

ELINOR WONDER'S WHY

EP 159 "Ears to You"

By: Tom Berger

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

SECONDARY CHARACTERS: Deputy Mouse

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

FIRST DRAFT: January 9, 2020

SECOND DRAFT: February 4, 2020

POLISH DRAFT: March 02, 2020

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

It's a gorgeous day, and MZ. MOLE and the STUDENTS are arriving at the LAKE. MZ. MOLE walks precariously, balancing a TALL STACK OF BEACH ITEMS/SUPPLIES. Her arms are so full that she can barely see over the top. ELINOR (wearing a SWIMSUIT) walks with her, also carrying ITEMS/SUPPLIES. CLASSMATES enter with then, and they run off eagerly to swim (with life vests), make SAND CASTLES, or read on TOWELS. *

1 ELINOR 1
What a great day for a field trip
to the lake!

Mz. Mole bumps into Elinor and a SUN HAT drops from her pile and onto her head.

2 ELINOR (CONT'D) 2
(Giggles) That fits great! *

3 MZ. MOLE 3
Is that you Elinor? Can you see
somewhere I can put all of this
down? *

Elinor assess where they're standing.

4 ELINOR 4
This is a good spot. *

Mz. Mole drops the supplies with a comedic <SFX: FWUMP>. *
Elinor puts her supplies down and returns Mz. Mole's sun hat.

5 MZ. MOLE 5
Phew. Thanks Elinor. I didn't think
we'd need *quite* so many supplies
for our field trip.
(she puts on the hat)
But you can't be too prepared!

Elinor <GIGGLES> and shakes out a TOWEL for Mz. Mole to sit on. ARI and OLIVE approach (also wearing SWIMSUITS).

6 OLIVE (TO ARI) 6
Of course you can, Ari. *

7 ARI (TO OLIVE) 7
No way, Olive. You can't do it. *

They stand off, face-to-face (good-naturedly).

8 OLIVE / ARI 8
Can! Can! Can! / Can't! Can't!
Can't! *

9 ELINOR 9
(Giggling) What are you two talking about?

10 OLIVE 10
Ari thinks you can't hear sounds underwater, but I think you can.

Ari covers his ears with his hands.

11 ARI 11
You can't hear things with all that water. It's like covering your ears.

12 MZ. MOLE 12
Well now, this *sounds* like an interesting question.

13 ARI (STILL COVERING HIS EARS) 13
What's that, Mz. Mole?! I can't hear you. *

Elinor <GIGGLES> and moves Ari's hands away from his ears.

14 ELINOR 14
How about now?

15 ARI 15
Oh, now I hear you. See? I can't hear with covered ears.

16 OLIVE 16
But being underwater isn't the same thing.

17 ELINOR 17
Ari, Olive... we don't have to argue about it. The lake is right there. We can go investigate and find out.

18 OLIVE 18
Good idea, Elinor! *

19 ARI 19
Let's go test it. *

20 MZ. MOLE 20
Don't forget to have fun... and wear life jackets!

She pulls LIFE JACKETS from the supplies. The kids grab them as they run towards the lake.

The gang (now wearing LIFE JACKETS) runs into the lake.

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

Ari takes a deep breath and holds it. He leans forward and dunks his head deep enough to cover his face and ears.

Olive sticks her trunk in the water and <TRUMPETS>!

UNDERWATER: Ari's eyes go wide as he hears a <MUFFLED TRUMPET SFX>. He pulls his head out of the lake.

26 OLIVE 26
(Laughing) Ari! *I'm the one who*
said you can hear underwater, you *
said we couldn't. *

27		ARI	27	*
	I did?			*

27 The kids <GIGGLE>. Ari turns his head sideways and shakes 27 *
water from his ear.

[illegible]

Ari starts to hop around. Just then, a curious GREEN FROG
swims past Olive. She <GASPS>.

29 OLIVE 29 *
Look, it's a little frog. That's so *
cute. *

30 ARI (HOPPING) 30
Water! Get! Out! Of! My! Ear!

Ari hops around as Elinor and Olive look on, smiling. *
Suddenly, a <RIBBIT> from the beach gets the kids' attention.
They turn to see the green frog hopping along the sand.

31 ELINOR 31 *
Look, the frog is hopping around *
now.

32 OLIVE 32
It sure is.

33 ELINOR 33
Hey, speaking of ears... I never
noticed before, but do frogs have
ears?

34 ARI (STILL JUMPING) 34
If they do, how do they keep water
out of them? Ack!

Elinor looks after the frog in the distance and squints.

