

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EP. 166 "Dandy Dandelions"

By: Karen Moonah

Elinor's Question: *Are weeds, like dandelions, good for anything?*

Logline: *Elinor learns that every plant has a purpose in nature, even the ones we call 'weeds'.*

LS3. Understand that all animals need food to live and grow, that they get their food from plants or from other animals, and that plants need water and light to live and grow:

a.) Observe ways that animals and plants get what they need to live and grow

c.) Help care for living things at home or in the classroom (Elinor learns that a garden needs to be 'weeded' to thrive)

LS5: Begin to understand that animals and plants depend on other living things and nonliving things in the environment to meet some of their needs:

d.) Identify and observe the consequences of how plants and animals impact the environment. (e.g. Dandelions provide food for bees, and building material for nests.)

SEP7: Engaging in argument from evidence a.) Engage in discussions before, during, and after investigations.

b.) Support thinking and argue ideas with evidence

SEP8: Obtaining, evaluating and communicating information

a.) Obtain information through discussing prior knowledge and observations with experts including teachers or knowledgeable adults

Line Count: 117

Mains: Elinor, Mr. Rabbit, Deputy (Joe) Mouse, Mz. Llama

Secondary: Olive, Ari

Locations: Path, Joe's Yard, Park

Props: GARDEN GLOVES, DANDELIONS, BASKET, WEEDING TOOL, BUCKETS, COMPOSTER, SALAD BOWLS, SALAD DRESSING BOTTLES, OUTDOOR TABLES

OUTLINE: Jan 23, 2020

FIRST DRAFT: Feb. 14, 2020

SECOND DRAFT: March 13, 2020

1. EXT. PATH - DAY

ELINOR and her father walk down a forest path. MR. RABBIT carries GARDEN GLOVES. Elinor skips on ahead to blow on a DANDELION that has gone to seed - the fluff swirls away.
<SFX: PUFF, GIGGLE>

1	ELINOR	1	*
	I love dandelions.		
2	MR. RABBIT	2	*
	Yep, they're just dandy.		*
	Elinor looks curiously at the dandelions and some yellow flowers nearby.		*
3	ELINOR	3	*
	Dad... see the white fluffy dandelions next to these yellow flowers? Do they always grow together like that?		*
4	MR. RABBIT	4	*
	Actually, they're the same plant.		*
5	ELINOR (SURPRISED)	5	*
	They are? But they look different.		*
	Mr. Rabbit crouches down with Elinor, and the plant.		*
6	MR. RABBIT	6	*
	That's because dandelion flowers start out yellow, then the flower turns into this white fluff. That's how it spreads its seeds. (pfft!)		*
	He blows on the seed fluff, to illustrate.		*
7	ELINOR	7	*
	That's SO interesting!		*
8	MR. RABBIT	8	*
	I think so, too. (standing up) Well, we better get going to Deputy Mouse's house. He said he needed help in his garden, right away.		*
9	ELINOR	9	*
	Is something wrong with his garden?		*
10	MR. RABBIT	10	*
	Well, he just came back from vacation, and it's all overgrown.		

11 ELINOR (CONCERNED) 11
Overgrown? Are plants growing all
over his house?

THOUGHT BUBBLE: She imagines Deputy Mouse, with a suitcase, *
coming home to find his home encased in vines. (BUBBLE POPS.)

12 MR. RABBIT 12 *
(laugh) I sure hope not.

ANOTHER ANGLE - as the two round a bend, they see MZ. LLAMA *
approaching, carrying an empty basket. *DESIGN NOTE: Both MZ. *
LLAMA and (later) DEPUTY MOUSE are in civilian clothes today. *

13 ELINOR 13
Hi, Mz. Llama.

14 MZ. LLAMA 14
(singsong)
Good morniiing! I hope you're both *
still planning to come to my salad *
party, at the park later today. *

15 MR. RABBIT 15 *
We sure are! I've already made my *
famous 'carrot top' salad to bring.

16 MZ. LLAMA 16
Sounds yummy!
(re. her basket)
I'm just off to Farmer Bear's to
get some spinach, for my own
special salad. Well, I'll see you *
at lunchtime, then. 'Ta' for now! *

She waves as she exits. Elinor and her father wave back. *

17 ELINOR 17
Bye, Mz. Llama! *

Elinor and Mr. Rabbit carry on down the path to... *

2. EXT. DEPUTY JOE MOUSE'S HOUSE (YARD WITH GARDEN) *

The two arrive at their friend's *not-so-overgrown* house. They *
follow the sound of grumbling to his garden... *

