

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EW 168 A Moth Mystery

By Laura Sams and Robert Sams

Elinor's Question: Why are there so many moths around Mr. Dog's porch?

Logline: The kids go summer caroling around the neighborhood, but when they get to Mr. Dog's porch, there are so many moths flying around that they can't finish singing their summer song.

Curriculum Goals:

ES2: Understand that plants and animals (including humans) can change their environment (Elinor and her friends realize they can turn off Mr. Dog's porch light and the moths won't gather around).

SEP 4: Analyzing and Interpreting 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. (Elinor and her friends identify the pattern of moth behavior, that they cluster around lights, and solve the problem by turning off the porch light).

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SECOND DRAFT: April 06, 2020

POLISH DRAFT:

FINAL DRAFT:

1. EXT. MRS. DROMEDARY'S HOUSE (FRONT DOOR) - LATE AFTERNOON

ANGLE ON Elinor's finger pressing a doorbell. <SFX: DING DONG>

A front door swings open to reveal MRS. DROMEDARY, who looks delightfully surprised. ELINOR, OLIVE, ARI and SEÑOR TAPIR stand on the front porch as a choir, each with a giant smile and wearing a sun hat and sunglasses. Señor Tapir strums his guitar with a flourish, pauses, then starts to play his guitar to accompany their summer song. *

SUNNY SUMMER SONG

1	ELINOR, OLIVE, ARI, SEÑOR TAPIR	1	*
	SR TAPIR: We're here to sing a		*
	sunny summer song		
	KIDS: A sunny summer song, A summer		
	sing-along		
	SR TAPIR: We're here to sing a		*
	sunny summer song		
	ALL: To celebrate the summer		
	sunshine!		
	ELINOR: We jump really high.		
	Elinor jumps high.		
	ARI: We flap and fly.		
	Ari flutters up in the air for a moment.		*
	OLIVE: We try to touch the sky		
	Olive raises her trunk and arms up to the sky.		*
	SR TAPIR: And now you know why		*
	Elinor, Olive and Ari spreads their arms wide like shining		*
	suns.		
	ALL: To celebrate the summer		
	sunshine!		
	The choir holds their last note while Mrs. Dromedary <SFX:		
	CLAPS> in celebration. Señor Tapir and the kids take a bow.		*
2	ELINOR	2	*
	Happy summer Mrs. Dromedary!		*

3	MRS. DROMEDARY	3	*
	Happy summer to youuu!		*
	Elinor, Olive and Ari wave goodbye, Mrs. Dromedary closes her door, and the gang hops off Mrs. Dromedary's porch.		*
4	SEÑOR TAPIR	4	*
	This was a great idea, amigos. Singing to the neighbors to spread good cheer. Thank you for inviting me.		* * * *
5	ELINOR	5	*
	You're welcome, Señor Tapir. I love to sing		* *
6	OLIVE	6	*
	Me too.		*
7	ARI	7	*
	Me three. I love to sing (he pauses) and show off my dance moves.		* * * *
	Ari does a back flip and then spreads his arms like a shining sun. Then he points off screen.		* *
8	ARI (CONT'D)	8	*
	To the next house!		
	The trio and Señor Tapir hop OS.		*

CROSSFADE TO:

**2. EXT. PORCH SONG MONTAGE (MRS. BEAVER'S FRONT DOOR, MR. RACCOON'S BAKERY, MZ. MOLE'S FRONT DOOR, THE RANGER STATION) -
- MOMENTS LATER**

Note: This is a quick montage so that we hear the choir singing the summer song once through, while we see a montage of the choir visiting various neighbors. The sky is gradually getting darker as they go from house to house.

ANGLE ON: a front door opening to reveal MRS. BEAVER who suddenly grins widely. A wide shot shows Mrs. Beaver enjoying the carolers' music.

9	ELINOR, OLIVE, ARI, SEÑOR TAPIR	9	*
	SEÑOR TAPIR: We're here to sing a sunny summer song KIDS: A sunny summer song, A summer sing-along		* *

ANGLE ON: the bakery's front door opening to reveal MR. RACCOON who grins widely. A wide shot shows the carolers on the sidewalk in front of Mr. Raccoon's bakery as he enjoys the song. A couple Animal Town residents, MR. BUFFALO and MR. ANTELOPE, stand on the sidewalk holding their recently purchased baked goods and smile as they listen.

