

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EP. 172 "The Little Drummer"

By: Laura Sams and Robert Sams

Elinor's Question: *Why is a woodpecker pecking on Ari's mailbox?*

Logline: After a noisy woodpecker keeps waking Baby Miri, Elinor, Olive and Ari are able to solve the problem by observing both the woodpeckers and Ari's drum-playing.

Curriculum Goals:

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:

b. Identify the habitats of familiar animals and plants in the environment

c. Recognize that each kind of living things has a habitat that has resources to meet its unique needs

d. Identify and observe the consequences of how plants and animals impact the environment (Elinor and her friends observe the woodpecker's habits, its environment and the impact the woodpecker's habits have on its environment).

ND5. (RTL Crosscutting concept Cause and Effect): Appreciate that events are connected to each other via cause and effect, and that similar links can be found in the natural and designed worlds. (Elinor and her friends make the link between the muffling of Ari's drums and decide to muffle the woodpecker's pecking).

SEP1. Asking questions (science) and defining problems (engineering) (Elinor is curious about why the woodpecker is pecking on the mailbox)

a. Demonstrate curiosity about the greater world outside of their local environment b. Ask more complex questions about observable phenomena c. Ask and/or identify cause and effect questions that can be answered by an investigation

d. Identify a problem that can be solved by the design a new or improved object or tool
(engineering)

SEP6. Constructing explanations (science) and Designing Solutions (engineering) (The kids notice that the woodpeckers are pecking back and forth to communicate with each other. Elinor suggests that the mailbox is loud like the drums were loud, and that they can make the mailbox quiet by muffling it with a blanket, just like Ari's drums.)

a. Use background knowledge experiences, and data to construct reasonable explanations and theories of natural phenomena

(science)

b. Look for and describe patterns and relationships in natural phenomena (science)

OUTLINE: April 1, 2020

FIRST DRAFT: April 28, 2020

SECOND DRAFT:

POLISH DRAFT:

FINAL:

Colorful stage lights shine down on ARI, who stands proudly with his wings wide, holding drumsticks high in a rockstar pose behind his drum set. The massive crowd <CHEERS> in silhouette, in anticipation.

The unseen audience <CHEERS> even louder as Ari plays an epic <DRUM SOLO>. We see music video-esque camera angles on Ari playing the drums. The crowd is cheering his name, and Elinor's voice emerges on top of the crowd's cheering.

WIDEN and TILT DOWN to reveal this is all happening in Ari's
daydream.

Ari startles from his daydream and hits the drums a couple more times. The room flips to reveal he is upside down, sitting at his drum set that hangs from the ceiling of his bedroom. ELINOR and OLIVE are standing beneath him, looking up.

7 ARI 7
Okay, I'M gonna play something.
Then YOU play something. Then *I*
play something. We'll go back and
forth.

Elinor and Olive pick up extra drumsticks on Ari's floor.

14 MRS. BAT 14
Thanks Ari.

Mrs. Bat flies down to the ground and leaves.

15 ARI 15
Wanna hear something cool?

16 ELINOR 16
Yeah!

Ari opens up the face of one his drums, stuffs it with a blanket and then closes it again.

17 ELINOR (CONT'D) 17
What's the blanket gonna do?

Ari picks up his drumsticks.

18 ARI 18
Listen to this...

Ari plays the drums again, except now it is much, much quieter.

19 ELINOR 19
(in awe) It's *quiet* now!

20 OLIVE 20
The blanket kind of muffled the sound.

21 ELINOR 21
That's SO interesting.

Ari plays his drums quietly for a moment, then flies down to the ground.

22 ARI V.O. 22
I'm done drumming anyway. Let's ask my mom if we can play outside.

5. INT. ARI'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mrs. Bat relaxes on the couch, reading a book. Elinor, Olive and Ari walk into the room, just as a loud drumming sound echoes. <SFX: THRRRRRRP>

(Note: It is the sound of a pileated woodpecker. Drumming sound references can be found here: https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Pileated_Woodpecker/sounds and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NqPPioNKifo>)

23 MRS. BAT 23
(without looking up from her book)
Ari, please stop playing the drums
so loudly.

24 ARI 24
It's not me, Mom. I'm right *here*.

Mrs. Bat looks up at Ari, who is standing just by the end of the couch.

