

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

The Little Drummer

Premise - March 17, 2020

By Laura Sams and Robert Sams

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

Logline: The kids are determined to figure out why a woodpecker is drumming on Ari's mailbox.

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 woodpeckers habits, its environment and the impact the woodpecker's habit 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 woodpeckers pecking).

"Thrrrrrrrrrap, ba da da da da, crashhhh!" Ari is playing the drums in his room during a playdate with Elinor and Olive, when Mrs. Bat asks if he can play the drums quietly because his little sister Miri is taking a nap. Ari shows Elinor and Olive a little trick he knows -- he opens up his drum kit and stuffs it with blankets. Then he plays it again and it is much, much quieter. The blankets make it so the drum doesn't vibrate or rattle as much when he plays it. But it's still probably too loud for Miri, so Ari flies down from the ceiling to play with Elinor and Olive quietly. Suddenly they hear a loud drumming sound. Mrs. Bat comes back into the room to tell Ari to stop playing the drums. "It's not me mom. I think it's the woodpecker." Mrs. Bat looks exasperated "Oh is it back AGAIN?" Miri wakes up and yells. Ugh. That woodpecker has been coming every day and making a lot of noise outside, and that wakes up Miri.

The kids go outside and see a woodpecker pecking the mailbox really fast to make a drumming sound. Elinor wonders why the woodpecker is drumming on the mailbox at Ari's house. Olive pulls out her nature book to look at woodpeckers. Woodpeckers are birds that peck on trees with their strong pointy beaks. Sometimes woodpeckers peck on trees to look for food like bugs. Hmm, are there any bugs in the mailbox? The woodpecker flies away to land on a nearby tree, while Elinor, Ari and Olive inspect the mailbox closely. Nope, no bugs. Just mail. And Elinor

notices a few dents in the mailbox where the woodpecker beak was drumming. Why is the woodpecker pecking on the mailbox? They're called woodpeckers, not mailbox-peckers. Elinor decides "We need MORE observations." The kids set out on a curiosity quest to observe the woodpecker on the mailbox. They notice that every time the woodpecker on the mailbox drums, another woodpecker drums on a nearby hollow tree. They're communicating with each other. Ari thinks about his own drumming, "Thrrrrrrrrrap, Thrrrrrrrrrap" and the sound of the woodpeckers, "Thrrrrrrrrrap Thrrrrrrrrrap." The sounds are so similar. It really does sound like drumming.

Elinor wonders what would happen if they make the mailbox quiet like Ari made his drums quiet. Maybe the woodpecker wouldn't want to peck there anymore. The kids test their idea. Ari grabs his drumsticks and plays the mailbox for a moment. Then the kids put blankets inside the mailbox and close it up. Ari bangs on the mailbox again and it is much quieter. Then the kids go back to the house porch to watch for the woodpecker. The woodpecker flies back to the mailbox and starts to peck, but the drumming is very quiet and doesn't ring out at all. And the other woodpecker doesn't drum in response. The woodpecker on the mailbox looks around and then flies to a nearby hollow tree and starts drumming, and the other woodpecker drums on another tree in response. They drum back and forth. Success! We cut to Miri, who is now sleeping soundly in her room. Everything seems to have worked out perfectly except...how will the Bat Family get their mail?