

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EP. 170 "The Band of Explorers"

By: Karen Moonah

Elinor's Question: *Why aren't we seeing many wild creatures, on our exploring walk?*

Logline: *When Elinor and her friends bring musical instruments on a hike, they don't understand why they aren't seeing any creatures - until they realize that wildlife needs quiet.*

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. c. Participate in simple activities to care for the environment (When Elinor and her friends realize their music is disturbing the forest animals, they decide not to play their instruments)

SEP1. Asking questions (science) and defining questions. (engineering) c) Ask and/or identify cause and effect questions that can be answered by an investigation.

SEP4. Analysing and Interpreting Data: b) use the five senses and simple tools to gather and record data.

SEP7. Engaging in Argument from Evidence: b) support thinking and argue ideas with evidence. Through observation and investigation, Elinor and her friends decide their music is having the unintentional effect of disturbing the animals.

OUTLINE: Mar. 16, 2020

FIRST DRAFT: April 06, 2020

SECOND DRAFT: April 24, 2020

1. EXT. CLUBHOUSE - DAY

ELINOR, OLIVE, SALLY and TITO have gathered at the clubhouse, for an unusual meeting of the Exploring Club. Today, they've all brought instruments! Elinor has a UKULELE, Olive holds a TRUMPET, Sally has a TOY XYLOPHONE (on a neck strap), and Tito has brought a DRUM, also on a neck strap. There's a <MUSICAL DIN> as they all noodle around, warming up.

1	SALLY	1	*
	(amid the din)		*
	This is a great idea, Elinor.		*
	Elinor looks up from tuning her ukulele.		*
2	ELINOR	2	*
	Excuse me?		*
	(Olive is still playing <SCALES> on her trumpet in the BG.)		*
3	SALLY (LOUDER)	3	*
	<i>I said, this is a great idea!</i>		*
	Olive stops playing, to chime in.		*
4	OLIVE	4	*
	Yes! A <i>musical</i> exploring walk.		*
	Super FUN!		*
	Olive <BLASTS> a fanfare. Tito winces and holds his ears.		*
5	TITO	5	*
	(giggle) And super LOUD.		*
	Elinor laughs. She's excited too.		*
6	ELINOR	6	*
	(laugh) That's okay. I want every		*
	bird, lizard, and frog in the whole		*
	<i>forest</i> to hear us!		*
	She spreads her arms wide. Sally smiles.		*
7	SALLY	7	*
	Do you think they'll like our		*
	music?		*
8	ELINOR (CONFIDENT)	8	*
	Sure! <i>We</i> like music, so birds,		*
	lizards and frogs must like it too.		*
	Elinor goes a bit dreamy, picturing it...		*

9	ELINOR (CONT'D)	9	*
	In fact, I bet we'll see <i>more</i> wild creatures than usual.		*
	IMAGINATION BUBBLE - Elinor pictures the Exploring Band, <PLAYING> as they march down a trail. An unlikely horde of BIRDS, FROGS and GEESE flock to them and follow along behind.		*
10	ELINOR (VO; CONT'D) (CONT'D)	10	*
	...a LOT more.		*
	ON: Elinor, proudly leading the parade like the Pied Piper!		*
	PAN DOWN TO:		*
	Olive chuckles as she digs a PAD OF PAPER from her bag.		*
11	OLIVE	11	*
	Good thing I brought a <i>lot</i> of paper. Because I want to draw every bird, bug and frog we see.		*
	Tito is getting excited.		*
12	TITO	12	*
	Are we ready? Let's go!		*
13	SALLY	13	*
	We can't. Ari isn't here yet.		*
14	ARI (OS, BREATHLESS)	14	*
	Yes I am!		*
	On cue, ARI runs in, carrying a large pair of CYMBALS.		*
15	ARI (CONT'D)	15	*
	Sorry I'm late. I had trouble closing my bag.		*
16	OLIVE	16	*
	Because your cymbals wouldn't fit?		*
17	ARI	17	*
	No. Because of all my snacks.		*
	He shows them a BULGING BACKPACK. (Tito might drum a <RIM-SHOT> to punctuate the joke.) the kids <SFX: LAUGH>		*
18	ELINOR	18	*
14	NOW we can go.	14	*
19	OLIVE	19	*
	Wait. First we have to do our Exploring Club pledge.		*

ON: Elinor.

