

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EW 173: ELINOR'S FISHY FRIEND

Written by
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Elinor's Question: What happened to Elinor's fish friend Spotty?
Logline: Elinor makes friends with a fish she names Spotty, but then something amazing happens, Spotty grows LEGS.

LS4. Understand that all animals and plants have a life cycle, can reproduce, and change and grow over time:

- a. Observe the life cycle of familiar plants and animals
- b. Observe the growth in animals and plants
- c. Understand that living things grow and change over time (Elinor and her friends observe the different stages in the life cycle of a frog).

LS7. Understand that young animals and young plants are very much, but not exactly like their parents:

- a. Understand that the young of a species are the same kind of animal or plant as the parents
- b. Arrange and compare illustrations of humans and other animals in developmental sequence from infancy to adult (Elinor and her friends arrange drawings of Spotty into a developmental sequence as it matures from tadpole to froglet to frog).

SEP1. Asking questions (science) and defining problems (engineering)

- 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 (Elinor and her friends ask questions about Spotty's changes, and decide to investigate)

SEP2. Developing and using models

- a. Represent observable, concrete objects, events, and findings in many different ways
- c. Use simple models to support explanations (Elinor and her friends make pictures of the various stages of the frog's development).

SEP3. Planning and carrying out investigations

- b. Compare and contrast objects and events by describing similarities and differences in detail

(Elinor and her friends compare the different stages of the frog's development)

SEP4. Analyzing and interpreting data

a. Collect, describe, and record observations in greater detail and in various ways

(Elinor and her friends collect data on the various stages of a frog's life).

SEP7. Engaging in argument from evidence

a. Engage in discussions before, during, and after investigations.

b. Support thinking and argue ideas with evidence.

(Elinor and her friends observe and discuss the changes they see in Spotty and the other tadpoles.

SEP8. Obtaining, evaluating and communicating information

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

f. Share findings and explanations (correct or incorrect) through a variety of methods

(Elinor and her friends share their findings with Mr. Rabbit by using drawings, and they discuss what they have discovered with him).

FIRST DRAFT: April 28, 2020

SECOND DRAFT: May 13, 2020

1. INT. ELINOR'S ROOM -- DAY

ELINOR is in her room, getting ready for school, humming to herself as she gathers her things for her backpack.

DESIGN NOTE: Her room is decorated with home-made fish that she's drawn, or cut out of construction paper, or made from paper plates, or whatever. Maybe she's even made a "fish mobile" to hang over her bed.

1	ELINOR	1
	(sing-song)	
	Fish, fish, fishy, fishy, fish,	
	fish, fish...	

She takes one fish drawing off the wall, grabs her backpack and runs out of the room.

2. INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Elinor is at the table, eating her breakfast and gazing at her fish picture as MR. RABBIT makes flapjacks (pancakes).

2	ELINOR	2
	Hey Dad! Did you know fish eat	
	their breakfast underwater?	

3	MR. RABBIT	3
	Really? That would make for some	
	soggy carrot pancakes.	*

4	ELINOR	4
	(giggling)	
	Fish don't eat pancakes, Dad, they	*
	eat underwater plants and things.	

5	MR. RABBIT	5
	Riiight.	

6	ELINOR	6
	Fish do EVERYTHING underwater -	
	eat, swim, play - even sleep.	
	They're sooo interesting!	*

7	MR. RABBIT	7
	Do tell.	

	RANGER RABBIT enters.	*
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8	RANGER RABBIT	8
	Ohh, carrot pancakes!	*

9	MR. RABBIT	9
	(formally, like a waiter)	
	Your breakfast is served madame.	
He puts a stack in front of Ranger Rabbit but just as she's about to dig in she notices her watch (or a clock on the wall).		
10	RANGER RABBIT	10
	Uh-oh. It's later than I thought - we'd better hurry up Elinor, or you'll be late for school.	
11	MR. RABBIT	11
	I'll make those pancakes to go.	*
12	ELINOR	12
	<GASP!> Mom! Did you know that a group of fish is called a school. Just like all my friends at my school. I can't wait to tell Mz. Mole.	*
She hops off. Mr. Rabbit hands Ranger Rabbit a paper bag and gives her a kiss on the cheek.		
13	MR. RABBIT	13
	I think Elinor is on a bit of a fish-kick.	
14	ELINOR (O.S.)	14
	(calling)	*
	Dad! Fish can't kick, they don't have legs!	*

3. EXT. PATH ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL - DAY

Elinor is hopping along ahead of her Mom.

