

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EP 128A A Change of Art

By: Adam Ruben

Elinor's Question: How do we use nature to make art?

Logline: When Mr. Lion's art class runs out of paint, Elinor and her friends learn to make art using the colors found in nature.

Curriculum Goals: LS8. Begin to understand that there are many different kinds of living things and how they may be the same or different. (Different plants have different colors.)

ND2. Begin to understand that systems developed in our world often work in similar ways to systems found in the natural world. (Elinor and her friends learn that paints have an array of colors, just as plants have an array of colors.)

SEPl a. Demonstrate curiosity about the greater world outside of their environment. (Elinor and her friends wonder which plants and other natural items can be used for their art.)

SEP6a. Use background knowledge, experiences, and data to construct reasonable explanations and theories of natural phenomena. (Ari theorizes, from having stained his clothes in the past, that some of the most dramatic colors will come from deeply colored blackberries.)

Main Characters: Elinor, Olive, Ari, Mr. Lion

Non-Speaking Characters: Children in art class (Goat Twins, Tito Mouse, Camilla Dromedary, Sally Beaver, Gael Lynx, and others)

Backgrounds - Forest clearing near the school

Props - Paints, easels, blade of grass, handful of grass, fruit bowl, dandelion, glue, blackberry, paintings, paint bottles, paint palettes, Olive's notebook and crayon, smocks

OUTLINE: October 28, 2019

FIRST DRAFT: November 26, 2019

SECOND DRAFT: December 16, 2019

POLISH DRAFT: January 9, 2020

RECORD DRAFT: January 29, 2020

1. EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

Open on a wide shot of a forest clearing, with ELINOR, ARI, OLIVE, and several of their classmates standing behind easels arranged in a semicircle. The kids all wear pin-on smocks or backwards old dress shirts to protect their clothes from the paint.

In the center of the circle is MR. LION, the fun, energetic, expressive art teacher wearing a smock. He stands at his own easel, holding a paintbrush aloft, squinting at the easel as he plans his next brush stroke. We can't see his easel, but we can see that he's looking at a still-life bowl of fruit on a small table. With his fluffy mane, he even looks a bit like Bob Ross.

We zoom in for a bit, then see a much closer shot of Mr. Lion, weighing his options for what to paint next.

1 MR. LION 1
Hmmm...

The next shot pans over the kids watching Mr. Lion in anticipation. He has really captivated them.

ANGLE ON: Mr. Lion gets a look of determination in his eyes, then boldly slashes a few strokes across his canvas. He smiles, satisfied, then stands next to the canvas so that he's not blocking the kids from seeing it.

2 MR. LION (CONT'D) 2
Ta-da!

2A ANGLE ON: We see that Mr. Lion has painted a perfect representation of the still life fruit bowl.

→ (<SFX: WOW, COOL, AMAZING WALLA> The kids applaud <SFX: applause> their approval.)

3 MR. LION (CONT'D) 3
And THAT'S the joy of painting!

ANGLE ON: The kids look impressed.

4 ELINOR 4
That's great, Mr. Lion!

5 OLIVE 5
Yeah, your painting looks just like the bowl of fruit!

6 ARI 6
Mmm. It looks so real, it's making me hungry!

Olive <SFX: GIGGLES>.

7 ARI (CONT'D)
(shrugging)
What? I'm a fruit bat.

8 MR. LION
Thanks, kids. And now, it's your
turn to paint!

9 ELINOR
Are we going to paint the bowl of
fruit, Mr. Lion?

ANGLE ON: Mr. Lion looking passionate -- he really cares about the spirit of art.

10 MR. LION
You can. Or you can paint whatever
you want! Art isn't about rules --
it's a way to show your feelings
about what you want to paint.

ANGLE ON: Elinor frowns.

11 ELINOR
But I don't know what I want to
paint.

He dances around and indicates/wiggles the body parts as he mentions them.

12 MR. LION
You will! Just think about something you love, and let your heart tell your brain, then let your brain tell your fingers, then let your fingers pick up a paintbrush and create something wonderful!