20 ELINOR 20
Oh, right! Good thinking, Olive.

BACK ON: The kids all have put down their instruments. They do their pledge with hand gestures.

21 OLIVE / ARI / HAZEL / SALLY/ ELINOR 21
An Explorer is Brave, an Explorer
is kind, an Explorer is CURIOUS,
who knows what we'll find! *

ON: Elinor's happy face.

22 ELINOR 22
Okay! Who wants to go and see LOTS
of birds and frogs and bugs? *

BACK ON: The kids have their instruments in hand. *

23 OLIVE / ARI / HAZEL / SALLY 23
We do! *

Elinor hurries to the head of the group, with her ukulele. *

24 ELINOR 24
Then let's play!
(counting in) *
And-a one, two, three four! *

With Elinor <STRUMMING> in the lead, the kids all march off
down the trail. *

2. EXT. FOREST TRAIL - DAY

As the 'Band of Explorers' parades along, they play an energetic marching song. (Think '76 Trombones')

THE EXPLORERS' MARCHING SONG: *

(NOTE: as they march down the trail, we see creatures in the foreground sense them coming, and depart before the kids can spot them. BUTTERFLIES perched on a tree flutter OS. An OWL swivels its head to note their approach - and flies away.)

25 ELINOR/OLIVE/ARI/TITO/SALLY (SING) 25
Oh we're off to play in the forest *
Singing as we march along *
So our forest friends will all come *
out *
To hear our Exploring Song *
(Tito drums) *
(MORE) *

ELINOR/OLIVE/ARI/TITO/SALLY (SING)
 <BOOMPA-BOOM, BOOMPA-BOOM, BOOMPA-
 BOOM!>

Elinor stops marching to look around. The others 'boxcar'
 into her. <SFX: IMPACT WALLA WHOOP - OOF>

*

26 TITO 26 *
 Whoa, why'd you stop? *

27 ARI (HOPEFUL) 27 *
 Is it snack time already? *

28 OLIVE 28 *
 (chuckling) *
 Ari. *

Elinor is looking all around, hoping to see wildlife. *

29 ELINOR 29 *
 23 I'm just looking for birds and 23 *
 frogs and stuff. Do you see any? *

They look around - but nothing stirs. The forest is quiet.

30 ARI / OLIVE / SALLY 30 *
 (ad lib 'No. Nothing. Nuh-uh.') *

Elinor is mildly surprised. *

31 ELINOR 31 *
 Hm. *

32 SALLY 32 *
 Maybe they can't hear us? *

33 ELINOR 33 *
 That must be it. Let's try playing *
 louder. *

34 ARI 34 *
 Yeah, louder! We can do that! *

35 ELINOR 35 *
 (counting in) *
 Ah-one, two, three, four! *

They all set off again, singing and playing louder than ever. *

36 SONG 36 *
 Oh we're off to play in the forest *
 Singing as we march along *
 So our forest friends will all come *
 out *
 To hear our Exploring Song *
 (MORE)

SONG (CONT'D)
 (Feature Olive on TRUMPET)
 <BRAP-A-BAP, BRAP-A-BAP, BRAP-A-BAP!>

Suddenly Olive spots something OS. She stops in her tracks.

POV - down a side trail, up in a tree, we just glimpse the flapping of a BLUE BIRD'S WING. *

37	OLIVE (PART OS)	37	
	Wait - I see some birds.		*
	(pointing)		
	Over there. C'mon!		*

Excited, the band pivots and marches off in the direction Olive indicated.

38	SONG	38	
	<i>Oh we're off to play in the forest</i>		*
	<i>Singing as we march along</i>		*
	<i>So our forest friends will all come</i>		*
	<i>out</i>		*
	<i>To hear our Exploring Song</i>		*

Ari rhythmically <CRASHES> his BIG CYMBALS as we CUT TO:

3. EXT. A HIGH TREE BRANCH

A PAIR OF DOVES are sitting on a high branch. As the band approaches, with Ari crashing his noisy CYMBALS -

OS <CRASH! CRASH! CRASH!>

The doves startle and fly OS, before the kids can really get a good look. *

CUT TO:

4. EXT. TRAIL - BELOW THE TREE

The marchers halt below the tree and look up, but -

LOW ANGLE POV - the tree is deserted.