18 DEPUTY MOUSE (PART OS) 18 *
Oh, my poor vegetables. This garden
is a complete and total mess!

19	MR. RABBIT	19	*
	Hi, Deputy Mouse. Your gardening crew has arrived.		*
	Mr. Rabbit 'salutes' with the garden gloves.		*
20	ELINOR	20	*
	Is everything okay with your garden, Deputy Mouse?		*
21	DEPUTY MOUSE	21	*
	I'm so glad you're here. Everything is NOT okay with my garden. Look - it's being invaded by WEEDS!		*
	Elinor looks.		
	POV - his garden beds are full of DANDELIONS. A few TOMATO and BEAN PLANTS peek out here and there.		*
22	ELINOR (CONFUSED)	22	*
	Weeds? I only see dandelions.		*
23	DEPUTY MOUSE	23	*
	A 'weed' is any plant that's growing in the wrong place. And this is my vegetable garden, not a... dandelion farm.		*
	Deputy Mouse parts the dandelions, to reveal a struggling tomato plant. Then, tenderly...		*
24	DEPUTY MOUSE (CONT'D)	24	*
	My poor veggies can't grow properly, with dandelions taking up all the space, water and sunshine.		*
25	MR. RABBIT	25	*
	How can we help, Deputy Mouse?		*
26	DEPUTY MOUSE	26	*
	By pulling up all these dandelions, that's how! Then my vegetables will have room to grow.		*
27	MR. RABBIT	27	*
	Okay, we're on it.		*
	Deputy Mouse picks up an EMPTY BUCKET and a WEEDER.		*
28	DEPUTY MOUSE (RELIEVED)	28	*
	Great. Thanks, Mr. Rabbit. Thanks, Elinor. I'll start over there.		*
25	(heads OS, muttering)	25	*
	(MORE)		

DEPUTY MOUSE (RELIEVED) (CONT'D)

Silly weeds. I'll show 'em who's boss...

Elinor turns to her Dad, confused.

*

29 ELINOR 29
Pull up the dandelions? But, Mom
always says we shouldn't pick
flowers.

30 MR. RABBIT 30 *
Well, that rule is for flowers
growing in the wild. It's okay to
pick things in a garden, IF you
have permission.

CUT TO the Deputy, his hands now wrapped around the biggest
dandelion in his garden. He's struggling to pull it up. *

31 DEPUTY MOUSE 31 *
And you definitely have my (grunt)
permission. You *really* do. *

BACK ON Mr. Rabbit and Elinor. *

32 MR. RABBIT 32 *
It's called weeding. In a garden,
it's good to 'weed' out the plants
you *don't* need, so that the plants
you *want*, can grow better.

Elinor nods, getting it. *

33 ELINOR 33 *
Ohhh. *

Mr. Rabbit picks up an empty bucket, and hands it to Elinor,
then picks up a weeding tool to use. *

34 MR. RABBIT 34 *
Okay, let's get started. First, you
want to loosen up the soil around
the plant... *

He uses the weeder to loosen the soil. *

35 MR. RABBIT (CONT'D) 35 *
...then, you get a good grip around
the bottom part, and *pull up*. (Oof) *

He grips the base and pulls up the plant, root and all.

36 ELINOR (IMPRESSED) 36 *
Whoa, the roots came up too!

37 MR. RABBIT 37 *

That's the idea! And the plants we
pull out, go in our bucket. *

He puts the plant neatly into the bucket she's holding. *

Elinor looks at all the weeds in the garden. *

38 ELINOR 38 *

I can do that.

39 MR. RABBIT 39 *

Great! (grins) Because we'll have
to do it about a hundred times. *

He hands her a pair of gloves and a weeder of her own. *

Elinor <SFX: CHUCKLES> As the two get busy weeding, we
DISSOLVE TO: *

3. EXT. DEPUTY MOUSE'S GARDEN / YARD (MINUTES LATER) *

Elinor sings-songs to herself as she weeds a garden bed. *

40 ELINOR (SING-SONG) 40 *

*Gardening, is my new thing, it
makes me want to siiing!*

Mr. Rabbit is working nearby. He grins. *

Elinor pulls up an especially big dandelion, revealing a
struggling bean plant underneath.

41 ELINOR (CONT'D) 41 *

Hi, green bean. Look, now you have
more room to grow!