25 MRS. BAT 25
(surprised) Oh, sorry. (then
knowingly frustrated as if she
knows what the sounds is). OHHH.

Elinor, Olive and Ari hear the drumming sound again <SFX: THRRRRRRP>. Elinor's ears swivel as she listens for where the sound is coming from.

26 ELINOR 26
What is that? Where's it coming
from?

Olive cups her hand to one of her big ears as she listens again to the sound. <SFX: THRRRRRRP>

27 OLIVE 27
I think it's... outside somewhere.

28 ARI 28
Yeah. It's the woodpecker.

Mrs. Bat is a little exasperated.

29 MRS. BAT 29
That woodpecker is back AGAIN? It's
going to wake up Miri. I don't know
why it keeps pecking on our
mailbox.

6. INT. MIRI'S CRIB - DAY

Miri sleeps soundly upside down in her crib, when a loud drumming sound echoes in her room. <SFX: THRRRRRRP> Miri's eyes pop open. The drum sound happens again. <SFX: THRRRRRRP> Miri looks around and opens her mouth wide. <SFX: BABY CRYING WALLA>

7. INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Bat responds to her daughter's <SFX: BABY CRYING>

30 MRS. BAT 30
Coming Miri! (to the trio) I'm
gonna go check on her.

31 ELINOR 31
Can we go outside to look for the
woodpecker?

32 MRS. BAT 32
Please do...(calling as she walks
away toward Miri) and if you figure
out why in the world that
woodpecker's pecking on the
mailbox, lemme know!

Elinor looks at her friends, excited about the mystery.

33 OLIVE 33
Dun, dun, dunnn - it's a mystery.
A wood-pecking mystery.

34 ELINOR 34
Let's go figure it out!

8. EXT. ARI'S HOUSE - DAY

The kids stand outside Ari's house on the front steps and look around. Elinor points excitedly to the sky.

35 ELINOR 35
There it is!

The pileated woodpecker (with a red head) flies down and lands on the mailbox. It starts pecking fast with its beak to make a drumming sound. <SFX: THRRRRRRRP>

ARI

(to Olive)

Knock, Knock.

37 OLIVE 37
Who's there?

ARI 38

The woodpecker.

39 OLIVE 39
The woodpecker who?

40	ARI	40
	The woodpecker who's knocking on my mailbox.	

Olive and Elinor <SFX: LAUGH>.

41 ELINOR 41
(wondering) Why IS the woodpecker
pecking on your mailbox, Ari?

42 I dunnno. ARI 42

43 OLIVE 43
Hmmm. I read about woodpeckers in
my nature book.

TILT UP to Olive's THOUGHT BUBBLE. We see a pileated woodpecker pecking on a tree and a close up of its pointy beak as it pecks a hole into the tree bark. Inside the hole, we see a few ants walking around.

44 OLIVE (CONT'D) 44
Woodpeckers are birds that peck on
trees with their strong, pointy
beaks. I think they peck on trees
to look for bugs to eat.

TILT DOWN to the kids.

45 ELINOR 45
HMMMM, (pondering) are there any
bugs in the mailbox? We'd better
check.

Elinor, Olive and Ari walk toward the mailbox, tentatively and carefully.

OLIVE

Oooh, look it it's red head!

The woodpecker on the mailbox turns its head to look at them
and then flies away.

47 ARI 47
Bye, woodpecker!

Close on the mailbox, as Olive approaches and lifts her magnifying glass to inspect the mailbox's sides.

48 OLIVE 48
Hrrrrmm, no bugs here.

Elinor looks under the mailbox closely.

49 ELINOR 49
(looking intently) I don't see any
bugs here.

Ari stands near the mailbox and suddenly looks intrigued.

ARI
(a bit sneakily) I have an idea...

Ari casually walks by the front of the mailbox, looking away from the mailbox as if he just doesn't care about it at all, and then suddenly he jumps and flips the mailbox lid down to look inside.

51 ARI (CONT'D) 51
Ahaaaa!!!!!!!!

Cut to a POV from inside the mailbox looking at Ari's face, as he peers into the inside.

ARI (CONT'D) 52

Um, no bugs.

Olive holds her magnifying glass over some dents in the mailbox side. Close on the dents.

53 OLIVE 53
Look at this! I can see where it
was pecking.

Elinor inspects the dents and then reaches up with her fingertips to gently feel them.