39	OLIVE	39	*
	Where'd they go?		*
40	TITO	40	*
	Are you <i>sure</i> you saw birds?		*
41	OLIVE	41	*
	Yes! They were here a minute ago.		

42	SALLY	42	
	Then why they didn't stay to hear		*
	us play? Don't they like music?		*
43	ELINOR (PUZZLED)	43	*
	They <i>must</i> like it. Birds 'sing' all		*
	the time.		*
	Olive looks up, clutching at faint hope.		*
44	OLIVE	44	*
	Maybe they went to tell all their		*
	bird friends about us.		*
	Just then, Ari sees something OS. He elbows Olive.		*
45	ARI	45	
	(gasp) Look! On the trunk!		*
	Olive quickly looks down and brushes off her own trunk, as if		*
	there were a spider on her.		*
46	OLIVE	46	*
	(with mild alarm)		*
	What? What's on my trunk?		*
	Ari points off in the direction he meant.		*
47	ARI (PART OS)	47	*
	Not YOUR trunk. On the TREE trunk.		*
	They all turn to look at a CLEARING up ahead, dominated by a		
	big FALLEN TREE. On top of it, a LIZARD basks in the sun.		*
48	ELINOR (OS, DELIGHTED)	48	
	It's a lizard!		*
49	TITO	49	*
	I see it too!		*
	Excited, Elinor beckons to her friends.		
50	ELINOR	50	
	Come on!		*
	They all happily fall into formation and strike up their		
	marching song again, as they head towards the sunny clearing.		
51	SONG	51	
	<i>Oh we're off to play in the forest</i>		*
	<i>Singing as we march along</i>		*
	<i>So our forest friends will all come</i>		*
	<i>out</i>		*
	<i>To hear our Exploring Song</i>		*
	(MORE)		

SONG (CONT'D)
 (feature Elinor on
 UKULELE)
 <STRUMMA-STRUM, STRUMMA-STRUM,
 STRUMMA-STRUMMM!>

5. EXT. FOREST CLEARING

As they arrive, Ari <CLASHES> his cymbals for a big finish.

52	ARI (like a rock star) Yeah! Woo-hoo!	52	* * *
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Then - they all react to the log with SFX: <DISMAY.>

ANGLE ON THE LOG - the lizard is gone!

53	ARI (CONT'D) Where's the lizard?	53	* *
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54	TITO It was here. I saw it.	54	* *
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55	ELINOR But it left. Just like the birds.	55	* *
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Olive pulls out her paper to show a blank page.

56	OLIVE (DISAPPOINTED) I didn't even get a chance to draw it.	56	* *
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The kids slump. Sally shakes her head, puzzled.

57	SALLY This is strange. On our <i>last</i> exploring walk, we saw all kinds of birds, bugs and frogs.	57	* * *
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58	ARI But today, we're hardly seeing any.	58	* *
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ANGLE ON Elinor, looking thoughtful.

59	ELINOR That's SO interesting! <i>Why <u>aren't</u></i> <i>we seeing many wild creatures</i> <i>today?</i> (resolved) We need more observations.	59	* * * *
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60	ARI	60	
	But that's what we've been <i>trying</i>		*
	to do. Observe them.		*
61	OLIVE	61	*
	And we're not having much luck.		*
	Elinor nods.		*
62	ELINOR	62	*
	Yes, but we've only been looking		*
	with our <i>eyes</i> . What if we try using		*
	our <i>ears</i> , instead?		*
63	SALLY	63	*
	Oh yeah, we can <i>listen</i> , too. Let's		*
	try that.		*
	Tito tucks his drumsticks away -		*
64	TITO	64	*
	I'll close my eyes, I listen		*
	better, that way.		*
	- and covers his eyes with his hands.		*
	WIDE - they all listen carefully for a BEAT. Finally...		*
	<CROAK!>		*
	ON: Elinor. Her ears prick up.		*
65	ELINOR (LOW)	65	*
	Did you hear that?		*
	The <CROAK> comes again. They all turn towards a marshy area.		*
66	ELINOR (WHISPER) (CONT'D)	66	*
	I think it came from over there...		*
	Curious, Elinor leads her friends across the clearing. Tito		*
	remains - he still has his eyes covered. Sally doubles back		*
	to grab him and bring him along.		*
67	SALLY	67	*
	Tito, come on!		*
	6. EXT. A MARSHY AREA		*
	Following the <CROAKS>, they come upon a large BULLFROG,		
	sitting on a rock at the edge of a puddle.		
68	OLIVE	68	*
	A bullfrog! Finally.		*

