
(demonstrating)
...wiggly ears like me.

26 ELINOR 26
How interesting!
(a thought occurs)
Wait a sec... if frogs don't have
ears, can they hear?

The kids watch as the green frog <RIBBITS> and the brown
frogs <RIBBIT> back in unison. This repeats.

27 OLIVE 27
It sure *seems* like they can hear
each other.

28 ARI 28
Try talking to them, Elinor.

29 ELINOR (A LITTLE LOUDER, TO FROGS) 29
Hello froggies!

The frogs look up at Elinor, startled to see the kids for the
first time. They quickly hop off <RIBBITING>.

30 ARI 30
Yup. They heard you all right!

The kids head back towards the lake.

31 ELINOR 31
Hmmm... I wonder, how can frogs
hear if they don't have ears?

32 OLIVE 32
Too bad they bounced off before we
could find out.

3 **3. EXT. LAKE - SHORE, BY THE TOWELS - CONTINUOUS** 3

The kids arrive back at the shore as Elinor considers.

33 ELINOR 33
Are frogs the only animals that
don't have ears?

Ari and Elinor think about it while Olive looks towards the
lake. Her eyes brighten with an idea!

34 OLIVE 34
That's fish! I mean, that's it...
Fish! I don't think fish have ears
either.

35 ELINOR (BRIGHTLY) 35
I think you're right! Let's go see.

The kids run into the shallow lake.

4 4. EXT. LAKE - SHALLOW WATER - CONTINUOUS 4

The gang stops at waist level in the lake and looks around for fish. All of a sudden, SEVERAL SMALL FISH approach and circle them. The kids lean in for a closer look.

36 OLIVE 36
I don't see any ears on these fish,
do you?

CLOSE UP on a FISH in the water, revealing no visible ears.

37 ELINOR 37
Nope. No ears at all. Not big ones,
tall ones, or wiggly ones.

38 ARI 38
Why would fish need ears anyway?
It's impossible to hear
underwater... isn't it?

39 ELINOR 39
(has an idea)
Let's try it and see, who wants to
go first?

Ari shoots up an eager arm and waves it around as if trying to get a teacher's attention.

40 ARI 40
Oh oh! I'll do it, whatever it is.

Elinor pretends not to see him.

41 ELINOR 41
Anyone? Olive?

Ari jumps up and down and waves his arm more obviously.

42 ARI 42
Ah! Me! Pick me! I'm right here!

Olive stifles a <GIGGLE>. Elinor looks around for a half beat before she finally "sees" Ari.

43 ELINOR (ACTING SURPRISED) 43
Oh, Ari, I didn't see you there.

44 ARI 44
Phew! Yes please!

45 ELINOR (GIGGLING) 45
Ok, take a deep breath and dunk
under the water. We'll make noise
and you tell us if you can hear it.

UNDERWATER: The fish bolt as Ari lowers into the water. He sits on the lake floor and gives his friends a thumbs up.

46 Arrrrriii! OLIVE / ELINOR(CALLING) 46

47 OLIVE / ELINOR (MUFFLED) (CONT'D) 47
Arrrrrrriii!

ABOVE: Ari resurfaces, playfully splashing his friends.

Ari struggles to hear Elinor. He turns his head sideways and shakes water from his ear.

50 OLIVE 50
So could you hear us under water?

52 ELINOR 52

Great! So now we know you can hear
underwater. But what about fish?
Can *they* hear without ears?

Elinor notices the fish heading back towards them.

53 ELINOR (CONT'D) 53
Oh, the fish are coming back...
Let's find out.

As the kids stand still, the fish return. Olive stifles a <GIGGLE> and struggles to stand still as the fish circle her.

54 OLIVE (WHISPER) 54
(Giggles) They're tickling me!

55 ELINOR (A LITTLE LOUDER) 55
Hey fish! Can you hear me? Stop
tickling my friend!

The fish look at Elinor and bolt! A relieved Olive relaxes.

ARI
Yup. They heard you all right.

