

Brains On (APM) | Smash Boom Best Opossums vs. Raccoons 01GAQ11JE8DZRAETHM2YXQH8E0

ANNOUNCER: From the brains behind Brains On, it's *SmashBoomBest*.

The show for people with big opinions.

MOLLY BLOOM: I'm Molly Bloom, and you're listening to *Smash Boom Best*, the show where we take two things, smash them together, and ask you to decide which one is best. Today's stand off is a total critter contest. It's opossums versus raccoons. We've got theater teacher and improv sensation, Roy Rodriguez, here to represent the marvelous marsupials, opossums.

ROY RODRIGUEZ: I wanted to start today with some motivation from my opossum, Guru Nana. Nothing is im-possum-ble.

[LAUGHTER]

MOLLY BLOOM: And super producer, Rose Dupont, here to defend the masked mavens, raccoons.

ROSE DUPONT: I cannot raccoon-mend raccoons enough.

MOLLY BLOOM: Oh, we're starting off very strong in the pun department. Which team will win? The one who digs through debris or the one who dares to act dead? Lucky for us, we've got Maeve from Eagan, Minnesota. She writes horror and fantasy short stories and draws dragons all over her homework. Hi, Maeve.

MAEVE: Hi.

MOLLY BLOOM: So, Maeve, I understand you and your friends consider opossums to be your mascots. Why is that? How did that start?

MAEVE: Screaming.

MOLLY BLOOM: Screaming?

MAEVE: We are a very loud group of individuals, very loud.

MOLLY BLOOM: It's the opossum screaming that really spoke to you?

MAEVE: You can just have three of my friends in a room, and we'd be really loud. If you had the entire, I call them the group chat because that's just like everyone is in one collective group chat, it would be so-- there would just be yelling and chaos and probably fire, who knows where? We're just chaotic.

MOLLY BLOOM: You clearly have a deep connection with opossums. So, what about raccoons?

MAEVE: I either think of that guy from *Guardians of the Galaxy* or *Pokemon*.

MOLLY BLOOM: Yes. And those are some lovable raccoons.

MAEVE: Yes.

MOLLY BLOOM: Excellent. So, do you think one of these animals is already cooler, or do we have a blank slate we're working with here?

MAEVE: I find them both really interesting. I know more opossums facts than I do raccoon facts, but I will gladly be surprised by the facts.

ROSE DUPONT: Maeve, you're in for some serious raccoon facts.

MAEVE: If you wow me, maybe.

ROSE DUPONT: All right.

MAEVE: Maybe.

ROY And Maeve, I've got some new possum facts that may just make you go, whoa! I didn't even know that about
RODRIGUEZ: opossums.

MOLLY BLOOM: OK. All right, Maeve, are you ready to judge this thing?

MAEVE: I am ready.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wonderful. Then let's review the rules of the game. Round 1 is the Declaration of Greatness, where our debaters present fact-filled arguments in favor of their side. And each have 30 seconds to rebut their opponent's statements. Then we've got the Micro Round, where each team will present a creative response to a prompt they've received in advance.

Round 3 is the Sneak Attack, where our debaters will have to respond to an improv challenge on the spot. And to wrap it all up, we've got the Final 6, where each team will have just six words to sum up the glory of their side. Our judge, Maeve, will award two points in the first round. One for her favorite rebuttal, the other for the declaration she liked best.

She'll award one point in each round after that, but she'll keep her decisions top secret until the end of the debate. Listeners, we want you to judge too. Mark down your points as you listen. At the end of the show, head to our website, smashboom.org, and vote for whichever team you think won. OK. Roy, Rose, and Maeve, are you ready?

MAEVE: Yeah.

ROSE DUPONT: Raccoon ready.

ROY Bring it on.

RODRIGUEZ:

MOLLY BLOOM: Then it's time for the--

ANNOUNCER: Declaration of Greatness.

MOLLY BLOOM: We flipped a coin. And Roy, you're up first. Tell us why team opossum is awesome.

ROY To help convince you of how incredible opossums are, I'm going to introduce you to a superfan.

RODRIGUEZ:

DOROTHY: Hi. I'm Dorothy. I'm eight years old. Opossums are my very, very, very, very favorite animal.

ROY Full disclosure, Dorothy is my daughter. She's been really into opossums since kindergarten. She has stuffed
RODRIGUEZ: animal opossums, opossum books. She even volunteers with them at a local animal rescue, where she helps feed the babies. And I'm starting to think she might be part opossum.

DOROTHY: I've been starting to eat like an opossum, hanging upside down on the monkey bars.