SEÑOR TAPIR: We're here to sing a
sunny summer song
ALL: To celebrate the summer
sunshine!

ANGLE ON: a front door in the ground, which opens to reveal MZ. MOLE. She pops her head up out of the ground to see Elinor's feet as they jump high and back down. Mz. Mole watches the choir as they sing.

ELINOR: We jump really high.

ARI: We flap and fly.

OLIVE: We try to touch the sky

ANGLE ON: the door of the ranger station swinging open to reveal DEPUTY JACK MOUSE and MS GEE RAFFE (her body and tall neck but her head is OS). Jack Mouse looks grumpy but then (after a beat) gives a very tiny but still noticeable smile.

SEÑOR TAPIR: And now you know why

ALL: To celebrate the summer
sunshine!

END MONTAGE

CROSSFADE TO:

3. EXT. PATH - EVENING

Señor Tapir walks with Elinor, Olive and Ari along a path back to Ari's house. Ari's house is visible in the distance.

10	ELINOR	10	*
	That was <i>so</i> fun.		*
11	SEÑOR TAPIR	11	*
	You are really good singers.		*
	(looking up) Ah, the sky is getting		*
	dark, amigos. I'd love to keep		*
	singing, but I think it's about		*
	time to go home.		*

The sun is now very low in the sky, almost about to sink below the horizon. We hear a <SFX: HOWL WALLA> from off screen.

12	ELINOR	12	*
	(her ears perk up and turn toward		*
	the sound)		*
	What was that?		*
13	ARI	13	*
	Mr. Dog. He lives next door...		*
	Wait, we never sang for Mr. Dog.		*
14	OLIVE	14	*
	Mr. Dog <i>loves</i> music. We <i>have</i> to		*
	sing for him.		*
15	SEÑOR TAPIR	15	*
	I guess we have time for one more		*
	magnificent song! (he strums his		*
	guitar with a flourish)		*
	Señor Tapir and the kids hop OS.		*

4. EXT. MR. DOG'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The moon shining in the sky. Suddenly Mr. Dog's mouth pops into the frame to <WALLA HOWL>.

MR. DOG sits in a chair on his front porch, next to a vase of
flowers, howling up at the moon. Elinor leads her friends up
to the porch. They are still wearing their sun hats and
sunglasses, even though Mr. Dog's front porch is dark.

Mr. Dog <WALLA HOWLS> and turns to his friends. *

16	MR. DOG	16	
	Hellooooo there. To what do I owe		*
	the pleasure?		*
17	ELINOR	17	*
	We're here to sing you a summer		*
	song.		
18	MR. DOG	18	
	Well now, I love music. Let me turn		*
	on some light so I can see your		
	faces.		

Mr. Dog flicks a light switch, and the porch light turns on
(which is directly over the carolers). The carolers are
standing very close together on the narrow porch.

Olive is standing right next to the vase of flowers and leans over to smell them with her trunk. *

19 OLIVE 19 *
Oh these flowers smell good. (she *
looks up when she hears the guitar *
strum) *

Señor Tapir strums his guitar with a flourish, pauses, then starts to play his guitar to accompany their summer song. Mr. Dog sits back to enjoy the music. *

Suddenly a single moth flutters in and lands on Señor Tapir's right ear. *

20 ELINOR 20 *
Señor Tapir? There's a, (pausing *
for a better look) a MOTH on your *
ear. *

21 SEÑOR TAPIR 21 *
(intrigued) Really? (he lifts his *
hand toward his left ear) Where is *
it? Here? *

22 ELINOR 22 *
No, other side. *

23 SEÑOR TAPIR 23 *
Here? *

He lifts his right hand toward his right ear, but the moth flutters up and lands on his hat instead. *

24 OLIVE 24 *
Now it's on your hat. (two more *
moths flutter in on his hat). Uh, *
now there are three moths on your *
hat. *