Olive eagerly pulls out her paper and pencil. *

69 OLIVE (CONT'D) 69
(to the frog) *
Now hold still, so I can draw you. *

CLOSE ON the BULLFROG, puffing up his throat with each
<CROAK>. When he pauses, there's an OS <ANSWERING CROAK>. *

The Exploring Club watches from nearby, delighted. *

70 ELINOR 70
My mom says frogs 'sing' like that, *
to talk to other frogs. *

71 ARI 71
Frogs sing too? Hey, maybe he'd *
like to sing with our band? *

72 SALLY 72
That would be fun. We can 'jam!' *

Everyone (except for Olive, who's busy sketching) raises his
or her instruments to play. *

73 ELINOR (PLAYFUL) 73
Count us in, Mister Bullfrog.

<CROAK. CROAK. CROAK...>

Taking their tempo from the frog's croak, the kids launch
into their noisy song again -

74 SONG 74
*Oh, we're off to play in the - **

But - <SPLASH!> The frog hops into the puddle and swims away. *

Olive waves her unfinished drawing in the air. *

75 OLIVE 75
Come back! I'm not finished! *

76 ARI 76
(sigh) I guess he only likes songs *
about frogs. *

Ari leans his cymbals (precariously) against a TREE STUMP. *

ON Sally, looking thoughtful. *

77 SALLY 77
Elinor, you said frogs 'sing' to *
talk to each other, right? *

78	ELINOR	78	*
	Yes?		*
79	SALLY	79	*
	Well, maybe it's like when I was trying to talk to you, but all you could hear was Olive's trumpet.		*
	Elinor nods, understanding.		*
80	ELINOR	80	*
	Oh. You mean, the frog couldn't hear his friends, because we were too loud?		*
	Ari makes a dismissive gesture.		*
81	ARI	81	*
	Ah, we're not <i>that</i> loud.		*
	Just then, his teetering cymbals fall over with a loud <CRASH>. The kids SFX: <REACT, STARTLED!>		*
	Elinor and Olive jump in the bushes. Tito dives into a HOLLOW LOG. Sally stumbles into the puddle, getting a 'soaker'.		*
	CUT TO Ari, who flew straight up in surprise, and is now dangling from a tree. He sheepishly glides down again.		*
82	ARI (CONT'D)	82	*
	Heh. I guess we <i>are</i> loud.		*
	Sally shakes off her muddy, wet foot.		
83	SALLY	83	*
	That startled me!		*
	Olive pops up from behind a bush.		*
84	HAZEL	84	
	Me too!		
	Elinor pops up too, with a twig on her head.		*
85	ELINOR	85	*
	Me <i>three</i> .		*
	Tito climbs back out of the log, rubbing his ears.		*
86	TITO	86	*
	Loud noises <i>always</i> make me jump. My ears are sensitive.		*
	Elinor flexes her own long ears, looking thoughtful.		*

87	ELINOR	87	
	I wonder if bird and frog ears are		*
	sensitive too?		*
	(dismayed gasp)		*
	Our noise might be <i>scaring</i> them		*
	away.		*

88	OLIVE	88
	Oh, no! I don't want to do that.	*
	But how can we find out for sure?	*

Elinor considers the ukulele in her hands. *

89 ELINOR 89

Well, the whole time we've been in
the forest, we've been pretty loud.
And we haven't seen many creatures. *

I wonder what would happen if we *

stayed quiet, instead? *

90	ARI	90	
	Quiet. Got it!		*

Ari picks up his fallen cymbals, accidentally <CRASHING> them together again. They all cringe.