35 ELINOR 35
It doesn't look like it has ears.
But it's hard to tell from so far
away.

36 OLIVE 36 *
Why don't we get a closer look?
I know! Let's play Follow The Frog!

37 ELINOR 37
Great idea. We need more
observations.

The girls run off and Ari finally clears his ear.

38 ARI (RELIEVED) 38 *
Ahhh, finally the water is out of *
my ear... (then, noticing) Huh?

Ari realizes the girls left, shrugs, and follows them.

The kids (no longer in life jackets) drop off their life jackets and catch up to the frog. Ari crouches down behind it. Olive and Elinor crouch into their own frog poses.

40	OLIVE	40
	Ribbit! Ribbit!	

41	ARI	41
	Hop faster! It's getting away.	

42 OLIVE 42
Ribbit! Where'd the frog go?

[illegible]

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

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

45 ELINOR 45
It wasn't me. Olive?

[illegible]

Olive is interrupted by a <RIBBIT>! The kids' ears perk up.

47 OLIVE (POINTING) (CONT'D) 47
The frog! 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.

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

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

The kids hop into the clearing, catching up to the green frog who sits calmly on a SMALL STONE.

52 ARI 52
Yeah, I could hear it too.

Ari wiggles his ears and the girls <GIGGLE>. They're interrupted by a <RIBBIT>. The gang leans in for a closer look. **CLOSE UP** on the frog reveals it, indeed, doesn't seem to have ears!

54 ARI (AMAZED) 54
You're right. It doesn't have big
ears like Olive, or long ears like *
you, or... *
 (demonstrating)
 ...wiggly ears like me.

55 ELINOR 55
That's sooo interesting!
 (a thought occurs)
Hmm... Frogs don't seem to have *
ears. But if they don't have ears, *
does that mean frogs can't hear? *

An unexpected <RIBBIT> from behind a nearby LARGE ROCK gets the frog's attention. It bounds off behind the rock. The gang shares a curious look.

56 OLIVE 56
I think I heard another ribbit.

The kids approach the rock and peer around it, spotting the green frog sitting on A LOG with TWO BROWN FROGS.

57 ARI 57
Check it out - it's a frog party. *

58 OLIVE 58
Ooooh fun... (giggle) are we
invited? *

The kids <GIGGLE> and watch as the green frog <RIBBITS> and the brown frogs <RIBBIT> back in unison. This repeats. (NOTE: It should be obvious the frogs are communicating with each other).

59 ELINOR 59
(GASP)! They seem to be talking to
each other. It looks like frogs can
hear!

The frogs look up at Elinor, surprised to see the kids.

60 ELINOR (TO FROGS) (CONT'D) 60
Hello froggies!

The frogs are startled by her and they hop away.

61 ELINOR (CONT'D) 61
64 Oops! (giggles), they sure seem to 64
have heard me. *
(then)
But I wonder... how can frogs hear *
if they don't have ears?

62 ARI 62
Yeah, I thought you needed ears to
hear.

63 OLIVE 63
Too bad they went away before we
could find out.

64 MZ. MOLE (O.S.) 64
Kids! Snack Time!

Ari cups a hand around an ear towards the lake.

65 ARI 65
 Snacks?! I definitely heard that!

His stomach <GURGLES>.

66 ARI (PATTING HIS BELLY) (CONT'D) 66
 I think my tummy did too, c'mon!

The girls share a <GIGGLE> and follow Ari back to the beach.

5. EXT. LAKE - SHORE, BY THE TOWELS - CONTINUOUS

The kids arrive back at the shore as students get JUICE BOXES and FRUIT SLICES from Mz. Mole. The gang approaches and Mz. Mole hands them SNACKS (which Ari quickly devours).

67 MZ. MOLE 67
 How did the investigation go? Did
 you figure out if you can hear
 underwater?

68 ARI 68
 We sure did! (toying with Olive)
 You can hear underwater, just like
 I said.

69 OLIVE (SMILING) 69
 Ari! You said we *couldn't*!

70 ARI (PRETENDING HE FORGOT) 70
 Are you sure? Hmmm... (then) Just
 kidding, you were right all along.

Olive and Ari share a <LAUGH>. Mz. Mole notices Elinor is deep in thought.

71 MZ. MOLE 71
 You look like you have another
 question, Elinor.

72 ELINOR 72
 Well, after we did our experiment,
 we followed some frogs and we saw
 them talking to each other.

73 MZ. MOLE 73
 Mmm. Ok...

74 ELINOR 74
 But it doesn't look like frogs have
 ears. So how could they hear each
 other?

*

Mz. Mole nods and releases the fur around her ear, covering it again.