15	ELINOR	15
	(sing-song)	
	Fish, fish, fishy, fishy, fish, fish, fish...	
They comes to a small crossroad in the path - the other path is obviously a little less used (this is not far from her house, we see the house in view).		
16	RANGER RABBIT	16
	We don't have much time. You'd better take the shortcut to school today, Elinor. See you tonight, hunny bunny. Have a great day.	*
		*

Ranger Rabbit gives her a kiss. *

17 ELINOR 17
Okay. Bye Mom. *

Elinor waves to Ranger Rabbit who watches as she hops off
onto a smaller path. *

4. EXT. SHORTCUT PATH - DAY

Elinor is hopping along. *

18 ELINOR 18
Fish, fish, fishy, fishy... *

Suddenly <SFX: SPLASH> from the pool. Elinor is puzzled.

19 ELINOR (CONT'D) 19
Whu?

She looks closely at the little pool of water (a shallow
stream is fine as long as it's shallow enough that she is
safe beside it). *

20 ELINOR (CONT'D) 20
<GASP!> A fish! A REAL fish!
(ANGLE ON: Spotty is a
bullfrog tadpole, nice
and fat - and spotty!)
Wow! Look at the way you swim, and
your nice long tail, and your
spots. Would you like to be my
fishy friend?
25 (the tadpole looks at 25
Elinor in a friendly way)
You would? Awesome, I'm going to
name you...
(she thinks)
SPOTTY! *

At this moment she hears <SFX: SCHOOL BELL RINGING> in the
distance.

21 ELINOR (CONT'D) 21
<GASP!> Gotta get to school.
(she hops off)
See you later, Spotty!

5. EXT. SCHOOL YARD - DAY

Elinor bounces into the schoolyard, very excited and joins
her friends ARI and OLIVE as they all head into the school. *

22	ELINOR	22	
	Olive! Ari! Guess what?		*
23	ARI	23	
	Let me guess, is it about a fish?		*
24	OLIVE	24	
	(giggling)		
	You have been talking about fish a lot lately, Elinor.		*
			*
25	ELINOR	25	
	It's true! I have been learning a lot about fish lately. But guess what? I saw a REAL fish today! One that lives underwater.		*
			*
			*
26	OLIVE	26	
	Really?		*
			*
27	ELINOR	27	
	Yup. I named her Spotty! Come on, I'll draw a picture to show you what she looks like.		*
			*
			*

They all run into the school.

6. EXT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Elinor is busily drawing as Ari and Olive look on.

28	ELINOR	28	
	I was taking the shortcut to school, and there was this tiny pool of water, and I heard a SPLASH, and then I looked down and...		
	ANGLE ON: Elinor's drawing of Spotty. <SFX: WHOOOA WALLA>		*
29	ARI (O.C.)	29	
	Now that is a cool fish.		
	WIDEN TO REVEAL: OLIVE and ARI are admiring the drawing.		*
30	ELINOR	30	
	Yep! She has a neat shape and a nice colour. And she swims in a really interesting way - she kind of wiggles, like this.		*
			*
			*

Elinor wiggles, Olive and Ari <SFX: GIGGLES>

31	OLIVE	31	
	I love her eyes, she looks so friendly.		
32	ARI	32	
	I like her spots. Spots are soo cool. I wish I had spots.		
33	OLIVE	33	
	(helpfully)		
	Well, you have wings, Ari. And wings are very cool too.		
34	ARI	34	
	Oh, yeah.		*
	(he lifts his arm to		*
	admire his wing)		*
	Hey. You know what would be the coolest - SPOTTED WINGS!		*
	Elinor <SFX: GIGGLES> Meanwhile Olive is admiring Elinor's drawing.		*
35	OLIVE	35	
	I'd sure like to meet Spotty one day.		
36	ARI	36	
	Me too.		
37	ELINOR	37	
	Sure! I'll bring you to meet her as soon as I can.		*
			*

7. EXT. SHORTCUT PATH - A FEW DAYS LATER

Elinor is hopping through the forest.

38	ELINOR	38	
	I'm coming Spotty!		*
	She hops over and looks down.		
39	ELINOR (CONT'D)	39	
	Spotty? Oh, Spoooootty...		
	A little <SPLASH>.		
40	ELINOR (CONT'D)	40	
	<GASP!> There you are! Hi Spotty!		
	She bends down to look.		

