

ELINOR WONDERS WHY
No Need to Shout
By Kate Barris

I made some changes to the interaction between the kids and Mr. Dog and Ari's mom. The interaction with Mr. Dog relied heavily on pity and sympathy, implying a strong sense of loss. Many people with disabilities hear too much of the pity narrative - so the shift on what Elinor can do is necessary to combat this. With Ari's mom, there are slight changes in her interaction with Elinor and how Olive and Ari react. Finally, there is a change in how the class is instructed to perform (sing/dance/express) since we should encourage kids to not just sing, but perform as they feel.

Elinor's Question: How can I communicate when I can't talk?

in a way that is familiar?

Logline: Elinor is supposed to sing a song with her friends but she's lost her voice.

Curriculum Goals:

- SEP 1 - Ask and/or identify cause and effect questions that can be answered by an investigation
- SEP 4d - Talk about and reflect on what happened during an investigation or when solving a problem and why it might have happened (Elinor and her friends observe how other animals communicate without words and determine how they could use those strategies)

(LS8) Begin to understand that there are many different kinds of living things and how they may be the same or different: a. Observe and describe similarities and differences across different types of plants and animals. Elinor and her friends observe there are many different ways to communicate.

• (ND2). (RTL Crosscutting concept 'Systems'): Begin to understand that systems developed in our world often work in similar ways to systems found in the natural world. Elinor realizes that, just like in the natural world, she and her friends express themselves through actions and expressions, not just sounds/talking.

MAIN CHARACTERS: Olive, Ari, Elinor, Mr. Dog

SECONDARY: Ms. Mole, Ari's Mother

LINE COUNT - 97

FIRST DRAFT: FEB 15, 2019

ESTABLISHING SHOT: The forest near Elinor's house.

CLOSE: ELINOR'S FOOT as she steps onto a little tree stump.

Elinor taps the baton/twig on a nearby branch.

She starts to "conduct" with her baton and Ari and Olive start to sing. They do some little hand gestures that go along with the song. (Elinor's voice is always **loudest**)

The three of them look very pleased.

5 OLIVE 5
Wow! Ms. Mole's going to love our
song!

6 ARI 6
She said we could sing it to the
whole class tomorrow.

They get to a fork in the path. Elinor goes one way and Ari
and Olive go the other, waving as they head home.

7 ELINOR 7
I want it to be perfect, so I'm
going to practice and practice and
practice!

As Elinor walks, she sings **loudly**.

8 ELINOR (CONT'D) 8
(singing)
*If you feel **glad***
*Let me know you're **glad***
*And we'll be **glad** together...*

2. INT. ELINOR'S HOUSE - MONTAGE

We see Elinor in a series of snippets, singing **very loudly**.

1. Elinor at the dinner table, her parents amused; 2. Elinor
at her desk colouring; 3. Elinor in the bathtub surrounded by
bubbles; 4. Elinor brushing her teeth (so song is garbled);
5. Elinor poking her head through her pyjama top; 6. Elinor
doing sit-ups into camera in her bedroom; 7. Elinor lying in
bed at night facing one way; 8. Elinor lying in bed facing
the other way; 9. Elinor lying in bed on her stomach, face in
her pillow (so song is muffled); 10. Elinor peeking out her
window in the morning, seeing the sunrise (she's yawning as
she sings); 11. Elinor at the front door, about to open it
and go off to school. She looks a little tired and her voice
is croaky.

9 ELINOR 9
(singing **loudly**)
*If you feel **sad...***
*Let me know you're **sad...***
*And I'll try to make it **better!***
*If you feel **mad...***
*Let me know you're **mad***
*And we'll work it out **together!***
(MORE)

ELINOR (CONT'D)

So always let your **feelings** out
Just **smile** or **frown** or **jump** about
'Cause I can be a **friend** for **real**
If I know just how you **feel**!
If I know just how you **feel**!

3. EXT. OUTSIDE ELINOR'S HOUSE - MORNING

Olive and Ari are waiting for her to join them.

10	ARI/OLIVE	10
	Hi Elinor!	

11 ELINOR 11
(very croaky) Hi. Are you ready to
sing our song?

12 OLIVE 12
What's wrong with your voice?

13	ARI	13
	Do you have a cold?	

14 ELINOR 14
(croaky and weak) No.

15 OLIVE 15
Then why is your voice so scratchy?

16 ELINOR 16
 (almost no voice) I don't know. It
 sounded okay when I was practicing
 our song ... all night long.

17 OLIVE 17
Hmmm. Maybe you practiced a little
too much.

18 ARI 18
What about our song? We promised
Ms. Mole.

Elinor, Ari and Olive look concerned.