She smooths the soil down, then adds the dandelion to a pile
in their weeding bucket. *

42 ELINOR (CONT'D) 42 *

Uh-oh, it looks like our bucket is
full. *

(calling OS) *

Deputy Mouse? What should we do
with the dandelions we pull up? *

ON Deputy Joe, popping up from behind a tall bushy dandelion. *

43 DEPUTY MOUSE 43 *

Come here, I'll show you. *

Bringing the bucket of weeds, Elinor follows the Deputy over
to a COMPOSTER. He opens a little door on the unit. *

44	DEPUTY MOUSE (CONT'D)	44	*
	They go into my composter. We just		
	open it up... dump in the weeds...		
	(he dumps in the weeds)		*
	...and shovel dirt on top.		
	He pitches a shovelful of dirt on top of the dandelions.		*
45	ELINOR (SURPRISED)	45	*
	Wha- why?		
46	DEPUTY MOUSE	46	*
	Because it helps the weeds to break		*
	down, and rot.		*
47	ELINOR (GROSSED OUT)	47	*
	Why do you want <i>that</i> ?		*
48	DEPUTY MOUSE	48	*
	Because when plants rot, they turn		*
	into <i>compost</i> . That's plant food I		*
	can use to help my veggies grow.		*
49	ELINOR (PERPLEXED)	49	*
	Oh. Okay.		
	Elinor goes back to her garden bed, with the empty bucket.		*
	<SFX: HMMM> She kneels back down, looking thoughtful. Her		*
	father notices.		*
50	MR. RABBIT	50	*
	Everything okay, Elinor?		
51	ELINOR	51	*
	I guess. But it seems like we're		*
	throwing out healthy plants. Are		*
	<i>dandelions really not good for</i>		*
	<i>anything other than compost?</i>		
52	MR. RABBIT	52	*
	I've never known a plant to be 'not		
	good for anything... '		
	Just then, a BUMBLEBEE flies between them, visiting a		
	dandelion in the bed. Elinor brightens. (Mr. Rabbit and		*
	Elinor both stay quite calm and still, and just observe it.)		
53	ELINOR	53	*
	It's a bumblebee.		*
54	MR. RABBIT	54	*
	Mm, that's a big one.		

TRACK WITH the bee, as it bee flies off to another dandelion.
(This one's in the lawn.) Then another.

Curious, Elinor gets up to follow from a safe distance.

55 ELINOR 55
It's going from dandelion to
dandelion.

Elinor passes Deputy Mouse, still comically tugging at the
same dandelion that just doesn't want to come up. <SFX: RRRR>

56 ELINOR (CONT'D) 56
I wonder why it's doing that?

Deputy Mouse pauses to wipe his forehead. *

57	DEPUTY MOUSE	57	*
	The bee? It's drinking nectar and		
	getting pollen from the flowers.		
	Here, you can use my -		*

He looks around for something he can't immediately find. *

58 DEPUTY MOUSE (CONT'D) 58 *
 - now, where did I put my *
 binoculars? Oh, there they are. *

Finally, he spies his BINOCULARS, on a GARDEN BENCH. He gets
them, and hands them to Elinor.

59 DEPUTY MOUSE (CONT'D) 59 *
 You'll get a better look, without *
 getting too close.

60 Thanks! ELINOR 60

BINOCULAR MATTE - as the bee comes into FOCUS, on the
dandelion. Its fuzz is covered in fluffy yellow pollen. *

61 ELINOR (OS) (CONT'D) 61
What's all that powdery stuff on
the bee?

62	DEPUTY MOUSE	62	*
	It's pollen, from the flowers. It		
	takes that back to the nest, along		*
	with the nectar, for the young bees		*
	to eat.		

BACK TO WIDE - as the bee flies away.

63 ELINOR 63
So, bees get food from dandelions?

64 DEPUTY MOUSE 64 *

Yep. Especially in the Spring, when
no other flowers are blooming yet.

<SFX: Oooh> She watches the bee for a few moments. Then, a *
HUMMINGBIRD <WHIRS> past, seizing her attention. *

65 ELINOR (DELIGHTED) 65

(gasp) A hummingbird! *

She heads out of frame to follow it. Deputy Joe pushes up his *
sleeves and resumes his battle with the big dandelion. *

ANGLE ON a dandelion which has gone to seed, as the
hummingbird hovers over to it.

Elinor moves closer and uses her binoculars again.

BINOCULAR MATTE - the hummingbird comes into focus, just in
time for Elinor to see it take a beak full of white fluff.