ROY OK. She hasn't grown a tail yet, but she's pretty obsessed. And I get it. Opossum rhymes with awesome, so bonus
RODRIGUEZ: points there. But it's not just the name. Opossums are one of the coolest, most unique animals on the planet.

For starters, opossums are the only marsupials in North America, which means they carry their young in a pouch like a kangaroo. And just like kangaroos, opossum babies are the size of jelly beans when they're born. Then, they crawl into their mother's pouches and grow into joeys.

And do you know what's even cuter? Baby opossums like to crawl onto their mother's back and hitch a ride. It's like an opossum school bus.

OPOSSUM All aboard the mom bus. Come on, you're going to be late for school.
MOM:

JOEY 1: I want to get on.

JOEY 2: Wait for me.

JOEY 3: Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait!

[SCHOOL BUS HONKING]

ROY It's just too cute!
RODRIGUEZ:

WOMAN: Ugh, opossums aren't cute. They're so mean. They hiss. And have you seen their gnarly, little rat teeth? Ugh!

ROY Well, that's just pre-possum-ness. I mean, preposterous. Opossums are not aggressive, right Dorothy?
RODRIGUEZ:

DOROTHY: Yeah, they're misunderstood. They don't want to hurt you. They're just trying to protect themselves.

ROY Right. Opossums get a bad rap for hissing and gnashing their teeth, but it's purely a defense mechanism. They're
RODRIGUEZ: basically all hiss and no bite. Truth be told, if opossums get really scared, they don't attack, they actually faint. And that's where we get the phrase, "Playing opossum."

[GASPS]

[FAINTS]

[THUD]

Their eyes close, their tongues flop out, and they release a super smelly odor. This way, a predator thinks they're already dead and doesn't attack. All of this makes their act pretty convincing.

ANNOUNCER: And the winner for playing dead goes to opossums!

OPOSSUM: Thank you. Wow! There are so many people I'd like to thank. It's all a little overwhelming.

[GASPING]

[FAINTS]

[THUD]

ANNOUNCER: Oh, not again. Can someone bring over a fan?

ROY What makes them even more special? Their resilience! Opossums, like raccoons, eat just about anything. Fruits,
RODRIGUEZ: seeds, nuts, insects, fish, trash, basically, whatever they can get their little mitts on.

[MUNCHING]

But unlike raccoons and some other animals, it's extremely rare for opossums to get diseases like rabies.

MAEVE: Wait, what?

ROY Yeah. Opossums' body temperature is too low for the rabies virus to survive. They also rarely get Lyme disease
RODRIGUEZ: from ticks. Instead, they act like nature's vacuum cleaners and eat up all the ticks without getting sick.

FEMALE This really tickles me fancy.

OPOSSUM:

ROY In fact, a single opossum eats about 5,000 ticks every season. And that keeps diseases from spreading to other
RODRIGUEZ: animals, including humans.

MOLLY BLOOM: Whoa. That's pretty rad.

ROY It doesn't end there. They also slurp up slugs and gobble grasshoppers, which makes gardeners pretty happy.
RODRIGUEZ:

GARDENER: Possums keep my petunias pleasant and my lilies lit.

ROY Opossums are even immune to honey bee stings--

RODRIGUEZ:

[BEES BUZZING]

--scorpions, and snake venom. They're nature's super heroes.

ANNOUNCER: It's a rat. No, a cat. No, it's an opossum! Protecting plants, fellow mammals, and humans alike. Rabies, ticks, even venomous snakes don't stand a chance against the mighty opossum!

WOMAN: Wow! I was wrong.

ROY AND Possums are awesome!

DOROTHY:

MOLLY BLOOM: Wow, a super versatile argument there for opossums. Who knew they were so talented? Maeve, what stood out to you about Roy's Declaration of Greatness?

MAEVE: I didn't know that they had lower body temp.

MOLLY BLOOM: Yeah. That was fascinating.

MAEVE: I knew a lot of that information, because I am just opossums. But I did not know they had a lower body temp than most animals. And so that-- because I knew that they weren't likely to get rabies, I didn't know why. And so that was interesting.

MOLLY BLOOM: It's really fascinating. Their bodies are pretty incredible and capable of withstanding a lot. All right. Rose, it's time for your rebuttal.

ROSE DUPONT: This raccoon is ready to go.

[LAUGHTER]

MOLLY BLOOM: You've got 30 seconds to tear up Roy's argument. Your time starts now.

ROSE DUPONT: OK, who cares if opossums don't get rabies easily? They are known for being infested with parasites, and they carry diseases that are dangerous to humans, including tuberculosis. Also, dogs are responsible for up to 99% of rabies infections in humans, not raccoons. So this whole raccoon rabies thing is overblown.