19 ELINOR 19
(whispered croak) You can do it
without me.

Olive crosses her arms and stands firm.

20 OLIVE 20
Unh unh. That's not fair. We made
up the song to sing together.

Ari steps up beside her, equally resolute.

21 ARI
Olive's right! If you don't sing,
we don't sing.

22 ELINOR
(hardly any voice) What are we
going to do?

23 OLIVE
Your voice is probably just tired
from all that practicing.

24 ARI
Yeah. Maybe if you give it a rest,
it'll be okay by the time we get to
school.

25 OLIVE
Good idea. Let's go.

Elinor worked hard to prepare to sing the song. It feels against her character to suggest that Olive and Ari sing without her. What if the exchange removed lines 19-22 and Elinor said she would try resting her voice and hope that it gets better in time for school, and her friends agree (which makes lines 24-25 still relevant). 22

4. EXT. ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL - A LITTLE LATER

As they skip along together, they meet up with MR. DOG.

26 ARI
Look! There's Mr. Dog!

27 OLIVE
Good morning, Mr. Dog!

They group around him, with Olive in front, Elinor on one side and Ari on the other side, nearer his rear end.

28 MR. DOG
Good morning, kids! How nice to
see you!

ANGLE ON: Mr. Dog's tail is wagging so vigorously that he keeps hitting Ari with it (Mr. Dog doesn't realize it).

29 ARI
 (giggles) Mr. Dog! Your tail is
 tickling me!

Mr. Dog looks at his back end and chuckles.

30 MR. DOG
Oops! (chuckle) Sorry Ari! I can't
help it! Wagging my tail is my way
of saying I'm so happy to see you!

30

31

OLIVE

If Elinor could talk, she'd say,
"That's soooo interesting!"

Elinor nods, and Mr. Dog reacts with curiosity.

32

MR. DOG

Elinor? Why can't you talk?

Elinor tries to talk but nothing comes out so Ol

33

OLIVE

We made up a new song and Elinor
practiced so much, her voice got
tired and now she can't talk.

Suggested change:
Elinor practiced so much last night
and now her voice is tired!

34

MR. DOG

You lost your voice?

Elinor nods sadly.

ON: Mr. Dog's ears go back in sympathy for
notices and has a "Hmmm" expression on her

Elinor. Olive
face.

35

ARI

Yeah, and we're supposed to sing
our song for the whole class, but
we can't unless Elinor *finds* her
voice.

Lines 34-38 focus on pity and
sympathy. What if it were
changed to be a more empathetic
response from Mr. Dog, where he looks
at Elinor and asks her closed questions
about how hard she practiced and how
much the song means to her. And his tail
and ears express reactions aligned with
empathy (tail resting position, ears back)
and not "feeling sorry" for her. For
reference: the animated short about
empathy vs. sympathy (Brene Brown).

36

MR. DOG

Oh! I'm so sorry!

Ari notices Mr. Dog's tail has stopped hitting l

37

ARI

I could tell you felt sorry for
Elinor. You know how? Your tail
stopped wagging and tickling me.

38

MR. DOG

You're right, Ari.

Olive points to Mr. Dog's ears.

39

OLIVE

And is that why your ears went back
too, Mr. Dog? Because you were sad
for Elinor?

Mr. Dog raises and lowers his ears and the kids watch in
fascination.

Line 39 is critical
to clarify his ears' response, to
which he follows up with
an explanation (see Line 40 change).

40 MR. DOG 40
My ears do **go** up when I'm happy and
back when I'm feeling a bit sad.

41 OLIVE 41
So even if you don't say anything,
everyone knows how you're feeling.
Mr. Dog's tail wags.

Suggested change to Line 40:
My ears DO show how I am feeling,
just like my tail! But, I'm not sad for
Elinor! She will be able to
perform the song - in her way!

42 MR. DOG 42
It's true! That's how we dogs show
our feelings! Well, bye kids! I
hope you get your voice back in
time to sing the song, Elinor.

Modify Lines 41-42 to wrap
up the conversation and showcase
both Olive and Ari's growing
understanding of nonverbal
expression.

Elinor smiles and waves to Mr. Dog.

43 ARI/OLIVE 43
Bye Mr. Dog!/Thanks!

As they start to head off, Elinor pauses, clearly thinking.