25 SEÑOR TAPIR 25 *
Well, a few moths can't stop us *
from making magnificent music, *
right? *

Señor Tapir strums his guitar with a flourish. He begins to play the guitar to accompany the song. *

26 SEÑOR TAPIR (CONT'D) 26 *
We're here to sing a, thp, a, thwpp *
thwppp ..." *
(several new moths fly right by his *
mouth) Sorry, let's try that again. *

Señor Tapir strums his guitar and takes a deep breath, but just then a whole bunch of moths fly around his face and he pauses to blow them away from his mouth and nose. *

Elinor, Olive and Ari <SFX: LAUGH> as bunches of moths flutter around their faces too. <SFX: MOTH WINGS FLUTTERING>

27 ELINOR 27
Wow, that's a lot of moths! *

A group of moths fly near the porch light and around Mr. Dog too.

28 SEÑOR TAPIR 28
Si. But moths can't stop us from making, (blowing and brushing moths away from his face) magnificent (blowing and brushing moths away) *

29 OLIVE 29
(laughing) Uhhaaaaack! *

Olive uses her trunk to brush away some moths from her face. Elinor turns her head and flaps her ears to try and duck away from the moths flying around her face. *

30 ARI 30
Aaaa! *

Ari does hilarious karate-looking moves and spin moves to evade the moths around him, to no avail. *

We see a wide shot of the porch with dozens and dozens of moths around the choir and Mr. Dog, just fluttering around, but the densest bunch of moths are near the porch light. *

31 SEÑOR TAPIR 31
Okay, maybe moths can stop us from making magnificent music. It sure is hard to concentrate. *

Señor Tapir looks at the kids, who are still awkwardly dealing with moths. Mr. Dog is trying to blow moths away from his face too. *

32 ELINOR 32
Can we come back later? *

33 SEÑOR TAPIR 33
Si amigos. Hasta luego Mr. Dog. *

34 MR. DOG 34
See you (howls) soooooon! *

Elinor, Olive, Ari and Señor Tapir hurry OS. *

5. EXT. PATH - NIGHT

The kids and Señor Tapir walk back to Ari's house. They are still wearing their hats but have taken off their sunglasses. The moon is bright enough to light up their path. *

35 ELINOR 35 *
Why are there so many moths around *
Mr. Dog's porch? *

36 ARI 36 *
I dunno. We didn't see any moths at *
any of the other houses. *

37 OLIVE 37 *
Sounds like a mystery, dun, dun, *
dunnnn, a moth mystery. *

38 ELINOR 38
Let's figure it out! (thinking)
What happened on Mr. Dog's porch
that was different than the other
porches where we sang?

39 ARI 39
(thinking)
I know. It was night time when we
were at Mr. Dog's porch but it was
daytime at the other places.

PAN UP In a THOUGHT BUBBLE, we see the kids and Señor Tapir standing on Mr. Dog's porch (at night), compared to the kids and Señor Tapir standing on Mrs. Beaver's porch (during the day). PAN DOWN *

40 ELINOR 40 *
Maybe moths only come out at night? *

41 OLIVE 41 *
(excited) I think you're right. I *
remember reading that in my Nature *
Book. *

Olive pulls her nature book out of her backpack and opens it to a picture of moths by the moon. *

42 OLIVE (CONT'D) 42 *
Most moths only come out at *
night... *

43	ELINOR	43	
	That's SO interesting.		*
44	ELINOR (CONT'D)	44	
	Let's watch and wait to see if moths show up.		*
	The trio and Señor Tapir all stand still and look around. Ari flutters up into the sky with the moon behind him and looks around from up high.		* * *
45	ARI	45	
	(he looks around) No moths here.		*
	Ari flies OS. Cut to Ari hanging upside down from a tree branch, looking around intently.		* *
46	ARI (CONT'D)	46	
	No moths here.		*
	Cut to Ari fluttering above Señor Tapir's hat to inspect it.		*
47	ARI (CONT'D)	47	
	No moths here either.		*
48	ELINOR	48	
	Huh, something must have made the moths show up at Mr. Dog's house. Señor Tapir, have you ever seen that many moths before?		* * * * *
49	SEÑOR TAPIR	49	
	(looking around) You know, I've sat under the stars and played music on many moonlit nights, but I've never seen that many moths.		* * * * *
	Ari lands next to his friends.		
50	ARI	50	
	Maybe it beaches Mr. Dog was howling on his porch.		*
51	ELINOR	51	
	Right. Maybe moths like howling.		*
	The kids and Señor Tapir all look up at the moon and howl.		*
52	ELINOR, OLIVE, ARI, SEÑOR TAPIR	52	
	"Arwwwwoooooooooooo! Arw Arwwwoooooohhhhhooooo!"		*