The kids giggle at his antics. Elinor looks reassured. The kids start to move toward their easels, then stop when Mr. Lion holds up his hands.

13 MR. LION (CONT'D)
But before you start! The most important thing of all, something you cannot forget! (pause) You need paint. Everyone come take some from the table ~~in the middle~~ over the

The class picks up their empty paint palettes and moves toward the middle table.

ANGLE ON: The kids surround the table, each helping themselves to a dollop of each color from squirt bottles. <SFX: excited talking as everyone prepares to paint>. Elinor seems to be taking a larger pile of green paint than any other color.

14 OLIVE 14
That's a lot of green paint,
Elinor.

15 ELINOR 15
Yup! Mr. Lion said to paint
something we love, so I'm going to
paint nature.

The kids start walking back to their easels.

16 ELINOR (CONT'D) 16
I'm going to paint the trees, and
the bushes, and the leaves, and the
grass...

17 ARI 17
(looking around)
Yup, you're definitely going to
need a lot of green.

18 OLIVE 18
What about you, Ari?

19 ARI 19
Well, I love fruit, so that's what
I want to paint. But...Mr. Lion
already painted that bowl of fruit.

20 ELINOR 20
I think that's okay, Ari. You can
paint something even if someone
else already did.

21 OLIVE 21
I'm glad you said that, Elinor.
Because I love nature, too, and I
also want to paint the forest.

22 ELINOR 22
That's great! We can both be nature
painters!

23 OLIVE 23
Awesome!

24

ARI

24

(striking a determined
pose)

It's time...to make art!

CROSSFADE TO:

2. EXT. FOREST CLEARING - A FEW MINUTES LATER

The kids stand back at their easels, and we see that the whole class is excitedly working away, though we don't yet see what's on their easels. Mr. Lion walks behind the kids, reacting to their paintings in progress.

25

MR. LION

25

Wow, Sally, look at that sunrise!
... Javier, I love those melting
clocks, how unusual! ... Beautiful
work, Ari! That apple looks tasty
enough to eat, but I'm not going
to, because it's a painting.

ANGLE ON: Elinor and Olive paint side by side, but with their easels angled slightly so that they can't see what the other is working on. Olive is a virtuoso, painting with a brush in her trunk as it twists around.

26

ELINOR

26

(singing to herself as she
paints)

I'm painting a scene. I'm using the
green. And now some blue. (to
Olive) How 'bout you?

Olive giggles. Elinor turns her canvas around so that Olive can see it: She has painted a kid-quality landscape with green grass, trees, and a blue sky with a yellow sun. It's clearly unfinished, though, with a large portion of one side unpainted.

27

ELINOR (CONT'D)

27

What do you think, Olive?

28

OLIVE

28

That's really nice, Elinor!

29

ELINOR

29

Mr. Lion is right -- it's so fun to
paint what you love.

She moves slightly so that she can see Olive's canvas, then gives a little gasp.

ANGLE ON: We see Olive's canvas. She's still working on it, but what she's painted so far looks like a higher-resolution version of Elinor's painting. The tree trunks look more defined, individual branches are visible, the clouds have texture.

30 *gasp* ELINOR (CONT'D) 30
Olive, that's beautiful!

31 OLIVE 31
(alternating squinting at
her painting and looking
above/beyond the canvas)
Thanks! I'm trying to paint all of
the things I notice in nature.

She leans back for a moment and assesses her canvas.

32 OLIVE (CONT'D) 32
Hmm. Needs more birds.

With a flourish of her trunk, she expertly adds a few birds to the sky.

33 ELINOR 33
Your painting is so good. It looks
...real.

34 OLIVE 34
(with a shrug)
You think so? Thanks, Elinor!

Olive keeps painting happily.

ANGLE ON: Elinor looks back at her own painting, a little discouraged.

35 ELINOR 35
(sighs)
I wish mine looked real, too.

Ari leans in.

36 ARI 36
It doesn't have to look real,
Elinor!

He holds up his canvas. In addition to the bowl of fruit, he has now painted a few robots.

37 ARI (CONT'D) 37
See? I've added some robots to my
painting.

He returns to working on his painting.