41	ELINOR (CONT'D)	41	
	Sorry I haven't visited in a few days. I walked to school the long way with my Mom. How are you doing?		
	(Another <SFX: SPLASH>)		*
	(giggles)		*
	Oh, very splashy I see.		
	(she notices)		
	Wait a second. What are those?		
	Elinor takes out her magnifying glass. MAGNIFIED ANGLE ON: Spotty - we can see she has two little bumps on her sides.		*
42	ELINOR (CONT'D)	42	
	Spotty you have two bumps on you. What ARE they?		
	Spotty <SFX: SPLASHES> again, getting a few drops on Elinor. She laughs.		*
			*
43	ELINOR (CONT'D)	43	
	(giggling)		*
	Spotty! OK, I gotta go to school. I'll check on you later.		*
			*

8. TIME-PASSING MONTAGE

Elinor shows more pictures of Spotty to Olive and Ari in the schoolyard.

Elinor is telling her parents about Spotty over dinner with a drawing.

Elinor is lying on her bed with her drawing pad in front of her, looking out the window. It's raining. She turns back to her pad and starts drawing more pictures of Spotty. *

Elinor in her room, putting up a picture of Spotty overtop of her fish pictures. *

Elinor has made a "Fish mask" - a green balaclava with spots. She puts it on and compares herself to her picture of Spotty - twins! *

END MONTAGE

9. EXT. PATH TO SCHOOL - DAY *

Elinor is wearing her balaclava as she hops along on her way to school again. *

44	ELINOR	44	
	I can't wait to show Spotty my fish mask. We look just the same! I'm gonna take the short-cut, okay Mom.		* *
45	RANGER RABBIT	45	
	Okay hunny bunny, see you tonight!		* *
EXT. SHORTCUT TO SCHOOL - DAY			*
She gets to the little pond, there's a <SFX: SPLASH>.			
46	ELINOR	46	
	Hey Spotty! Sorry I didn't visit for a while. Look what I made! (She models her mask.) I'm a fish too, just like... (then she notices) Spotty?		* *
ANGLE ON: Spotty in the water now has legs!			
47	ELINOR (CONT'D)	47	
	OH MY GOODNESS! Spotty! You have LEGS!!! That is sooo interesting.		*
She takes out her magnifying glass. ANGLE ON: Spotty, magnified.			
48	ELINOR (CONT'D)	48	
	Wow, where did they come from? Hmmm, maybe from the bumps I saw before? (Elinor changes position and continues to observe) I wonder if you can walk on those legs. Will you walk under water? <GASP> Maybe you could walk OUT of the water - now THAT would be cool.		* * * * * * * *
Maybe we see Spotty walking out of the water in a THOUGHT BUBBLE . At this moment the <SCHOOL-BELL RINGS> in the distance.			
49	ELINOR (CONT'D)	49	
	Uh-oh. Gotta go! See you later Spotty. Have fun with your new legs!		* * * *
10. EXT. SCHOOLYARD - DAY			*

Olive and Ari are gobsmacked about the news.

*

50	ARI	50	
	Wow, that's an awesome mask Elinor.		*

51 ELINOR 51

Thanks, Ari. I made it so Spotty
and I could be the same. But then *
when I went to show her, I noticed *
something really strange. *

52	What?	OLIVE	52	*
				*

53	ELINOR	53	*
	Spotty has legs!		*

54	OLIVE	54	*
	Legs? Really? I didn't think fish		*
	HAD legs.		*

55	ELINOR	55	*
	Me neither. But Spotty does. They		*
	started out as little bumps but I		*
	guess they grew.		*

56	ARI	56	
	Whoa! A fish with legs! I gotta see		*
	that.		

57 OLIVE 57

Me too.

58 ELINOR 58
Okay! I'll take you to meet Spotty,
right after school. You're gonna be
amazed!

11. EXT. PUDDLE ON THE PATH - DAY

The kids are running through the forest. (NOTE: Elinor
doesn't have her mask anymore).

59 ELINOR 59
Spotty's pond is just over here.

They arrive, Elinor points. <SFX: SPLASH>

60 ELINOR (CONT'D) 60
There she is.

ANGLE ON: Spotty, with legs.

