

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: May 08, 2020

POLISH DRAFT:

FINAL:

**1. INT. A ROCK CONCERT ARENA STAGE (ARI'S THOUGHT
BUBBLE/FANTASY)**

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.

1	ARI	1
	(loudly to his fans)	
	Are you ready to ROCK?	

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.

2	ELINOR (V.O.)	2
	(like an enthusiastic fan cheering	
	to the rhythm) Ar-i! Ar-i!	

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

2. INT. ARI'S BEDROOM - DAY

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, each holding a pair of drumsticks, looking up at him.

3	ELINOR	3	
	(transitioning from Elinor's voice		*
	yelling in the daydream) Ari! We're		*
	ready!		*

4	ARI	4	*
	Whaaa? (snapping out of his		*
	daydream)		*

5	ELINOR	5	*
	Ari, (giggling) I said we're ready.		*
	I thought you were gonna teach us		*
	how to drum.		*

	Olive lifts her trunk to reveal she's holding a third		*
	drumstick with her trunk.		*

6	OLIVE	6	
	We've got our drumsticks.		*

7	ARI	7	
	Okay, I'M gonna play something. Then YOU play the same thing.		*
8	ELINOR	8	*
	Okay. So just do what you do?		*
9	ARI	9	*
	Yep. Elinor, try this.		*
	Ari plays a rhythm <SFX: TAT-TAT-TAT>. Then Elinor taps the drumsticks lightly on the rock floor in Ari's room and plays the same rhythm back <SFX: TAT-TAT-TAT>.		*
10	ELINOR	10	*
	Ha! I did it!		*
11	ARI	11	*
	Nice. Okay Olive, your turn.		*
	Ari plays a rhythm <SFX: TAT-TU-TAT>. Olive taps the drumsticks lightly on Ari's rock floor and plays the same rhythm back <SFX: TAT-TU-TAT>.		*
12	OLIVE	12	*
	Ooh this is fun.		*
13	ARI	13	*
	Okay, Elinor, try this.		*
	Ari starts with a simple rhythm <SFX: TAT TAT TAT TU TAT> but before Elinor can try it, Ari gets carried away and begins playing an epic drum solo, playing with his eyes closed and banging the drums really LOUD.		*
	MRS. BAT enters the room and looks up at Ari.		
14	MRS. BAT	14	
	Ari?		
	Ari doesn't hear her because the drums are so loud. Elinor and Olive look up at Ari.		
15	MRS. BAT (CONT'D) (good-natured) ARI!!	15	
	Ari still doesn't hear his mom and keeps playing. Mrs. Bat flies up toward the ceiling to be face to face with Ari. Just then, Ari opens his eyes.		
16	ARI	16	
	(startled) Whoah! Mom!		

He stops playing immediately.

17	MRS. BAT	17	
	Ari, Miri is taking a nap, and your drum playing is a little loud. Could you please play quietly so you don't wake her up?		* *

3. INT. MIRI'S CRIB -- DAY

Miri, hanging upside down in her crib, closes her eyes and falls asleep.

4. INT. ARI'S ROOM - DAY

Mrs. Bat is still fluttering and close to Ari on the ceiling.

18	ARI	18	
	Uh, yeah, sure Mom.		
19	MRS. BAT	19	
	Thanks Ari.		

Mrs. Bat flies down to the ground and leaves.

20	ARI	20	
	Wanna hear something cool?		
21	ELINOR	21	
	Yeah!		

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

22	ELINOR (CONT'D)	22	
	What's the blanket gonna do?		

Ari picks up his drumsticks.

23	ARI	23	
	Listen to this...		

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

24	OLIVE	24	*
	(in awe) It's <i>quiet</i> now!		
25	ELINOR	25	*
	The blanket kind of muffled the sound. That's SO interesting.		* *

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

26	ARI	26	*
	Yeah, that way I can play the drums		*
	when Miri's napping. But playing		*
	the drums loud is way more fun.		*
27	ELINOR	27	*
	Well, wanna do something else?		*
	(offering a happy suggestion) We		*
	could play outside.		*
28	ARI	28	*
	Good idea, let's ask my mom if		*
	that's okay.		*

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>)

29	MRS. BAT	29	*
	(without looking up from her book,		*
	kind of stage whispering toward		*
	Ari's room) Ari, I can still hear		*
	the drums!		*

30	ARI	30	
	It's not me, Mom. I'm right here.		

Mrs. Bat looks up at Ari, who is standing near the couch. *

31	MRS. BAT	31	*
	(surprised) Oh, sorry. I didn't see		*
	you there.		*

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.