57 ELINOR 57
So now we know fish can hear...
(wondering)
But if they don't have ears, *how*
are they doing it? Hmm....

The kids silently consider. At that moment, Mz. Mole drifts by on an INFLATABLE WATER LOUNGER.

58 MZ. MOLE 58
Heya kids! Enjoying your lake day?

59 ELINOR 59
 Yep. We've been observing frogs and
 fish.

MZ. MOLE

Oh? And what have you noticed?

61 ARI 61
That frogs and fish don't have ears
like we do.

He wiggles his ears.

62 OLIVE 62
But we discovered that they can
still hear.

63 ELINOR 63
So now we're wondering *how* they can
hear if they don't have ears.

Mz. Mole stifles a <GIGGLE> and turns her head.

64 MZ. MOLE 64
Have you ever noticed that it
doesn't look like I have ears like
yours either?

The gang looks at her as if for the first time. Her head is
smooth and seemingly ear-less! The kids are shocked!

65 ARI 65
Woah, no ears? But you can hear us.
(then, unsure)
...right?

66 MZ. MOLE 66
I sure can, Ari.

67 ELINOR 67
Hmmm... so how can you hear if you
don't have ears?

68 MZ. MOLE 68
I didn't say I don't have ears, it
only looks like I don't. Have a
closer look...

Mz. Mole parts the fur on the side of her head as the kids
lean in. **SCIENCE CU:** Mz. Mole has small lobe-less ears on the
sides of her head surrounded by fur.

69 ELINOR 69
(Gasp!) You *do* have ears!
(squinting)
But I can barely see them.

70 MZ. MOLE 70
I sure do. Any animal that can hear
has ears.

71 ELINOR (CONSIDERING) 71
How interesting! So if fish and
frogs can hear, that means...
(realizing)
They *must* have ears too!

Mz. Mole nods and releases the fur around her ear which
disappears under it.

72 MZ. MOLE 72
Exactly! You all have ears that are
easy to see. Big ones... tall
ones... or wiggly ones.

The kids perk up (or wiggle) their ears as they're mentioned.

73 MZ. MOLE (CONT'D) 73
But some animals have ears that are
much harder to spot... like mine.

74 ELINOR 74
Why are your ears hidden by fur
anyway?

75 MZ. MOLE 75
Moles, like me, tunnel underground.
My ears are small and protected by
fur so dirt doesn't get in.

76 ELINOR / OLIVE / ARI 76
Coooooooooooool...

Olive looks in the water at the fish who are returning to
them yet again. She considers.

77 OLIVE 77
If Mz. Mole's ears are made for
hearing underground, maybe fish
have ears for hearing underwater?

78 ELINOR 78
Great idea, Olive! We need more
observations.

Olive starts <GIGGLING> as she's tickled underwater.

79 OLIVE 79
(suppressing giggles) The tickling
fish are back! Hurry, I don't know
how long I can stand still.

Elinor, Ari and Mz. Mole all look closer at the fish. **SCIENCE
CU:** The fish have no visible ears on their heads.

80 ARI 80
Hmm... I still can't see any ears
at all. Are they invisible?

81 MZ. MOLE 81
Not invisible, inside.

The kids share a confused look. In **THOUGHT BUBBLE**, a FISH IN
PROFILE appears.

82 MZ. MOLE (CONT'D) 82
Olive is right, fish have ears that
are made for hearing underwater,
which is *why* you can't see them!

QUESTION MARKS appear around the fish's head. ZOOM into to an X-RAY of the head, revealing the OTOLITH (fish's ear) inside.

83 MZ. MOLE (CONT'D) 83
Fish ears look *so different* from
yours, there's nothing to see on
the outside at all... because a
fish's ear is *inside* its head!

The kids can't believe it! <SFX: WHOOA WALLA>

84 ELINOR 84
How interesting! So fish really *do*
have ears.

85 ARI 85
And they look really *really*
different from ours.

Olive can't keep it together anymore and suddenly bursts out
<LAUGHING>. The startled fish scatter.