91	ARI (CONT'D)	91
	Sorry! Sorry.	*

The kids all <SFX: GIGGLE> Elinor gestures to the clearing with the log.

92 ELINOR (LOW) 92 *

Let's go sit over there for a
while. *Shh!*

She puts a finger to her lips. The others nod and 'shh' too, and they all tiptoe OS, back the way they came.

DISSOLVE TO:

7. EXT. FOREST CLEARING - MOMENTS LATER

WIDE on the clearing, as they all perch on the log in
expectant silence. Their instruments have been put aside. The *
forest is beautifully quiet, until - <CHOMP!> *

ON Ari, biting into a very crispy APPLE he brought along. He *
<CHEWS> loudly. *

The other kids turn to <SFX: SHHHHH> him. *

93	ARI (normal volume) I'm not <i>talking</i> , I'm just <i>eating</i> .	93	*
			*
	The others give him a meaningful look, fingers to their lips. Ari reluctantly puts his apple back into a baggie.		*
			*
94	ARI (CONT'D) (whispers) Okay, okay. Being quiet is <i>hard</i> .	94	*
			*
	Just then, with a <FLUTTER>, the TWO DOVES fly down and start pecking at the ground in front of them. SFX: <SOFT COOING>.		
	The kids' faces light up with silent delight! Olive remembers her notebook, sitting on the log beside her. She quietly picks it up, and starts sketching.		
	CUT TO: a ROBIN appears, landing on a tree branch. <CHIRP!>		
	CUT TO: the BULLFROG reappears, at the edge of the clearing. He <CROAKS>. The LIZARD clambers onto a sunny rock.		
	ANGLE ON Sally - two BUTTERFLIES dance right past her face.		
95	ELINOR (whispers) Being quiet is working. Look at all the creatures that are coming out!	95	*
			*
			*
			*
	CLOSE ON Olive's notebook page, which is filling up with childlike DRAWINGS of the animals they're seeing.		
96	OLIVE (whispers, happy) I can hardly draw fast enough.	96	*
			*
			*
97	TITO (whispers) I never really <i>listened</i> to the forest before. It sounds nice.	97	*
			*
			*
	Elinor nods in agreement.		*
98	ELINOR Yes! We were so busy playing our music, we didn't notice that the forest already <i>has</i> beautiful music.	98	*
			*
	CUT TO the trees, <RUSTLING> in the breeze.		
99	ELINOR (CONT'D) (whispers) Like the sound of the trees...	99	

CUT TO the robin, <SINGING> joyfully.

100 ELINOR (CONT'D) 100
 (whispers)
 ...and the birds...

Ari beams as the bullfrog hops closer, <CROAKING>.

101	ARI	101
	(whispers)	
	...and the frogs!	

WIDE to include all of the quiet, patient Explorers.

In her quietest voice, Elinor sings a gentle REPRISE:

102	ELINOR (SINGS QUIETLY)	102
	<i>We played our song in the forest</i>	*
	<i>But the creatures stayed away</i>	*
	<i>Until we used our ears to hear</i>	*
	<i>What the forest had to say</i>	*

They all pause to listen for a quiet BEAT - and are rewarded when a FUZZY BUMBLEBEE flies by, <BUZZING GENTLY>. <SFX: QUIET OOHS OF APPRECIATION>

After the bee departs, the whole group joins in Elinor's song, singing in their most quiet voices;

103	SONG	103
	(SING QUIETLY)	
	<i>We played our song in the forest</i>	*
	<i>But the creatures stayed away</i>	*
	<i>Until we used our ears to hear</i>	*
	<i>What the forest had to say</i>	*

As they all pause to listen to the beautiful forest music of <BUZZES, CROAKS and BIRDSONG>, we PULL BACK and...

FADE OUT.

*

REFERENCE:

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BULLFROG CALL - (around the 8 minute mark)

<https://ca.video.search.yahoo.com/search/video?fr=yfp-t&p=frog+calls#id=1&vid=51481521f73c4968564c422b9882cafd&action=view>