Number two, opossums are not nice. They're scaredy rats. They are bad at protecting themselves. They have a really high mortality rate. The longest that an opossum lives in the wild or anywhere is four years.

MOLLY BLOOM: And time.

ROSE DUPONT: Oh my gosh! Most of them die in the first year of their lives.

MOLLY BLOOM: I could tell we were going to run out of time when you were like, "And number two." I was like, uh-oh.

ROSE DUPONT: [LAUGHING]

MOLLY BLOOM: Rose's going to run out of time today.

ROSE DUPONT: Oh, man. I've much more to say, guys. So much more to say.

MOLLY BLOOM: Well, Rose, I know you have a lot more points to make.

ROSE DUPONT: Oh my gosh.

MOLLY BLOOM: So please tell us why raccoons should reign supreme.

ROSE DUPONT: Hey, y'all. I'm hanging out by the dumpsters behind my apartment building, waiting for my raccoon friend to arrive. And boy, does it smell.

ROXY Like heaven.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: [LAUGHING]

Roxy Raccoon.

ROXY Time for midnight breakfast.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: Roxy, I'm so glad you're here. I'm defending raccoons in a *Smash Boom Best* debate against opossums. And I want to ask you about your kind.

ROXY Raccoons. We're incredibly smart and pretty darn cute.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: Like way smarter than opossums.

ROXY We're even smarter than cats and dogs.

RACCOON:

[DOG BARKS]

Sorry, Mitsy, you got nothing on us. Raccoons have brains packed with neurons, the little information messengers in your noggin. Our intelligence is on par with human toddlers.

[BABY BABBLING]

ROSE DUPONT: Raccoons are so smart scientists in the early 20th century wanted to use them as lab rats in scientific experiments.

ROXY Yeah, like that was going to work. We pickpocketed researchers, chewed our way through cages, and escaped

RACCOON: into lab ventilation systems. We could not be contained!

ROSE DUPONT: Wow!

ROXY Yep, it's all in the hands, baby. All in the hands.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: Raccoons have incredibly sensitive, adorable hands.

ROXY See the lock on this trash bin here? Watch this.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: \$10, she'll be able to open it. Raccoons can unlock boxes, navigate latches and bolts, use buttons and levers. The only other mammals with hands as sensitive as raccoons are--

ROXY Primates.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: Which includes humans. Yeah, we have a lot in common with these little masked bandits.

ROXY Ta-da! Food for you and food for me. I am cute and trash is free.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: You are cute, Roxy.

ROXY Oh, stop.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: It's true. Looks aren't everything, but raccoons are so much more adorable than opossums. Let's do a side-by-side comparison. Raccoons have little black button noses, a mischievous black mask, and innocent eyes trimmed with splashes of white.

ROXY Easy, breezy, beautiful raccoon girl.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: Meanwhile, opossums look like deranged mice the size of house cats, perpetually scowling with all 50 of their sharp, scary teeth. Ew! And consider this. Raccoons' charming looks have influenced the fashion world. In the 1950s, the *Davy Crockett* TV show was super popular.

["DAVY CROCKETT THEME"]

(SINGING) Davy, Davy Crockett, king of the wild frontier.

ROSE DUPONT: American kids loved Davy so much they wanted their own version of his iconic raccoon skin cap. That's a hat with a raccoon tail attached to the back.

ROXY OK, I don't love thinking about raccoons being killed for their fur, but you have a point. We're extremely good

RACCOON: looking.

ROSE DUPONT: Can you imagine wanting to dress up like an opossum?

ROXY Ugh! I'd rather play dead.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: [LAUGHING]

Me too, Roxy. Me too. And we might as well face the truth. Raccoons, with their smarts and good looks, have captured the human imagination in a way opossums never will. Throughout history, they've stolen the spotlight as celebrity pets and movie stars.

ROXY My favorite is Rocket Raccoon from *Guardians of the Galaxy*. He's super smart and the funniest character in the

RACCOON: franchise. And he's pretty cute.

ROSE DUPONT: Mine is Rascal raccoon. He's the star of Sterling North's best selling book, *Rascal*. It's a true story about their adventures together during Rascal's first year of life. And it was so popular it turned into a live action Disney movie and a Japanese TV show in the 1970s.

["RASCAL THEME SONG"]

(SINGING) Hidey, hidey, little Rascal. Like the wind, oh little Rascal.

Hidey, hidey, my friend Rascal. Come with me, oh little Rascal. Hidey!

ROXY Loved that show. That's how raccoons ended up in Japan.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: Wait, really?

ROXY Yeah. Japanese kids were so obsessed with the anime version of Rascal Raccoon, for a while, more than 1,000

RACCOON: pet raccoons were shipped into Japan every month.