32	ELINOR	32	
	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>

33	OLIVE	33	
	I think it's... outside somewhere.		
34	ARI	34	
	Yeah, it is. It's that woodpecker again.		*
			*
35	ELINOR	35	*
	A woodpecker?		*
36	ARI	36	*
	There's a woodpecker that keeps pecking on our mailbox.		*
			*
	Mrs. Bat is a little exasperated.		
37	MRS. BAT	37	
	That woodpecker is back? It's going to wake up Miri.		*
			*

6. INT. MIRI'S CRIB - DAY

Miri sleeps soundly upside down in her crib, when a loud drumming sound echoes in her room. <SFX: THRRRRRRRP> Miri's eyes pop open. The drum sound happens again. <SFX: THRRRRRRRP> 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>

38	MRS. BAT	38	
	Oh dear. Coming Miri! (to the trio)		*
	I don't know <i>why</i> that woodpecker keeps pecking on our mailbox.		*
			*
	Mrs. Bat gets up to go check on Miri.		*
39	ELINOR	39	
	Can we go outside to see it?		*
40	MRS. BAT	40	
	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.		*

41	ELINOR	41	
	Let's go!		*

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.

42	ELINOR	42	
	There it is!		

43	OLIVE	43	*
	Oooh, look at its red head!		*

The pileated woodpecker (with a red crest on its head) flies down and lands on the mailbox, a metal mailbox on a wooden post - we don't need to worry about design, woodpecker peck on mailboxes because they are so resonant. It starts pecking fast with its beak on the metal to make a drumming sound.	*
<SFX: THRRRRRRP>	*

44	ARI	44	
	(to Olive) Knock, Knock.		

45	OLIVE	45	
	Who's there?		

46	ARI	46	
	The woodpecker.		

47	OLIVE	47	
	The woodpecker who?		

48	ARI	48	
	The woodpecker who's knocking on my mailbox.		

Olive and Elinor <SFX: LAUGH>.

49	OLIVE	49	*
	Whoah, it <i>is</i> pecking on the mailbox.		*

50	ELINOR	50	*
	That's SO interesting.(wondering) Why IS the woodpecker pecking on your mailbox, Ari?		

51	ARI	51	*
	I dunno.		

52 OLIVE 52
Hmmm. I read about woodpeckers in
my nature book.

TILT UP to Olive's THOUGHT BUBBLE. We see a pileated
woodpecker on the side of a tree trunk and a close up of its *
pointy beak. It stabs the tree a couple times and rips off a *
chunk of wood with its beak to make a small hole. (Note the *
woodpecker doesn't peck fast.) Inside the hole, we see a few *
ants walking around. The woodpecker reaches into the hole and *
sticks out its tongue to lick up ants. *

53 OLIVE (CONT'D) 53
Woodpeckers are birds that peck on
trees with their pointy beaks. *
That's how they find bugs to eat. *

TILT DOWN to the kids.

54 ELINOR 54
Hmmm, (pondering) are there any
bugs in the mailbox? We'd better
check. *

Before the kids approach, the woodpecker on the mailbox flies *

55 ELINOR (CONT'D) 55 *
Look, it flew away. *

56 ARI 56 *
Yeah, but it'll be back. Quick,
let's go see if there are bugs in
the mailbox. *

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

57 OLIVE 57
Hmmm, no bugs here.

Elinor looks under the mailbox closely.

58 ELINOR 58
(looking intently) I don't see any
bugs here.

Ari stands near the mailbox and suddenly looks intrigued.

59 ARI 59
(a bit sneakily) I have an idea...

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

69	ARI	69	
	Wait! Do you hear that?		*
The kids all look toward the sound, surprised. Olive cups an ear toward the sound.			
70	OLIVE	70	
	It sounds like...another woodpecker.		
Olive gets up and walks to the edge of the trees.			
71	(OLIVE)	71	
	(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.			
72	ELINOR	72	
	And it has a red head too, like the other woodpecker does.		
The woodpecker drums on the tree trunk.			
73	ELINOR (CONT'D)	73	*
	Is it pecking a hole and eating bugs?		*
			*
74	OLIVE	74	*
	Lemme check! (she pulls out her binoculars)		*
			*
We look through binoculars to focus on the woodpecker on the tree, who is pecking really fast but not making a hole, or eating bugs.			
75	OLIVE (CONT'D)	75	*
	No. It's not eating bugs. (watching it peck) Wow, its beak is SO fast... And loud!		*
			*
			*
76	ARI	76	*
	Yeah, it's like a little drummer. With feathers.		*
			*
We see the three kids looking up toward the tree. After the woodpecker drums, the other woodpecker on the mailbox drums, and all three kids' heads turn toward the sound.			

The woodpeckers drum back and forth, and we see the three kids' heads turning in unison (like watching a tennis match) to the right, to the left, back to the right, as they listen to the birds drumming. *

77 ELINOR 77 *
They're taking turns. It's almost *
like...they're... *

Mrs. Bat pops her head out from the house far away and calls. *
The woodpecker on the mailbox drums <SFX: THRRRRP> at the *
exact moment she speaks. *

78 MRS. BAT 78 *
(good natured) Kiiiids? *

Elinor turns her head toward the house. Then the woodpecker on the tree drums <SFX: THRRRRP> at the exact moment that Ari calls back. *

79 ARI 79 *
Yeah mom? *

Elinor's head turns back and forth (like watching a tennis match) as she listens to Mrs. Bat and Ari talk back and forth. The woodpecker on the mailbox drums <SFX: THRRRRP> at the exact moment that Mrs. Bat calls back. *