38

ARI (CONT'D)

38

(robot voice, as he
paints)

ROBOTS EATING FRUIT. DOES NOT
COMPUTE.

ANGLE ON: Elinor still looks a little discouraged. Mr. Lion
walks over, having heard Elinor's disappointment.

39

MR. LION

39

Elinor, there isn't a "good" or
"bad" way to make art. Art is just
your own way of showing how you
feel about what you're painting.

Elinor looks reassured.

40

ELINOR

40

Thanks, Mr. Lion. Okay, I'm going
to make my painting really show how
much I love nature!

ANGLE ON a closer shot of Elinor; she looks determined. She
touches her brush to her palette.

41

ELINOR (CONT'D)

41

(singing again)

I'm painting a scene. I'm using the
green.

When she says the word "green," she puts the brush to her
canvas, attempting to add leaves to a bare tree trunk -- but
nothing comes off of her brush.

42

ELINOR (CONT'D)

42

Hmm.

She picks up her palette, and we can see that she's out of
green paint (i.e., it's in its usual spot in a rainbow of
paint blobs, but there's only a tiny smidgen left on the
palette).

43

ELINOR (CONT'D)

43

Uh-oh. I'm out of green paint.

ANGLE ON: Elinor carries her palette to the table where Mr.
Lion keeps the paint bottles. She picks up the green paint
bottle and tries to squeeze a dollop onto her palette.

44

ELINOR (CONT'D)

44

(trying her song again)

I'm getting more green...

On the word "green," she gives the bottle a squeeze, but nothing comes out.

45 ELINOR (CONT'D) 45
I'm getting more...green!

This time, on the word "green," she gives the bottle an extra hard squeeze. It makes a <SFX: spluttering bottle sound>, but again nothing comes out.

46 ELINOR (CONT'D) 46
Hmmm...we're out of green paint.

Ari comes up behind her, carrying his own palette.

47 ARI 47
Elinor, can you please hand me the blue paint? I think my fruit-and-robot picture needs a blue dragon.

Elinor picks up the bottle of blue paint, but before she hands it to Ari, she realizes it's also light and gives it a test squeeze.

48 ELINOR 48
It looks like we're out of blue paint, too.

49 ARI 49
We're OUT?

Olive approaches with her palette.

50 OLIVE 50
What about brown? I need more brown paint for the tree trunks.

Elinor picks up the bottle of brown paint and tries to squeeze it onto Olive's palette.

51 OLIVE (CONT'D) 51
There's no more brown paint?

A few more kids start to show up, hoping to add paint to their palettes but finding none. <WALLA TITO, SALLY, ARI: hey, we're out of paint/what's going on?/but I need more red/etc.>

Mr. Lion approaches, and Ari steps out to talk to him.

52 ARI 52
Mr. Lion? It looks like we're out of paint. Do you have more?

Elinor hands a bottle to Mr. Lion, and he shakes and squeezes it himself. Nothing comes out.

53 MR. LION 53

Hmm...

He grabs bottle after bottle, squeezing each.

54 MR. LION (CONT'D) 54

Oh no! I thought I had brought enough paint, but it looks like we ran out.

55 SALLY 55

(holding up an unfinished painting of a tree)
But how am I going to finish my painting of my favorite tree?

56 TITO 56

(holding up a painting of an adult female mouse in the pose of Whistler's mother)
And how am I going to finish painting my mom?

57 ELINOR 57

Now what do we do? It's an art emergency!

58 ARI 58

(overly dramatic)
It's an art-mergency!

59 MR. LION 59

I'm so sorry, kids. We'll have to wait until next week to finish your paintings. I'll be sure to bring more paint then.

The kids walk sadly back to their easels.

60 ELINOR 60

Aw. I really wanted to finish my nature painting.

61 OLIVE 61

Me too.

62 ARI 62

Yeah, now we'll have to wait a whole week.

He again moves his arms robotically.

63

ARI (CONT'D)

63

(robot voice)

CANNOT PAINT BLUE DRAGON. VERY SAD.
BEEP BOOP BEEP BOOP...