53 MR. DOG (O.S.) 53
(after a beat, from far away) Nice
howling!

The kids and Señor Tapir stand still and look around intently. No moths show up. *

54 ELINOR 54
No moths. That's not it either.
Hmmm. *

6. EXT. ARI'S HOUSE (FRONT PORCH)-- MOMENTS LATER

The kids and Señor Tapir hop up to Ari's front door. The porch light is off. *

55 OLIVE 55
I remember something else. Mr. Dog
had flowers on his front porch.

56 ELINOR 56
Right. Maybe moths like flowers.

57 SEÑOR TAPIR 57 *
Where can we find some flowers?

Ari thinks for a quick moment.

58 ARI 58
I'll be right back.

CUT TO:

7. INT. ARI'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

MR. BAT is holding a pitcher of water, about to pour some water into a vase full of flowers on the kitchen table, as Ari quickly runs into the room, grabs the vase of flowers and is gone in a flash. Note: Mr. Bat is not putting flowers in the vase, he is just topping it off with water. The flowers have been on the table, so Ari knows they are there. *

59 ARI 59
(quickly)
Hi dad. Bye dad.

Mr. Bat is left holding the pitcher of water and briefly pours water on an empty table. *

CUT TO:

8. EXT. ARI'S HOUSE (FRONT PORCH)-- MOMENTS LATER

Ari comes back through the front door with the vase of flowers. He carefully sets the vase down on the porch.

60 ELINOR 60
Let's see if any moths show up.

The kids and Señor Tapir hold still, watching the flowers
intently, but no moths come. *

61	OLIVE	61
	No moths.	*

62 ELINOR 62
 Hmm. So why were there so many
 moths around Mr. Dog's porch? *

Just then, Mr. Bat peeks his head outside the front door.

63 MR. BAT 63
It's pretty dark outside kids.
Lemme give you some light. *

ANGLE ON: Mr. Bat's finger flipping on the porch light switch. The porch light comes on and the kids and flowers are illuminated.

64 MR. BAT (CONT'D) 64
(noticing the flowers for a brief
moment) Oh, the flowers do look *
nice there. *

Mr. Bat goes back inside.

After a moment, a few moths flutter up toward the porch light.

65 ELINOR 65
 (pointing at the porch light)
 Look! Moths!

The kids and Señor Tapir look at the light, while more moths *
flutter up toward the porch light. <SFX: MOTH WINGS
FLUTTERING>

66 ARI 66
(flying up a bit toward the porch
light because he's excited)
My dad turned on the porch light
(pointing at the light) and then
the moths showed up.

67	OLIVE	67	*
	And...		*
	A THOUGHT BUBBLE appears as she remembers Mr. Dog turning on his porch light.		*
			*
68	OLIVE (CONT'D)	68	*
	Mr. Dog turned on his porch light and then the moths showed up.		*
69	ELINOR	69	
	Right. Maybe moths like the porch light. (looking at her friends) We need MORE observations! Quick, Ari, turn off the light.		*
			*
	Ari turns the porch light off, so the kids and Señor Tapir are in the darkness. The moths flutter away.		*
			*
70	OLIVE	70	*
	Whoah, the moths are flying away.		*
71	ELINOR	71	*
	Okay Ari, turn the light back on.		*
	The kids and Señor Tapir watch and wait in anticipation. A moth flutters in, then another.		*
			*
72	OLIVE	72	*
	(pointing) There's one! (seeing another) There's two!		*
			*
	Then a lot of moths flutter in and fly up toward the porch light.		*
			*
73	OLIVE (CONT'D)	73	*
	There's uh,		*
74	ELINOR	74	*
	A lot of moths!		*
	Elinor, Olive and Ari watch the moths with wonder. <WALLA>		*
75	ELINOR (CONT'D)	75	*
	Okay, Ari turn off the light again.		*
	Ari turns off the porch light, and the moths flutter away.		*
76	ARI	76	*
	The moths flew away!		*
	Elinor, Olive, Ari and Señor Tapir stand in the moonlight on Ari's porch.		*