66 ELINOR (OS) (CONT'D) 66

It's taking some fluffy seeds. I
wonder why? *

The bird zips out of frame. Elinor lowers the binoculars,
excited.

67 ELINOR (CONT'D) 67

I need more observations.

Elinor quickly follows the bird to the edge of the yard. *

CLOSE ON the hummingbird as it returns to a TINY NEST in the
fork of a slender tree branch. It tucks the seed fluff into
its nest. (The nest is already partly lined with it.)

68 ELINOR (OS) (CONT'D) 68

Oh, wow. It's using the fluff to
make its nest. Ooh, I bet that *
makes the nest soft and warm. *

BACK ON Elinor as her Dad quietly joins her.

69 MR. RABBIT 69 *

Looks cozy, doesn't it?

70 ELINOR 70

Yes. That's a smart bird! *

Elinor looks thoughtful as she counts on her fingers.

71	ELINOR (CONT'D)	71	
	So, dandelions make food for bees, and their seed fluff is good for making bird nests?		
72	MR. RABBIT	72	*
	That's right. Some birds eat the dandelion seeds, too.		*
73	ELINOR	73	
	It seems like dandelions are good for <i>lots</i> of things.		
	Mr. Rabbit nods in agreement.		*
74	MR. RABBIT	74	*
	It's like I said - in nature, <i>everything</i> has a place. Even weeds.		*
75	DEPUTY MOUSE (OS, BREATHLESS)	75	*
	That's true...		
	CUT TO Deputy Mouse, who is losing patience with the giant dandelion that is still refusing to be pulled out.		*
76	DEPUTY MOUSE (CONT'D)	76	*
	...but that place does NOT have to be in my veggie garden! (strains)		
	Elinor and Mr. Rabbit <SFX: TRY NOT TO LAUGH> Just then -		*
77	MZ. LLAMA (OS)	77	
	Joe? Are you home?		
	WIDE - they turn to see Mz. Llama approaching, still carrying a basket. She chuckles when she sees them.		*
78	MZ. LLAMA (CONT'D)	78	
	Oh, hello again, Mr. Rabbit! Hello, Elinor.		*
	Deputy Mouse dusts off his hands for a moment.		*
79	DEPUTY MOUSE	79	*
	Morning, Mz. Llama. Can I help you?		
80	MZ. LLAMA (HOPEFUL)	80	
	I hope so. Do you have any spinach growing in your garden right now?		
	He makes a grumpy face.		*
81	DEPUTY MOUSE	81	*
	I <i>wish</i> . It's mostly dandelions.		

82 MZ. LLAMA (DISAPPOINTED) 82
I see. Hmm...

Joe (still preoccupied with his big weed) goes back to work. *
Elinor notices Ms. Llama's dismay. *

83 ELINOR 83
What's the matter, Mz. Llama? *

84 MZ. LLAMA 84
I went to Farmer Bear's to get
spinach for my Spinach Surprise
salad. But the surprise was on me.
She's all out of spinach!

Mz. Llama shows them her still-empty basket.

85 ELINOR (SYMPATHETIC) 85 *
Oh, no. *

86 MZ. LLAMA 86
And now I don't know what to bring
to my own party! How can I make a
salad, with no leafy greens? *

ANGLE ON Elinor. She looks down at the weeding bucket, which *
is brimming with picked dandelions. She gets an idea. *

87 ELINOR 87 *
Hmm. (beat) Dad, are dandelions
safe to eat? *

88 MR. RABBIT 88 *
Good question! Most flowers are NOT
safe to eat, so you should always
ask an adult, before you eat
anything in a garden. *

Mr. Rabbit plucks a leaf out of the bucket. *

89 MR. RABBIT (CONT'D) 89 *
But as a matter of fact, dandelion
leaves are safe to eat.

ANGLE ON Mz. Llama, who has perked right up.

90 MZ. LLAMA 90
Oh, and not just safe - they're
delicious in a salad. *

Elinor looks excited. *

91 ELINOR 91 *
Mz. Llama, why don't you use *
dandelion leaves, to make a salad? *
92 MR. RABBIT 92 *
That's a great idea, Elinor. *
93 MZ. LLAMA 93 *
It certainly is! But are sure *
Deputy Mouse has enough to spare? *

Elinor grins.