His silly robot motions intensify, and he gets his whole body into the beep boops. This distracts him from where he's walking, and he trips over an easel and falls into the grass.

64

ARI (CONT'D)

64

I'm okay, I'm okay.

Elinor <SFX: GIGGLES> at his antics and helps him stand and brush off his smock, but then she notices that some of the green stains on his white smock aren't brushing off.

65

ELINOR

65

Huh. Ari, your smock has green stains on it.

66

ARI

66

(noticing the stains)

Sure. That's what it's for -- to keep my clothes from getting paint on them!

67

OLIVE

67

But these stains weren't here a minute ago.

The kids look around for a moment, and then Elinor looks closely at Ari's smock. She picks a broken blade of grass off of it and holds the grass up. CU: We can see that it's vibrant green.

68

ELINOR

68

I don't think these stains came from the paint. I think they're from the grass. alt "Oh, Ari your smock has green stains on it."

ANGLE ON: Olive examines the stain, too.

69

OLIVE

69

You mean like the stains you get on your pants sometimes when you're playing in the grass?

70

ELINOR

70

Yes. That is SO INTERESTING.

Elinor has an idea.

71 ELINOR (CONT'D)

I wonder...

Elinor rubs the grass onto a blank part of her canvas.

72 ELINOR (CONT'D)

Wow, look! The green from the grass gets on my canvas.

73 OLIVE

It's like you're painting with it.

Ari picks up a few grass shoots and uses the green to start shading an otherwise unfinished pear in the fruit bowl.

74 ARI

Whoa, cool!

75 OLIVE

<Gasp!> Maybe we can use it to finish our paintings!

76 ELINOR

We can use grass to paint the grass!

77 ARI

Yeah, but that only gives us green.
How do we paint the other colors?

Elinor looks around.

78 ELINOR

Hmm...I wonder what else we can use
to paint with around here. (beat)
We need more observations!

CROSSFADE TO:

3. EXT. FOREST - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Elinor, Olive, and Ari explore the edges of the forest, which is near the painting area. Elinor carries her canvas with her.

Olive finds a flower with yellow petals on the forest floor,
and she picks it up.

79 OLIVE

Look! Maybe we can use the petals from this flower to make yellow.

She hands the flower to Elinor, who rubs a petal against her canvas, leaving a faint streak of yellow in the sky.

80 ELINOR 80
That works!

Ari pulls two handfuls of dirt from the ground.

81 ARI 81
(holding up one handful)
This dirt is brown...(he holds up
the other handful)...and this dirt
is more like orange.

Elinor takes a smidgen of dirt from each hand and wipes them on her canvas to make a tree trunk and orange leaves.

82 ELINOR 82
That works, too!

Elinor picks up a small, white rock.

83 ELINOR (CONT'D) 83
And this rock is like chalk -- we
could use this for white!

She adds some white highlights to her painting.

84 OLIVE 84
Looks like the rock works too.

85 ARI 85
We can paint with nature!

86 ELINOR 86
Let's go tell Mr. Lion!

4. EXT. FOREST CLEARING - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Elinor, Olive, and Ari run over to Mr. Lion, carrying multicolored plants, rocks, dirt, and berries. They're so excited!

87 ELINOR 87
Mr. Lion! Guess what! We can finish
our paintings after all!

88 ARI 88
(pointing to the grass
stain still on his smock)
(MORE)

ARI (CONT'D)

I had a grass stain on my smock,
and Elinor thought that maybe we
could paint with colors from
nature!

89

OLIVE

89

(indicating the objects in
their hands)

We found all kinds of colorful
plants and nature things. Some of
them should work.

90

MR. LION

90

What a great idea, kids! You're
right -- there are no rules in
art. Not even that you have to use
paint.

91

ELINOR

91

We can use nature to paint nature!

92

ARI

92

Wait. I still need blue for my
dragon.

Ari looks off-camera.

93

ARI (CONT'D)

93

<GASP!> I had a grass stain on my
smock, and Elinor figured out that
we could paint with the grass. I'll
be right back.

He rushes away.

94

MR. LION

94

Another inspiration!

Over near the paint station, Ari picks up a blueberry from
the still life fruit bowl, then rushes back.

