

**New Animated STEM Series ELINOR WONDERS WHY Premieres on PBS KIDS September 7, 2020***Multiplatform Show Inspires Preschoolers and Parents to Ask Questions and Experience the Joys of Nature and Curiosity Together*

**Arlington, VA, July 30, 2020** – Preschoolers and their families from coast-to-coast will take a trip to Animal Town this Labor Day with the premiere of the newest [PBS KIDS](http://www.pbskids.org/) series, **ELINOR WONDERS WHY**. The animated show encourages children to follow their curiosity, ask questions, figure out the answers, and learn about the natural world around them using their science inquiry skills. The multiplatform series, created by celebrated cartoonist and robotics engineer, Jorge Cham, and physicist and educator, Daniel Whiteson, produced in partnership with Pipeline Studios, will debut nationwide on PBS stations, the PBS KIDS 24/7 channel and PBS KIDS digital platforms Monday, September 7, 2020, with a special one-hour premiere that kicks off a week of new episodes.

In the upcoming premiere, Elinor, the most curious and observant bunny rabbit in Animal Town, plays hide-and-go-seek with her friends and finds out how animals hide in nature; investigates a strange nighttime sound made by an owl and realizes many fascinating creatures are doing interesting things at night; makes “Backyard Soup” with vegetables from her family’s garden; and sells lots of cupcakes by learning how flowers attract bees, through color and smell, and applying those concepts to baking.

“We’re so excited to invite audiences nationwide into the fascinating world of Animal Town and introduce them to Elinor and her friends as they ask questions and explore the remarkable ways that our everyday lives are connected to nature,” said Linda Simensky, Head of PBS KIDS Content, PBS. “Kids learn best when their parents and caretakers are engaged in their learning. **ELINOR WONDERS WHY** will spark preschoolers’ curiosity with an innovative science inquiry curriculum and will encourage the adults in children’s lives to help them answer their questions by exploring together.”

“**ELINOR WONDERS WHY** helps give parents the confidence to say, ‘I don’t know the answer. Let’s explore it together,’” said Whiteson. “Asking questions and investigating the answer are at the core of scientific discovery, and we designed the series to model and encourage children, parents and educators to do just that together.”

“Much like my own daughter, Elinor, who inspired the series’ main character, kids everywhere love to wonder about things around them and find out the answers,” said Cham. “Our hope is that the show will help foster the natural curiosity of young children and make them want to explore and learn, just like Elinor and her friends do in these stories.”

Developed for children ages 3-5, **ELINOR WONDERS WHY** centers on the adventures of Elinor and her pals, Ari, a funny and imaginative bat; and Olive, a perceptive and warm elephant.As young viewers explore Animal Town along with Elinor, Ari and Olive, they will meet all kinds of interesting, funny, and quirky characters, each with a lesson to share about respecting others, the importance of diversity, caring for the environment and working together to solve problems. Elinor models the foundational practices of science inquiry and engineering design in each episode, using her amazing powers of observation and willingness to ask questions. When she encounters something she doesn’t understand, like why birds have feathers or how tiny ants build massive anthills, she perseveres until she figures it out. In discovering the answers, Elinor often learns something about nature’s ingenious inventions and how they can relate to aspects of our designed world, as well as what it takes to live in a community.

The one-hour premiere on September 7 includes these four stories:

***Hiding in Plain Sight***

*Elinor and her friends are playing Hide-And-Go-Seek at recess, but no matter where they hide, the Goat twins always seem to find them. The kids decide they need a to find a better way to hide, so they observe some animals who are camouflaged, prompting Elinor to realize that she, Olive and Ari can use their shapes, colors and patterns to hide themselves in plain sight, so that the Goat Twins can't spot them.*

***Owl Girl***

*Elinor isn't sure what she's going to be for Costume Day, but it has to be something INTERESTING. That night, Elinor is awakened by a strange “Whooo!” sound coming from outside, so she and her mom go out to investigate. While looking for the source of the strange sound, Elinor is surprised at how many things are happening outside at night while she sleeps. Suddenly, they hear the sound again and look up to see an owl soaring in the sky, which inspires Elinor to figure out exactly what she wants to be for the costume parade.*

***Backyard Soup***

*Elinor loves making “Backyard Soup,” because all the ingredients come from their backyard garden. She’s eager to try the same recipe when she visits her grandma and grandpa, but their backyard is a lot different than Elinor's, because they live in the desert. Elinor learns that different plants grow in different environments as she makes a whole different “Backyard Soup” with her grandparents, where the main ingredient is cactus!*