61	OLIVE	61	
	Wow, you're right Elinor. Spotty does have legs.		*
62	ARI	62	
	How can that even be?		
63	OLIVE	63	
	Dun, dun dunnn, it's a mystery. A FISHY mystery.		
64	ELINOR	64	
	We need MORE observations.		
Elinor and Olive start observing (with the magnifying glass).			
65	OLIVE	65	
	Hmmm. Spotty has legs all right, but she doesn't quite look like other fish.		*
66	ARI	66	*
	What do you mean?		*
Olive pulls out her Nature Book and flips to a picture of a fish. (Or this can be a thought bubble)			
67	OLIVE	67	*
	See, she has eyes like a fish does, and a mouth and a tail. But she doesn't have fins on her sides like the other fish.		*
ANGLE ON: Olive compares the picture of the fish with Spotty.			
68	ELINOR	68	
	You're right, Olive. I never noticed that before.		
Meanwhile Ari is looking at another spot nearby, a little farther down the stream.			
69	ARI	69	
	Olive, Elinor - come and look at this!		
They run over.			
70	ARI (CONT'D)	70	
	I found a whole bunch of Spotties.		
ANGLE ON: The pond with tadpoles at various stages. <SFX: KIDS WOOOOW WALLA>			

71	ELINOR	71	
	There sure ARE a lot of Spotties. But...they don't all look the same.		
	ANGLE ON: Olive takes out her notebook.		
72	OLIVE	72	
	I'd better take some notes.		
	BACK ON: The tadpoles.		
73	ELINOR	73	
	That little one looks like Spotty used to, like fish, with no legs at all.		* *
	ANGLE ON: Olive draws a picture of a tadpole with no legs. BACK ON: The tadpoles.		
74	ARI	74	
	And that bigger one looks like Spotty does now - with legs.		*
	ANGLE ON: Olive draws another picture.		
75	ELINOR	75	
	This one has front legs too!		
	ANGLE ON: A tadpole with front legs, back legs and a tail, in other words a "froglet". Olive draws it.		* *
	ANGLE ON: Elinor looks at Olive's drawing.		*
76	ELINOR (CONT'D)	76	
	Wait a minute - this fish with front legs and back legs doesn't really look like a fish to me at all.		
77	OLIVE	77	
	No? What does it look like?		*
78	ELINOR	78	
	Kind of like....		
	Meanwhile Ari is distracted.		*
79	ARI	79	
	Look, a frog! Over there!		*
	ANGLE ON: A frog hopping nearby.		

80	ELINOR	80	*
	(realizing)		*
	Ari! That's it! A frog! The fish		*
	with arms and legs looks kind of		*
	like...a frog!		
COMPARE: The two animals, or the frog with Olive's drawing.			
81	OLIVE	81	
	Whoa! You're right Elinor. It does		*
	look like a frog, but with a tail.		*
82	ARI	82	*
	Wait a minute. First a fish with		*
	legs, now a frog with a tail?		*
83	OLIVE	83	*
	Yep, and they all seem to be		*
	related somehow.		*
84	ELINOR	84	
	Wait a minute. If Spotty grows arms		*
	too, then that's what she'll look		
	like. A frog with a tail!		*
85	OLIVE	85	*
	So does that mean Spotty is a frog?		*
	Or a fish?		*
At this moment Mr. Rabbit joins them (Elinor's house is not far), she's holding a bag of groceries.			
86	MR. RABBIT	86	
	Hey, kids. I was just coming back		*
	from getting veggies at Farmer		*
	Bear's when I saw you looking at		*
	something really closely. That's		*
	how you make careful observations.		*
	What are you up to?		
87	ELINOR	87	
	It's Spotty, Daddy!		
88	MR. RABBIT	88	
	What about Spotty?		
89	ELINOR	89	
	She has...LEGS!		
90	MR. RABBIT	90	
	Legs? But I thought Spotty was a		
	fish?		