95

ARI

95

Mr. Lion, can I use this blueberry
to paint my blue dragon.

96

MR. LION

96

Wonderful! Let's use all the colors
of nature.

Mr. Lion leads a song as the kids experiment with plants and
soil on their paintings. Scenes during the song include:

Kids run excitedly from plant to plant.

Olive tries plants one at a time, then records the results in her notebook.

Elinor uses grass to spread more green across her canvas.

Tito Mouse hauls a giant bundle of flowers to his canvas.

The Goat Twins paint pictures of each other in unison.

Sally Beaver thinks while chewing on the back of her paintbrush, then realizes she's shredded it.

Mr. Lion dances; his dancing looks like meditative tai chi.

SONG:

96A

MR. LION: The world is full of
colors that can all be found
Hanging from the trees or growing
in the ground.
Put down your ~~pen~~ and pencil,
'cause here's the greatest part:
Nature is a work of art!

ELINOR: A berry's blue --
OLIVE: The grass is green --
ARI: The dirt is brown --
MR. LION: And hello!
Flowers are orange, pink, and
yellow.

ARI: You don't always need to buy
things in stores.
ELINOR: You might find them if you
look outdoors.
OLIVE: Put berries in your
painting, instead of in a tart.
ARI: The world is full of colors,
so pick one up and start.
ELINOR, OLIVE, AND ARI: Nature is a
work of art! Nature is a work of
art!

MR. LION (slowly, operatically):
You see it all around you; you feel
it in your heaaaaaart!

ALL (happily shouting, resuming
tempo): Nature is a work of art!

END SONG.

ANGLE ON: The class smiles at their paintings; they're all
pleased with how they turned out.

ANGLE ON: Elinor considers her canvas; Mr. Lion stands behind her. She's holding a dandelion head and weighing how to represent it in her painting. She's almost done, but not quite.

97 ELINOR 97
Now how do I paint with this
flower?

Mr. Lion comes up behind her.

98 MR. LION 98
Remember, Elinor, there are no
rules in art. Maybe what you need --
is glue!

He dramatically reveals that he's holding a bottle of white glue.

99 ELINOR 99
 <SFX: Gasp!> Yes!

He hands Elinor the bottle. She smiles, then puts a dab of glue on her canvas and attaches the dandelion head as a bright, yellow sun in the sky. It looks great!

Elinor steps back to look at her work. Olive and Ari come over to look at it as well.

100 OLIVE 100

Wow. A picture OF nature, BY
nature, IN nature, made WITH
nature.

101 ARI 101

The dandelion is the sun -- what a cool idea!

102 ELINOR 102

I love how my painting turned out.
Like you said, Mr. Lion, it shows
how much I love nature -- because
it's beautiful, and interesting,
and full of surprises.

103 MR. LION 103

See? I told you not to worry,
Elinor. Art isn't about right or
wrong, it's just a way to share
your feelings and ideas with
others.

104

ELINOR

104

It's easy to share my feelings
about Nature -- it's so colorful!

105

ARI

105

(robot voice, holding up his painting and waving it as though he's making the robots talk)

MY ROBOTS AGREE. BEEP BOOP BEEP
BOOP.

105A Elinor, Olive, and Mr. Lion laugh, and we start to zoom out.

AS WE ZOOM OUT: Ari sticks two berries to be the robot's eyes -- Olive then grabs a few flowers and glues them below the tree in her painting, then we see the whole scene, with kids painting, chatting, and having a good time, all painting with plants and dirt.

FADE OUT,

SEGMENT 2.

1. EXT PARK -- DAY

Open on SENOR TAPIR, covering his eyes with his hoof.

106

SENOR TAPIR

106

(giggling) Can I look yet?

ELINOR uses a blueberry to finish painting the shape of Senor Tapir and his guitar with a blue-ish purple color on a medium-sized rock.

107

ELINOR

107

(giggling) Almost . . . now!

107A Senor Tapir looks at the painting and is delightfully surprised.

108

ELINOR (CONT'D)

108

I used blueberry juice to paint
your picture!