83 MZ. MOLE 83
Exactly! You all have ears that are
easy to see. Big ones, long ones,
or...

She looks at Ari who wiggles his ears.

84 MZ. MOLE (CONT'D) 84
(Giggles)... or wiggly ones. But
some animals have ears that are
much harder to spot... like mine.

85 ELINOR 85
Why are your ears hidden by fur Mz.
Mole?

86 MZ. MOLE 86
Moles, like me, live in tunnels
underground. My ears are small and
protected by fur so dirt doesn't
get into them.

87 ELINOR / OLIVE / ARI 87
Coooooooooooool...

Olive considers.

88 OLIVE 88
If Mz. Mole's ears are good for
hearing underground, maybe frogs
have ears that are good for hearing
underwater?

89 ELINOR 89
That's a good idea, Olive. Maybe
you're right. *

Suddenly, a <RIBBIT> gets the kids attention. They look
around and spot the green frog hopping along the beach.

90 ARI 90
Let's look at the frog again!
Thanks for the snacks, Mz. Mole.

91 MZ. MOLE 91
You're welcome... come back to tell
me what you discover.

92 ELINOR 92
Let's Follow That Frog!

The kids drop into frog poses and hop after the frog.

102 OLIVE 102
 You're right, Elinor! We figured it
 out. Woo hoo! *

The kids run off excitedly.

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

Mz. Mole is reading a NATURE BOOK on her towel when the kids
 run in and drop down next to her.

103 ELINOR 103
 Mz. Mole! We think the frog *does*
 have ears, but they're covered by a
 patch of skin.

104 OLIVE 104
 Yeah, the patch of skin keeps water
 from going into the ear. *

105 ARI 105
 But they can still hear fine. We
 saw them talking to each other.

106 MZ. MOLE 106
 Well, aren't you all the most
 clever scientists. Here, have a
 look... *

As Mz. Mole shows them the book, the illustrations come alive
 with SIMPLE ANIMATION that shows a FROG hopping in and out of
 water. *

107 MZ. MOLE (CONT'D) 107
 Animals live in all kinds of
 environments, so they have
 different ears to help them get
 around. Frog ears help them live
 underwater *and* on the ground. *

BOOK SHOWS: A FISH underwater and a BIRD flies in the air. *

108 MZ. MOLE (CONT'D) 108
 Fish live underwater, and birds fly
 in the air, so they both have
 covered ears that can help them do
 that. *

Mz. Mole points to: ARI, ELINOR and OLIVE'S EARS. *

109 MZ. MOLE (CONT'D) 109
Just like your ears can help you
live and play in your environment
too!

110 ELINOR 110
That's so amazing!

111 ARI (PROUDLY) 111
My ears can help me laugh, too.

112 OLIVE (CONFUSED) 112
How can your ears make you laugh?

Ari proudly wiggles his ears and everyone <LAUGHS>. MUSIC
STARTS.

SONG:

113 ELINOR / OLIVE / ARI (SINGING) 113
OLIVE: Big ears!
ELINOR: Long ears!
ARI: Cute-and-wiggly bat ears!
ALL: If we counted all the ears,
We'd be counting ears for years!

The frogs bounce past and the kids fall in line, hopping
along respectfully after them along the beach.

ELINOR: It seems like they have
none at all,
ARI: But frogs have ears that hear
your call.
OLIVE: You might be surprised to
know,
ALL: They work **above** water or
below.

The frogs hop into and out of the lake, demonstrating.

OLIVE: Big ears!
ELINOR: Long ears!
ARI: How-cool-are-these frog ears?
ALL: If we counted all the ears,
We'd be counting ears for years!

The kids perk up, hold out and wiggle their ears.

ELINOR: Bunny ears are long and
they,
Turn this way or that-a-way,
OLIVE: I can pull my big ears wide,
But that makes them hard to hide!

(MORE)

ELINOR / OLIVE / ARI (SINGING)

OLIVE: Big ears!

ELINOR: Long ears!

ARI: Covered-by-fur mole ears!

ALL: If we counted all the ears,
We'd be counting ears for years!

As the song ends, the kids talk with Mz. Mole again.

*

114	OLIVE	114	*
	Wow, we learned so much about ears		*
	today.		*

115	ELINOR	115	*
	Yeah, we sure learned an EARFUL.		*

As everyone <LAUGHS>, the frogs bounce past the kids again. *

They drop into frog poses and hop after them <SFX: WALLA *

C'MON! LAUGHING AND RIBBITING>. THE END. *