***Colorful and Tasty***

*Elinor and her friends are selling lots of yummy cupcakes, but the problem is no one is buying any. The kids don't understand what's wrong, because everyone loves cupcakes. After observing how flowers attract bees through color and smell, they go back to their bake sale and decorate the table with fantastic colors, and use a fan to spread the aroma of the cupcakes. Before they know it, the place is “buzzing” and they sell every cupcake!*

The new seriescomes to PBS KIDS from co-creators Jorge Cham and Daniel Whiteson. Cham is the cartoonist behind the popular online comic “Piled Higher and Deeper” (a.k.a. PHD Comics). He holds a PhD in Robotics from Stanford University and is a former Instructor and Research Associate at Caltech. Whiteson is a Professor of Physics and Astronomy at the University of California, Irvine, and a fellow of the American Physical Society. He earned his PhD in Physics from the University of California at Berkeley and is an active researcher, using the Large Hadron Collider at CERN to search for exotic new particles. The two have collaborated on several projects aimed at exploring science-related questions with humor, including a book (“We Have No Idea: A Guide to the Unknown Universe”) and a podcast (“Daniel & Jorge Explain the Universe”).

Funding for **ELINOR WONDERS WHY** was provided by a grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and a grant from the U.S. Department of Education as part of the Ready To Learn Initiative, a federal program that supports the development of innovative educational television and digital media targeted to preschool and early elementary school children and their families.

Each episode of **ELINOR WONDERS WHY** includes two 11-minute stories with accompanying interstitial content. The series is currently in production for 40 half-hour episodes.

**ELINOR WONDERS WHY** will offer digital content for kids, parents and teachers, also debuting in September 2020. **ELINOR WONDERS WHY** games will be available on [pbskids.org](http://www.pbskids.org/) and on the free [PBS KIDS Games App](http://pbskids.org/apps/play-pbs-kids-games.html), along with clips and full episodes streaming across PBS KIDS’ video platforms, including the free [PBS KIDS Video App](http://pbskids.org/apps/pbs-kids-video.html). Parent resources, including tips and hands-on activities to extend the learning at home, will be available on the [PBS KIDS for Parents](http://www.pbs.org/parents/) site, and [PBS LearningMedia](https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/) will offer classroom-ready materials for teachers, including video excerpts, games, teaching tips and printable activities.

**About PBS KIDS**

PBS KIDS, the number one educational media brand for kids, offers children ages 2-8 the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television, digital media and community-based programs. PBS KIDS and local stations across the country support the entire ecosystem in which children learn, including their teachers, parents and community. Provided by stations, the free PBS KIDS 24/7 channel and live stream is available to more than 95% of U.S. TV households. Kidscreen- and Webby Award-winning [pbskids.org](http://www.pbskids.org/) provides engaging interactive content, including digital games and streaming video. PBS KIDS offers mobile apps to help support young children’s learning, including the PBS KIDS Video app, which is available on a variety of mobile devices and on platforms such as Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android TV and Chromecast. PBS KIDS also offers parent and teacher resources to support children’s learning anytime and anywhere. For more information on PBS KIDS content and initiatives supporting school readiness and more, visit [pbs.org/pressroom](http://pbs.org/pressroom), or follow PBS KIDS on [Twitter](http://twitter.com/pbskids), [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/pbskids) and Instagram.

**About the Corporation for Public Broadcasting**
The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private, nonprofit corporation created by Congress in 1967, is the steward of the federal government’s investment in public broadcasting. It helps support the operations of more than 1,500 locally owned and operated public television and radio stations nationwide. CPB is also the largest single source of funding for research, technology and program development for public radio, television and related online services. For more information, visit [www.cpb.org](http://www.cpb.org/) and follow us on Twitter [@CPBmedia](https://twitter.com/CPBmedia), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CorporationForPublicBroadcasting) and [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/corporation-for-public-broadcasting), and [subscribe](http://www.cpb.org/subscribe) for email updates.

**About The Ready To Learn Initiative**
The Ready To Learn Initiative is a cooperative agreement funded and managed by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. It supports the development of innovative educational television and digital media targeted to preschool and early elementary school children and their families. Its general goal is to promote early learning and school readiness, with a particular interest in reaching low-income children. In addition to creating television and other media products, the program supports activities intended to promote national distribution of the programming, effective educational uses of the programming, community-based outreach and research on educational effectiveness.

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