86 OLIVE 86
(giggling subsides) Sorry, I
couldn't hold still any longer.
(then)
My knees are really ticklish.

87 ELINOR 87
You did great, Olive! I couldn't
have stood still for that long.

88 OLIVE (PROUDLY) 88
Totally worth it to learn that fish
have ears *inside* their heads.

89 ELINOR 89
Totally! (then) I wonder about the
frogs. If they can hear, then they
must have ears too, right?

Suddenly, a <RIBBIT> gets the kids attention. They look back
to the shore and see the green frog from earlier.

90 ARI 90
Let's go find out! Thanks Mz. Mole.

91 MZ. MOLE 91
Have fun... come back to tell me
what you discover.

The gang bounds back towards the shore. Olive scoops up her
SATCHEL from her TOWEL as they chase after the frog.

5 **5. EXT. LAKE - SHORE, LARGE ROCK - CONTINUOUS** 5

Further up the shore, the frog settles on a LARGE ROCK at the edge of the lake. The kids approach quietly. The green frog <RIBBITS> and the brown frogs from earlier suddenly emerge from the lake and jump onto the rock.

92 ARI 92

Look at that! The brown frogs heard the green frog from underwater.

The three frogs <RIBBIT> back and forth as they did earlier.

93 ELINOR 93

They can hear *above* the water too. Their *ears* must be made to work both ways.

94 ARI (RECALLING) 94

When I had water in my ears, it was hard to hear. Maybe frogs have ears that help keep water out?

The gang leans in closer to the frog. **SCIENCE CU:** The friends notice a SMALL CIRCULAR PATCH OF SKIN behind a frog's eye.

95 ELINOR 95

Hmm... I didn't notice that small circle before. Maybe that's an ear?

96 OLIVE 96

Let's check my Nature Book.

Olive pulls her NATURE BOOK out of her satchel and flips through it. Ari and Elinor look on as she lands on an DRAWING OF A FROG'S HEAD with the SMALL CIRCLE clearly visible.

97 OLIVE (CONT'D) 97

It *is* part of it's ear! It stops water from getting in when the frog is underwater, but also lets it hear when it's above water, too.

As if to illustrate, one of the brown frogs hops from the log and disappears into the lake. The green frog <RIBBITS> and the brown frog resurfaces before <RIBBITING> a reply in unison with the other brown frog.

98 ARI 98

Now *that* is cool.

99 ELINOR 99

C'mon... let's go tell Mz. Mole what we observed.

SONG:

ALL: My ears are here,
Your ears are there,
Ears can be most anywhere!

The fish scatter and the kids run back to shore. Elinor spots Mz. Mole relaxing on her towel and the gang runs towards her.

ALL: My ears are here,
Your ears are there,
Ears can be most anywhere!

7 **EXT. LAKE - SHORE, BY THE TOWELS - CONTINUOUS** 7

MUSIC STOPS as the kids land on towels next to Mz. Mole.

101 ELINOR 101
Mz. Mole! Frogs have ears that
don't look like ours either.

102 OLIVE 102
They're like little circles on the
side of their heads.

103 ARI (IN DISBELIEF) 103
Who knew there were so many kinds
of ears?

104 MZ. MOLE (BLISSFUL) 104
It really is wonderful how
different they can be, isn't it?

Suddenly, a FAMILY OF DUCKS waddles past them. One BABY
straggles behind distractedly and the MAMA DUCK looks back
and <QUACKS>! The baby perks up and catches up <QUACKING>.

105 OLIVE 105
Look! Those ducks don't have big
ears, tall ears or wiggly ears.

106 ELINOR (WONDERING) 106
Hmm... what do *duck ears* look like?

107 ARI 107
I know how we can find out...

Olive hops down into a duck pose, holding her arms as wings.

108 OLIVE 108
Let's play Follow That Duck!

Ari and Elinor happily drop into duck poses behind her.

109 ELINOR / OLIVE / ARI 109
Quack! Quack! Quack!

IRIS OUT as the gang <QUACKS> happily as they waddle after
the ducks. **THE END.**