5. EXT. CLOSER TO SCHOOL - A LITTLE LATER

Elinor, Olive and Ari are almost at school when they hear...

44 ARI'S MOM (O.S.) 44
Ari! Ari! You forgot your lunch!

They turn and see ARI'S MOM catching up to them, with his
lunchbox. In her other arm she's got Ari's baby sister.

45 ARI 45
Whoa! I forgot my lunch? How does
that even happen?

46 ARI'S MOM 46
It happened because you were so
excited about singing your song.
Are you two as excited about the
song as Ari is?

Remove "it happened
because"

Suggested change to Line 45:
instead of talking, he uses
nonverbal expression to
show an exaggerated
"Oops/Oh man" feeling.

slightly disappointed
Ari, Olive and Elinor look a bit sad and Ari's Mom reacts.

47 OLIVE 47
Elinor lost her voice, so we won't
be able to sing our song today.

Elinor shrugs sadly, and Ari's mom looks sympathetic.
concerned

Suggested change:
We may not be able to sing
our song today. Elinor lost her
voice.

48 ARI (with optimism) 48
She's giving her voice a rest. We
hope maybe she'll get it back by
the time we get to school.

Ari's Mom gives Elinor a reassuring pat on the shoulder.

49	ARI'S MOM	Physical touch is not	49
	That's a good plan, Elinor.	needed. Could be interpreted	
		as condescending.	

Just then Ari's little sister starts fussing, <GURGLING> and waving her hands up and down. Olive reacts.

50 OLIVE 50
Oh! What's wrong with (Ari's little
sister?)?

Ari smiles and waves his arms the same way she just did.

51 ARI 51

She's just hungry. She always goes like this when she's hungry. Don't you, Little Sis! (He gurgles just like her)

The baby <SFX: BABY GIGGLES> Then the baby starts rubbing her eyes.

ARI (CONT'D)
And when she rubs her eyes, it
means she's tired, right Mom?

ARI'S MOM

Ooh! I'd better get her home for
her snack and a nap! I hope
Elinor's voice gets better in time
to sing your song! Bye!

Ari's Mom gives Ari a kiss on the head and then hurries off.
Olive turns to Ari.

54 OLIVE 54
Wow! You sure know a lot about
babies, Ari.

55 ARI 55

I just know a lot about my baby
sister. I can tell what she wants,
even though she can't talk yet.

56 OLIVE 56
Kind of like we could tell that Mr.
Dog was happy because of his
wagging tail.

Elinor is watching the conversation between Ari and Olive. Suddenly her eyes pop open. She starts tugging Olive's arm.

57 OLIVE (CONT'D) 57
What is it Elinor? Did you get your
voice back?

Elinor shakes her head no, then points to her temple.

58 ARI 58
Do you have a headache?

She shakes her head no again. Then she holds one finger up, in a kind of "aha!" gesture and has a big smile.

59 ARI (CONT'D) 59
Your finger hurts?

Elinor shakes her head and points to her temple then **creates** draws a circle above her head, kind of like a thought bubble.

Remove

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60             OLIVE
        You have an idea??
60

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Elinor nods her head vigorously.

61 ARI 61
All right! What's your idea?

Elinor points to them, then acts like she's singing.

62 ARI (CONT'D) 62
What's she doing?

Elinor tries again, this time doing some of the hand gestures that they did earlier when they sang the song.

63 OLIVE 63
Oh! You want us to sing our song?

Elinor nods vigorously.

64 ARI 64
But we already said we don't want
to sing the song without you.

Elinor points two fingers at Ari and Olive's eyes then to herself.

65 OLIVE 65
You want us to look at you?

Elinor nods then smiles a great big smile, and points at her smiling mouth.

66 OLIVE (CONT'D) 66
You're happy?

Elinor nods, then makes a sad face and points at her mouth.

67 ARI 67
But now you're sad. I don't get it.

Olive suddenly starts to smile.

68 OLIVE 68
I do! We can tell how Elinor is
feeling by the look on her face.

Ari still isn't getting it.

69 ARI 69
... Okay?

Elinor smiles mischievously and wags her butt. Olive gets it right away but Ari is still puzzled.

70 OLIVE 70
Ah! Just like we could tell Mr. Dog
was happy when he wagged his tail!

Elinor smiles and nods, and then waves her arms the way NAME did earlier. Ari's face lights up.