54 ELINOR 54
It's dented. Why is the woodpecker
pecking on your mailbox, Ari?

55 ARI 55
Not sure. They're called
WOODpeckers, not MAILBOXpeckers.

Olive, Elinor and Ari <SFX: GIGGLE>.

56 OLIVE 56
Yeah, it should be pecking on a
tree.

57 ELINOR 57
Let's sit on Ari's porch and see if
the woodpecker comes back.

The kids sit on Ari's porch in a row, looking around and watching the mailbox.

58 ELINOR (CONT'D) 58
There it is!

The woodpecker lands on the mailbox and starts drumming.
<THRRRRRRRP>.

59 ELINOR (CONT'D) 59
That's really loud.

Just then, another <SFX: DRUMMING> sound rings out from the woods near Ari's house.

60 ARI 60
Wait! Do you hear that?

The kids all look toward the sound, surprised. Olive cups an ear toward the sound.

61 OLIVE 61
It sounds like...another woodpecker.

Olive gets up and walks to the edge of the trees and peers around.

62 (OLIVE) 62
(excited gasp) I see it! There IS another woodpecker.

Elinor and Ari run over to Olive, excited to see the other pileated woodpecker on the tree.

63 ELINOR 63
And it has a red head too, like the other woodpecker does.

Close on the woodpecker on the mailbox drumming. Then close on the woodpecker on the tree drumming. They drum back and forth again.

64 ELINOR (CONT'D) 64
They're going back and forth, like they're talking to each other.

65 ARI 65
They peck so fast... they sound like drummers.

Olive gets excited, because she remembers something important.

66 OLIVE 66
Drummers? Drums! Oh! I saw a picture of this in my book.
(MORE)

OLIVE (CONT'D)
(talking quickly because she's
excited, remembering)

While Olive's talking, we see and hear each woodpecker
drumming.

67	OLIVE (CONT'D) Sometimes woodpeckers peck really fast and loud, and that's called drumming. Woodpeckers use DRUMMING to TALK to each other! Just like some birds use SINGING to talk to each other.	67
68	ELINOR You mean, they go peck peck peck to say 'Hi, I'm here?'	68
69	OLIVE Yup!	69
70	ELINOR So <i>that's</i> why they drum!	70
71	ARI They're drummers, like me. That's so cool.	71

The woodpeckers drum loudly <SFX: THRRRRRP> back and forth.

9. INT. MIRI'S ROOM - DAY

Miri sleeps soundly upside down in her crib, when the loud drumming sound echoes in her room. <SFX: THRRRRRRRP>. Miri's eyes stay closed for a beat, but then pop wide open. Her mouth opens wide and she yells. <SFX: BABY CRY>

10. EXT. ARI'S HOUSE - DAY

Elinor, Olive and Ari still stand by the trees, but they turn back toward the house because they hear Miri yelling from inside. <SFX: BABY CRYING>

72	ARI Uh oh, the woodpecker woke Miri up again.	72
73	MRS. BAT (O.S.) (from inside the house) Coming Miri!	73

The trio turn back to look at the woodpecker on the mailbox.

74	ELINOR	74
	That woodpecker really is loud when it's drumming.	
75	ARI	75
	Hey Olive, (turning to Olive), Knock Knock.	
76	OLIVE	76
	Who's there?	
77	ARI	77
	Wood.	
78	OLIVE	78
	Wood who?	
79	ARI	79
	Would you ask the woodpecker to drum quietly?	
80	ELINOR	80
	(excited) That's it! Drum quietly!	
81	ARI	81
	What do you mean?	
82	ELINOR	82
	Ari, remember what you did to make your drums quiet?	
83	ARI	83
	Oh, (thinking) I put a <i>blanket</i> inside it.	
84	ELINOR	84
	Right! Maybe we can make the mailbox quiet if we put a blanket inside it.	
85	OLIVE	85
	Let's try it out! Ari, can you get the blanket?	
86	ARI	86
	You know I can! I'll be back super fast.	

Ari flies toward his house.

WIPE TO:

Elinor, Olive and Ari stand by Ari's mailbox. Olive holds the blanket, while Ari holds his drumsticks.

88 ARI 88
 Yep. (looking off into the
 distance) Has anyone ever had a
 mailbox band?

89 ARI (CONT'D) 89
 (to his adoring fans) This one's
 called The Mailbox Rock!

90 ELINOR 90

Ari? Ari!