109

SENOR TAPIR

109

It looks just like me. That reminds me of a song about a scientist who discovered lots of art painted on rocks from thousands of years ago.

Senor Tapir starts to sing to Elinor and her friends. After a line, we transition to a simpler style of animation that describes what he is singing.

110 SENOR TAPIR (CONT'D) 110

(singing)

Doctor Sada Mire is an awesome scientist.

She explored the ancient desert's rocky caves and cliffs.

2. EXT. DESERT -- DAY

Sada Mire, a SOMALI CAT, walks past rocky caves and rock walls, looking at some paintings of animals on a rock wall.

111 SENOR TAPIR 111

She found amazing paintings from a long time ago

Of snakes, giraffes, horses, sheep, goats and antelope!

[Image references for style and palette:

<https://www.sadamire.com/wp-content/uploads/sada-mire-at-the-rock-art.jpg>

https://www.sadamire.com/wp-content/uploads/sada.mire_.shimbiris.jpg

https://www.megalithic.co.uk/a558/a312/gallery/tunisia/Central_Africa/Somaliacavethreatened2.jpg

https://media.springernature.com/lw785/springer-static/image/art%3A10.1007%2Fs10437-008-9032-2/MediaObjects/10437_2008_9032_Fig3_HTML.jpg

https://media.springernature.com/lw785/springer-static/image/art%3A10.1007%2Fs10437-008-9032-2/MediaObjects/10437_2008_9032_Fig4_HTML.jpg

https://media.springernature.com/lw785/springer-static/image/art%3A10.1007%2Fs10437-008-9032-2/MediaObjects/10437_2008_9032_Fig6_HTML.jpg

Close up of a drawing of a giraffe on a rock wall. Sada's face pops into the scene (smiling, happy) to look at the giraffe. Close up of a drawing of a snake on a rock wall. Sada's face pops into the scene (smiling, happy) to look at the snake.

112 SENOR TAPIR (CONT'D) 112
Oh rockin' ancient rock art
Let's celebrate!
The rockin' ancient rock art,
Still colorful today!

Other SOMALI CATS (one male and one female) use primitive paintbrushes to paint sheep onto a rock wall. A cat holds reddish brown dirt, the color of ochre, in its paws. A cat uses two stones to grind the ochre into a powder and adds some fruit juice. Cut to a brush dipping into an orange-red paint mixture. Close up of the brush painting an ochre-colored line onto a rock wall.

113 SENOR TAPIR (CONT'D) 113
Folks painted wonderful colors on
the rocks,
Colors that didn't come from a
store or a box.
The colors came from nature, and
things in the ground
Like dirt and clay and juice, and
other things that they found.

Close up of a drawing of a cow on a rock wall. Sada's face pops into the scene (smiling, happy) to look at the cow.
Close up of a drawing of a sheep on a rock wall. Sada's face pops into the scene (smiling, happy) to look at the sheep.

114 SENOR TAPIR (CONT'D) 114
Oh rockin' ancient rock art
Let's celebrate!
The rockin' ancient rock art,
Still colorful today!

Streaks of colors go across the screen -- a stripe of red, then green, then pink, then yellow, then black, then white -- until the screen is covered with this rainbow of colors.

115 SENOR TAPIR (CONT'D) 115
Red and green and pink and brown
and yellow, black and white,
The colors from so long ago are
still shining bright!

Sada smiles as she thinks about all the rock art she has seen, and we recap the paintings in a visual montage behind her.

116 SENOR TAPIR (CONT'D) 116
Oh rockin' ancient rock art
Let's celebrate!
(MORE)

SENOR TAPIR (CONT'D)

The rockin' ancient rock art,
Still colorful today!

WIPE WITH THE
PAINT COLOR
STRIPES TO:

3. EXT PARK -- DAY

Senor Tapir finishes singing the song, while Elinor crouches over the rock again to paint something new.

117 ELINOR 117
(giggling) I have one more
surprise.

Elinor moves her paintbrush to reveal she has added music notes around the painting of Senor Tapir on the rock.

118 SENOR TAPIR 118
That looks just like my song!

THE END.

★