94 ELINOR 94
Let's ask him. *
 (calls) *
Deputy Mouse? Would you mind if Mz. *
Llama took some of your dandelions? *

CUT TO the Deputy, pulling with all his might on his 'Moby *
Dick' of a dandelion. Just then, it finally comes free -

<SFX: STRAIN AND RELEASE> - sending him flying backwards into
big, soft clump of even MORE dandelions! He sits up, holding
the bushy plant.

95 DEPUTY MOUSE 95 *
(Oof) Mind? I'd be thrilled! Take *
'em, *please!* Take 'em all! *

As the friends <SFX: CHUCKLE> and Mz. Llama accepts a
bucketful of dandelions with delight, we

DISSOLVE TO:

4. EXT. PARK - 'SALAD PARTY'

LATER THAT DAY. Elinor, Mr. Rabbit, Mz. Llama and Deputy *
Mouse, RANGER RABBIT, ARI, OLIVE and MRS. COW all gather in
the park. Two PICNIC TABLES have been pushed together to make
one long dining table. Right down the middle are a line of
SALAD BOWLS, with a selection of potluck salads.

96 OLIVE 96
Mm, this is a great fruit salad,
Ari.

97 ARI 97
Thanks!

Mz. Llama is standing up, with a salad bowl.

98 MZ. LLAMA 98
Who wants the last of my dandelion
salad?

99 DEPUTY MOUSE (QUICKLY) 99 *

I do!

Elinor looks at him in surprise. He smiles sheepishly. *

100 DEPUTY MOUSE (CONT'D) 100 *

Can't let it go to waste.

101 ELINOR 101

Speaking of waste...

(Elinor indicates a third table nearby, which has a CUTTING
BOARD, KNIFE, SALAD DRESSING BOTTLES and a bowl of DANDELION
FLOWERS AND STEMS.)

102 ELINOR (CONT'D) 102

What's going to happen to all the
flowers and stems that are *not* good
to eat? *

103 MZ. LLAMA 103

Oh! I know what they're good for...

Mz. Llama brings over the bowl of flowers and stems.

104 MZ. LLAMA (CONT'D) 104

I used to do this all the time, as
a little girl. (ALT: little 'cria')

Ari, Olive and Elinor lean in to watch as Mz. Llama quickly
ties the flowers together. (OS) Then, she holds it up.

105 MZ. LLAMA (CONT'D) 105

Ta-da! You can make them into
dandelion crowns, like this.

She places it on Elinor's head, and admires her work.

106 MZ. LLAMA (CONT'D) 106

My, that looks -

107 MR. RABBIT 107 *

- *Dandy?* It sure does.

Elinor looks brightly at Olive and Ari.

108 ELINOR 108

Let's make crowns for everybody!

109 OLIVE / ARI (OVERLAPPING) 109
 Okay! / Sure!

Ari and Olive get busy knotting the flower stems into
 'crowns' as Elinor begins to SING...

SONG MOMENT: 'Dandy Dandelions'

Elinor indicates the rampant dandelions in the park lawn.

110 ELINOR (SINGS) 110
*Oh you may wonder why I care
 about a plant that's everywhere
 But it helps Nature here and there
 It's more than just a weed*

Elinor delivers a flower crown to her Mom, then to Mz. Llama.

*The bumblebees can't get enough
 They eat its tasty flower stuff*

She then puts a 'crown' on her Dad - only this one has a head
 of seeds on it. He accidentally inhales a fluff -

*And hummingbirds like its cozy
 fluff.*

Mr. Rabbit <SFX: SNEEZES>

*

It's more than just a weed

Elinor scoops up a 'bouquet' of dandelions from the dandelion
 bowl to hold as she dances on the grass, singing the CHORUS:

*Dandy Dandelions,
 you're more than just a weed
 'Cause every single part of you
 is something nature needs*

Ari and Olive (now crowned as well) join her in the dance. *

111 ELINOR/ ARI/ OLIVE 111
*Dandy Dandelions,
 you're more than just a weed
 'Cause every single part of you
 is something nature needs*

The SONG ENDS, to <CHEERS AND APPLAUSE> from the adults. *

Just then, Olive notices that Deputy Mouse's head is bare. *

112 OLIVE 112
 Deputy Mouse didn't get a crown. *

113	ELINOR	113	
	We'll make you one. (jokes) You can be 'king of the gardeners.'		*
	Elinor quickly knots him a small crown, which he puts on.		*
114	MR. RABBIT	114	
	He already is. Why, I've never known anyone so good at growing dandelions!		*
	As the Deputy's pride dissolves into <SFX: AD LIB LAUGHTER>, we...		*

FADE OUT.