91	ARI	91
	Oh, sorry.	

92 OLIVE 92
Whoah that's LOUD. Be careful we
don't want to wake up Miri.

Olive opens the mailbox, stuffs the blanket inside and closes the lid.

94 ELINOR 94
Ari, now drum on the mailbox.

Ari lifts his drumsticks dramatically like a rock star, and he plays the mailbox, but this time it is quieter and doesn't echo as much.

95 ELINOR (CONT'D) 95
It worked! It's quieter!

96 ARI 96

Just like my drums in my bedroom.
The blanket made it quieter!

97 ELINOR 97
Okay, let's go back to the porch
and watch what the woodpecker does.

The kids run back to the porch, sit down to watch the mailbox. They look around and wait in anticipation.

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98             OLIVE
(looking around) This is sooo fun.
98

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Mrs. Bat comes out on the porch.

99 MRS. BAT 99
How's it going out here?

100 ELINOR 100
We're waiting for the woodpecker
(gasping and pointing) oh there it
is...

The woodpecker flies back and lands on the side of the mailbox. The woodpecker looks around.

101 MRS. BAT 101
Oh no. Miri JUST fell asleep again.

The woodpecker leans its head back, and then starts to <SFX: DRUM> very fast with its beak. But this time, it is quieter. The woodpecker stops, tries to drum again, pauses and looks around. Then the woodpecker flies away into the woods to land on a tree. Close on the woodpecker as it drums <SFX: THRRRRP> on the tree trunk, instead of the mailbox.

We cut wide to see that the woodpecker is now pretty far from Ari's house. Elinor, Olive, Ari and Mrs. Bat watch from a distance.

Back on the porch, Mrs. Bat and the kids are thrilled.

102 ELINOR 102

The woodpecker left the mailbox! I
think it's pecking on the tree now,
because the tree is louder.

103 MRS. BAT 103
So why was the woodpecker pecking
on the mailbox?

104 OLIVE 104
It was *drumming* on the mailbox.

105 ELINOR 105
Yeah, woodpeckers TALK to each
other by drumming.

SONG - DRUMMING SONG MONTAGE

We see a montage of pileated woodpeckers drumming on different trees, back and forth, along with close ups of their beaks pecking at the trees.

106	ELINOR/ARI/OLIVE	106
	A rat-a-tat-tat	
	A bibbidy-bum	
	The woodpecker's pecking like the	
	sound of a drum,	
	A rat-a-tat-tat,	
	A bibbidy bow,	
	The woodpecker's drumming so it can	
	be loud.	

When a woodpecker wants to send a
message
To say "I'm right here!"
To talk to the other woodpeckers
Flying far and near,

*It taps really fast with its beak
To make a loud sound,
Because woodpecker drummers are the
Best bird drummers around!*

A rat-a-tat-tat
A bibbity-bum
The woodpecker's pecking like the
sound of a drum,
A rat-a-tat-tat,
A bibbity bow,
The woodpecker's drumming so it can
be loud.

The song ends as the woodpeckers drum from the trees, but it's pretty quiet because it's far from the house.

107 MRS. BAT 107
(Sighing with relief) Ari, do you hear that?

108 ARI 108
The woodpeckers? Yep, they're far away now.

109 MRS. BAT 109
No, I mean do you hear what's happening in the house?

The kids turn and listen, but there are no sounds coming from the house.

110 ARI 110
(confused, listening but not hearing anything) Uh, I don't hear anything.

111 MRS. BAT 111
Exactly. (sighing with relief) Your sister is *finally* asleep.

12. INT. MIRI'S CRIB -- DAY

Miri, hanging upside down in her crib, is now sleeping soundly. She rolls onto her side in a deep sleep.

13. EXT. ARI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

112 MRS. BAT 112
(with a big smile) Oh this is wonderful. Thanks kids.

Mrs. Bat gives Ari a great big hug with her wings.

113 ELINOR 113
You're welcome, Mrs. Bat!

The trio and Mrs. Bat sit on the porch as MR. PIG, the postal worker, walks up carrying a bag of mail. Mr. Pig waves at them on the porch, and they wave back.

Close on Mr. Pig as he lifts an envelope from his bag, opens the mailbox to put it in, and pauses...because there is a BLANKET in the mailbox.

114

MRS. BAT

114

Whoops, how are we supposed to get
our mail now?

The trio and Mrs. Bat <SFX: LAUGH> as we:

IRIS OUT

THE END.