91	ELINOR	91	
	I thought so too, but now that		*
	we've been looking at these other		*
	creatures...		*
92	ARI	92	*
	First a fish with legs, then a fish		*
	with arms and legs, and then a frog		*
	with a tail...		*
93	OLIVE	93	*
	They seem to go together.		*
94	ELINOR	94	*
	So we're thinking Spotty might not		*
	be a fish after all.		*
95	MR. RABBIT	95	*
	What do you think she is?		*
96	ELINOR	96	*
	I'm not sure. Maybe some kind frog?		*
97	MR. RABBIT	97	
	A frog? Let me see.		
ANGLE ON: Spotty.			
98	MR. RABBIT (CONT'D)	98	
	Ah, I see. Well, you're right,		*
	Spotty is NOT a fish, and she's not		*
	a frog just yet, but she will be.		*
	Right now she's a TADPOLE, turning		*
	into a frog.		*
99	ARI	99	*
	Whoaah, my brain just exploded.		*
100	OLIVE	100	*
	Tadpole! I like that word.		*
101	ELINOR	101	*
	But what's a tadpole, Dad?		*
102	MR. RABBIT	102	
	Hmm, maybe I'd better start at the		*
	beginning. Frogs start out as		*
	eggs.		
ANGLE ON: Maybe he points to some frog eggs.			
103	ARI	103	
	I thought only birds lay eggs.		*

104	MR. RABBIT	104	
	Frogs do too, and so do some other animals, like turtles and lizards. Then, when the frog eggs hatch, they look like little fish but they're called tadpoles.		
	He points to a tadpole in the pond.		
105	ELINOR	105	*
	That tadpole sure does look like Spotty, before she grew her legs.		*
106	MR. RABBIT	106	*
	Right. Then the tadpoles grow legs and arms too, and are called froglets.		*
107	OLIVE	107	
	I like that word too - Froglets!		
108	MR. RABBIT	108	*
	Then the froglets lose their tails, which doesn't hurt them at all, and then they turn into...		*
109	ELINOR	109	*
	<GASP!> FROGS!		*
	They are all amazed at this, <SFX: WOOOW WALLA> Elinor points to the various stages of tadpoles in the pond as she explains:		*
110	ELINOR (CONT'D)	110	
	(sure now) That means... Spotty is NOT a fish. She's a tadpole turning into a frog.		*
111	MR. RABBIT	111	
	You got it, Elinor!		
112	ELINOR	112	*
	(in awe) Wow. That...is...AMAZING!		*
	SONG MONTAGE		
	As we sing the song Elinor follows Spotty on her journey as she turns into a frog.		
113	ELINOR/ARI/ OLIVE	113	
	ELINOR: Every little frog Starts with an egg (MORE)		

ELINOR/ARI/ OLIVE (CONT'D)

And when it hatches
It has no legs

ARI: A tadpole's not much more
Than a tail and a head
OLIVE: But it will grow and change
And become a frog instead.

ALL Grow and change
Grow and change
Baby frogs
Grow and change.

ELINOR: A tadpole swims around
Happy in their pond
But soon they grow back legs
That they can jump on.

OLIVE: When the front legs come
A froglet becomes a frog
ARI: And climbs out of the water
To sit happy on a log.

ALL: Grow and change
Grow and change
Baby frogs,
Grow and change

Grow and change
Grow and change
ELINOR: My friend Spotty
Will grow and change.

12. INT. ELINOR'S ROOM -- DAY

CU: Elinor is now putting up the pictures she drew of Spotty
(or Olive's drawings) in each different stage.

114	ELINOR (sing-song) Frog, frog, froggy, froggy, frog, frog, frog.	114
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WIDEN TO REVEAL:	Her parents are watching as she points to each drawing.	* *
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115	ELINOR (CONT'D) (she indicates) This is a frog egg, then tadpoles come out, this is a tadpole with legs, a tadpole with arms AND legs is called a froglet. (MORE)	115 * * * * *
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	ELINOR (CONT'D)		
	See, it still has its tail...and		*
	finally - a frog. And they are ALL		*
	Spotty!		
116	RANGER RABBIT	116	
	Very nice, Elinor.		
117	MR. RABBIT	117	
	They ALL look just like Spotty to		
	me! And so do you, by the way.		
118	ELINOR	118	
	Thanks. I thought I had a fish		*
	friend but it turns out Spotty		
	wasn't a fish after all. She's a		
	FROG. But that's okay because frogs		*
	are AWESOME.		
	The family walks out of the room as Elinor starts riffing		*
	about frogs. The camera stays on the frog drawings, and		*
	starts moving in...		*
119	ELINOR (O.C.) (CONT'D)	119	*
	Did you know frogs can live on land		
	AND in the water, and that they		
	really do sit on lilypads, and they		
	really love to hop, and they have		
	long sticky tongue....		*
120	MR. RABBIT (O.C.)	120	*
	I think Elinor is on a bit of a		*
	frog-kick.		*
	CU on the drawing of Spotty as a frog. IRIS OUT		*
	THE END		