77	ELINOR	77	
	Every time we turn on a light...		*
78	OLIVE	78	
	(excited, because they are solving the mystery)		
	...the moths show up.		*
79	ELINOR	79	
	Every time we turn off the light...		
80	OLIVE	80	
	They fly away.		
81	ELINOR	81	*
	It's a pattern!		*
82	OLIVE	82	*
	I have an idea.		*
	Olive pulls a flashlight from her bag.		*
83	OLIVE (CONT'D)	83	*
	I'm gonna turn on my flashlight.		*
	She shines the flashlight's beam of light up toward her face.		*
84	OLIVE (CONT'D)	84	*
	What do you think will happen?		*
85	ARI	85	*
	Uh, you're going to tell a ghost story?		*
86	OLIVE	86	*
	No. What will happen with the moths Ari?		*
87	ARI	87	*
	Oh, right. (thinking, excited)		*
	Moths will show up.		*
	Just then, moths fly right into the beam of the flashlight.		*
88	OLIVE	88	*
	Yes! We finally solved the, dun, dun, dunn (beat) moth mystery.		*
	Mr. Bat comes out onto the porch and turns the light back on.		*
89	MR. BAT	89	
	What moth mystery?		

90	ELINOR	90
	We wanted to know why so many moths were flying around Mr. Dog's porch.	
91	ARI	91
	(excited) And we figured it out. Moths fly (Ari flutters up toward his porch light) toward the light.	
92	MR. BAT	92
	Oh I remember reading about this. Moths are attracted to light. Some scientists believe it's because the moths think the lightbulb is the moon or the sun, but no one really knows why.	*
93	ELINOR	93
	It really is a moth mystery. (to her friends) Hey, I know how we can finish singing our summer song for Mr. Dog.	

DISSOLVE TO:

10. EXT. MR. DOG'S HOUSE (FRONT PORCH) - NIGHT

ANGLE ON Elinor's finger pressing Mr. Dog's doorbell. <SFX:
DING DONG>

The kids and Señor Tapir wait patiently on the porch, wearing *
their sun hats, underneath the bright porch light. Lots of
moths flutter around them.

Mr. Dog opens his front door.

94	MR. DOG	94
	(smiling) So glad you're back.	
95	ELINOR	95
	Mr. Dog, we'd love to sing for you, but first, would you turn off your porch light? We don't want to confuse the moths.	* *
96	ARI	96
	Moths like the light, and they're making it hard for us to sing.	

Mr Dog turns off the porch light, so that the choir is standing in the dark, and the moths flutter away toward the moonlight. When the moths are gone, Señor Tapir strums his guitar with a flourish, then starts to play the song.

*
*
*
*

SUNNY SUMMER SONG

97 ELINOR, OLIVE, ARI, SEÑOR TAPIR 97

SEÑOR TAPIR: We're here to sing a sunny summer song

*
*

KIDS: A sunny summer song, A summer sing-along

SEÑOR TAPIR: We're here to sing a sunny summer song

*

ALL: To celebrate the summer sunshine!

ELINOR: We jump really high.

Elinor jumps high.

*

ARI: We flap and fly.

Ari flutters up in the air for a moment.

*

OLIVE: We try to touch the sky

Olive raises her trunk and arms to the sky.

SEÑOR TAPIR: And now you know why

*
*

ALL: To celebrate the summer sunshine!

*
*

Mr. Dog claps and tilts his head back to <WALLA HOWL>. Señor Tapir and the kids all join in, howling at the moon.

*
*

98 ELINOR, OLIVE, ARI, SEÑOR TAPIR 98
(CONT'D)

Arwwwwwwoooooooooooooooooooo!

A moth flies in front of the moon and then toward the camera until it fills the screen.

BLACK OUT

THE END

*