71 ARI 71
And the way (Ari's sister) let us
know she was hungry by waving her
arms.

72 OLIVE 72
Exactly! That's soooo interesting!
Come on!

Elinor jumps up and down happily - she knows Olive is on the same track as she is.

73 ARI 73
Okay, what's so interesting? And
where are we going?

Olive ushers them toward the school.

74 OLIVE 74
To school! Elinor's figured out a
way to sing our song even if she
doesn't have her voice! I'll
explain on the way!

6. INT. CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

ON MS. MOLE: Who looks a little surprised as Elinor, Ari and Olive rush up to her.

75 ARI/OLIVE 75
Ms. Mole! Ms. Mole!

76 MS. MOLE 76
Oh! Good morning, my fine singing
students! Are you all ready to sing
your new Feelings Song for the
class?

The kids excitedly tell their story.

77 ARI 77
Well, we thought we weren't going
to be able to sing our song!

78 OLIVE 78
Because Elinor practiced so much
that she lost her voice.

Elinor nods and gestures that she can't talk.

79 ARI 79
And we didn't want to sing The Glad
Sad Mad Song without Elinor!

Ms. Mole nods, understanding.

80 OLIVE 80
But then we made some observations!

81 MS. MOLE 81
You did? Good for you! What did you
observe?

Elinor repeats her wagging tail motion, imitating Mr. Dog.
Ms. Mole looks confused.

82 MS. MOLE (CONT'D) 82
Um ... I'm not sure I understand.

83	OLIVE	83
	We observed that when Mr. Dog was happy, he wagged his tail.	

All three wag their butts and Ms. Mole <chuckles>.

84 OLIVE (CONT'D) 84
So even if he didn't *talk* to us, we
could tell he was *happy*. Share how his ears are

Share how his ears and tail moved according to how he felt - when he was happy and when he was listening.

85 ARI 85

Yeah, and then we observed my
little sister and I knew she was
hungry because when she's hungry,
she always does *this*...

The three of them wave their arms and Ms. Mole laughs.

86 OLIVE 86
And that gave Elinor ...

All three of them point to their temple.

87 ARI/OLIVE 87

An idea!

88 ARI 88

Even if you can't use your voice,
there are ways to make your friends
understand you.

89 OLIVE 89
Yeah! By the way your face looks or
your body moves. And so we realized
we can sing our song...

Suggested change:
Yeah! By the way your face
looks or your body moves. Elinor
helped us realize that we CAN
sing our song — 90

90 ARI/OLIVE sing our song — 90
With Elinor!

Elinor smiles and points to her smiling face!

7. INT. CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Elinor, Ari and Olive in front of the class with Ms. Mole.

91 MS. MOLE 91
And now, Ari, Olive and Elinor are
going to present The Glad Sad Mad
Song!

Ari and I are going to sing, but Elinor lost her voice, so she's going to show her feelings instead of singing them.

Remove "lost her voice"

93	ARI	93
	Yeah and if you can tell what she's	Suggested change: "sing
	feeling, you can sing along too!	move along too!" Emph

Suggested change: “sing or move along too!” Emphasize multiple means of expression.

Elinor conducts as she did earlier. NOTE ON THE SONG: Would be great to have other kids voices shout the emotions (glad, sad, bad) depending on the pairing of this Ep.

94 ARI/OLIVE/ KIDS (TBD) 94
 (singing)
Ari/Olive - *If you feel...*

Elinor shows a big smily face.

Ari/Olive/Kids? (shouted) **Glad!**
 Ari/Olive (singing) *Let me know
 you're glad
 And we'll be glad together!
 Ari/Olive - If you feel..*

Elinor makes a sad face.

Ari/Olive/Kids(shouted) **Sad!**
Ari/Olive (*Singing*)- *Let me know
you're sad.
And I'll try to make it better.
If you feel..*

Elinor makes a mad face.

Ari/Olive/ Kids(shouted) **Mad!**
 Ari/Olive - *Let me know you're mad.*
 And we'll work it out together.

Elinor dances as Aru and Olive sing.

Ari

Olive - Always let your feelings
out
Ari - Smile or frown or jump about
Ari/Olive - 'Cause I can be a
friend for real
If I know just how you feel!
If I know just how you feeeeeeeel!

The class reacts with great <SF: APPLAUSE>

95 MS. MOLE 95
That was wonderful!

OLIVE

I think it was even better with
Elinor showing the feelings instead
of singing them.

97 ARI 97
Me too. What do you think Elinor?

Elinor makes a great big smiley face!

THE END