80 MRS. BAT (V.O.) 80 *
Where'd you go? *

The woodpecker on the tree drums <SFX: THRRRRP> at the exact moment that Ari talks, and the woodpecker on the mailbox drums <SFX: THRRRRP> when Mrs. Bat talks again. *

81 ARI 81 *
We're over here! *

82 MRS. BAT (V.O.) 82 *
Okay! Lunch is almost ready! *

Elinor hops up with excitement. *

83 ELINOR 83 *
The woodpeckers are TALKING to each *
other! *

84 OLIVE 84 *
(nodding in agreement) Just like *
Ari and his mom were talking to *
each other! It's like the *
woodpeckers go peck peck peck to *
say 'Hi, I'm over here!' *

85	ELINOR	85	
	So woodpeckers peck on trees to		*
	look for food AND to talk to each		*
	other.		*

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>

86	ARI	86	
	Uh oh, the woodpecker woke Miri up		
	again.		*

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

87	ELINOR	87	
	That woodpecker really is loud. I		*
	wonder how we can get it to peck		*
	more quietly.		*

88	ARI	88	
	(to himself) Yeah, peck more		*
	quietly. (beat) Wait, my drums!		*

89	OLIVE	89	
	What about em?		*

90	ARI	90	
	I made my drums quiet with a		*
	<i>blanket!</i>		*

91	ELINOR	91	
	Right! Maybe we can make the		
	mailbox quiet if we put a blanket		
	inside it.		

92	OLIVE	92	
	Let's try it out! Ari, can you get		
	the blanket?		

93 ARI 93
You know I can! I'll be back super
fast.

Ari flies toward his house.

WIPE TO:

11. EXT. ARI'S MAILBOX - DAY

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

94 ELINOR 94
Okay, let's try our idea. (turning
to Ari). Ari, do you have your
drumsticks?

95 ARI 95
 Yep. (looking off into the
 distance) Has anyone ever had a
 mailbox band?

TILT UP to Ari's THOUGHT BUBBLE/FANTASY of himself as a rockstar, standing on a giant stage like his previous fantasy, except this time...he is standing behind a drum set made of mailboxes. The massive crowd <SFX: CHEERS> in anticipation.

96 ARI (CONT'D) 96
 (to his adoring fans) This one's
 called Mailbox Rock!

The unseen crowd <SFX: CHEERS> while Ari plays the mailboxes in an epic drum solo. We see music video-esque camera angles on Ari drumming on the mailboxes.

97 ELINOR 97

Ari? Ari!

WIDEN and TILT DOWN as Ari snaps out of his daydream, to show he is just standing by the mailbox, holding his drumsticks.

98 ARI 98
Oh, sorry.

Ari lifts his drumsticks up dramatically as if he is a rock star and bangs on the mailbox two times. <SFX: PAF! PAF!>

99 OLIVE 99
Whoah that's LOUD. Be careful we
don't want to wake up Miri.

100 ARI 100
 (looking guilty back at the house)
Right. Better try the blanket. *

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

101 ELINOR 101
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 much quieter. *

102 ELINOR (CONT'D) 102
It worked! It's quieter!

103	ARI	103
	Just like my drums in my bedroom.	
	The blanket made it quieter!	

104	ELINOR	104
	Okay, let's go sit on the grass and	*
	watch what the woodpecker does.	

The kids sit on the grass and wait in anticipation. We hear *
<SFX: FRONT DOOR OPENS> and Mrs. Bat walks up behind them. *

105 MRS. BAT 105
How's it going out here?

106 ELINOR 106
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.

107 MRS. BAT 107
Oh no. Miri JUST fell asleep again. *

108	ARI	108	*
	It's okay mom, we put a blanket in		*
	the mailbox to make it quiet.		*

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.

109	ELINOR	109	*
	Look! It's pecking on a tree now!		*

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

110 MRS. BAT 110 *
I don't understand. Why did the *
woodpecker like the mailbox so *
much? *

111 OLIVE 111 *
Mrs. Bat, woodpeckers can talk to *
each other by pecking on things. *
And the louder the better. *

112 ARI 112 *
Like a drum! *

113 ELINOR 113 *
And now that the mailbox is quiet, *
it found something louder to peck *
on, far from the house! *
*

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.

114 ELINOR/ARI/OLIVE 114
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 bibbidy-bum
The woodpecker's pecking like the
sound of a drum,
A rat-a-tat-tat,
(MORE)

ELINOR/ARI/OLIVE (CONT'D)

*A bibbidy 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.

115 MRS. BAT 115
(Sighing with relief) Ari, do you
hear that sound coming from the
house? *

The kids listen, but no sounds come from the house. *

116 ARI 116
(confused, listening) Uh, I don't
hear anything. *

117 MRS. BAT 117
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

118 MRS. BAT 118
(with a big smile) Oh this is
wonderful. Thanks kids.

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

119 ELINOR 119
You're welcome, Mrs. Bat!

The trio and Mrs. Bat stand on the grass 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, pauses...and (looking confused) pulls a BLANKET part way out of the mailbox. *

120 MRS. BAT 120
Whoops, how are we supposed to get
our mail now?

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

IRIS OUT

THE END.

*