ROSE DUPONT: Oh, I wish I could have a pet raccoon.

ROXY No, you don't. We're born to be free, baby.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: OK, I'll settle for raccoon memes. Raccoons are internet sensations. Take Melanie Raccoon from the UK. She's got a huge following, and she can perform over 100 tricks. From dancing to clapping to riding a tiny bike.

ROXY Whatever. I could do that, too.

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: With a little bit of coaching, Roxy, yeah, you could. Got any memeable content to close with?

ROXY Live every day like trash day.

RACCOON:

[LAUGHTER]

ROSE DUPONT: I swoon for raccoons.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wow, raccoon's taken pop culture by storm. Maeve, what stood out to you about Rose's Declaration of Greatness?

MAEVE: Their hands are sensitive. Also, I really like the thing about trash is free that, I don't know.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHING]

MAEVE: I just like that bit. That bit was fun.

MOLLY BLOOM: It's a very charismatic raccoon. MAEVE: Also, I thought it was really interesting that the raccoons kept pickpocketing the scientists and escaping.

MOLLY BLOOM: Very clever.

MAEVE: It's like, I don't think they're going to be very good lab rats.

MOLLY BLOOM: Using those hands for some mischief. Roy, it's time for your rebuttal.

ROY OK.

RODRIGUEZ:

MOLLY BLOOM: You have 30 seconds to turn Rose's argument upside down. And your time starts now.

ROY So Rose said possums are infested with parasites. But actually, raccoons have roundworm and leptospirosis,
RODRIGUEZ: which are very harmful to humans. And in fact, the Center for Disease Control said that, in fact, raccoons are second only to bats that carry the most rabies in the United States. Also, she said that possums aren't smart.

But actually, possums were used by scientists to go through very complicated mazes. When it comes to raccoons using their hands, they're basically thieves. They're called pests. They get into people's attics, because with their little hands, they crawl into your attic space and make babies.

MOLLY BLOOM: And time.

ROSE DUPONT: Oh my gosh. You know who else crawls into attics? Opossums. You just met an opossum, in fact, that had snuck into a flower shop, I believe, and ate lots of glittery ribbon and then pooped glittery poops all over the flower shop.

ROY That opossum got there by accident, because the owners had a terrible roof. It's not the opossum's fault that the
RODRIGUEZ: owners of that flower shop had a bad roof. So I say, you know what? It's on the owners of that shop that the possums fell through.

ROSE DUPONT: You know what, Roy? Here's what I'm going to say. I want to say that raccoons and opossums both will go into an attic if it's available to them. So maybe we're just-- we're on the same level here, OK?

MOLLY BLOOM: OK. Maeve, it's time for you to award your points. Give one point to the Declaration of Greatness you liked best and one point to the most compelling rebuttal.

ROSE DUPONT: Oh no.

MOLLY BLOOM: You get to decide what makes a winning argument. Did one side sway you with their humor or logic, wow you with fantastic facts? Maeve, have you awarded those points?

MAEVE: Yes.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wonderful. Now, Rose and Roy, how are you feeling so far?

ROSE DUPONT: Woo, woo, raccoons! Feeling good.

MOLLY BLOOM: Roy, how are you feeling?

ROY Opossums are so resilient that any attack that Rose and her raccoons have are nothing to the resilience that
RODRIGUEZ: we've got on side possum.

MOLLY BLOOM: Ooh, things are heating up. All right, it's time for a quick break. Go pick through the recycling and eat a handful of ticks.

MAEVE: And we'll be right back with more *Smash Boom Best*.

TAYLOR Hey there, super smarties. Taylor here with my number one debate mate, Todd Douglas!
LINCOLN:

TODD Here I am. And guess what? Taylor and I got another logical fallacy in the wild.
DOUGLAS:

TAYLOR Logical fallacies are debate mistakes that muck up your argument.

LINCOLN:

TODD DOUGLAS: And this baddie is called the correlation fallacy. It's when you think one thing causes another thing to happen, but the relationship is actually totally random.

TAYLOR Let's head over to Kanga's Fast Food Palace and listen to this fallacy in the field.

LINCOLN:

BRIAN: Ooh, I love playing the Kanga Scratch lottery game. I'm totally going to win.

[SCRATCHING]

Yes! I knew it.

SANDRA: Whoa! Brian, chill.

BRIAN: I knew I would win.

SANDRA: Really?

BRIAN: Yeah because I'm wearing pink.

SANDRA: What? No way that's a thing.

BRIAN: Yes, it is. I've done the research, Sandra. I've camped out at Kanga chains around the city, and people are always wearing pink when they win the game.

SANDRA: Brian, that's just a coincidence.

BRIAN: Look, I've taken pictures of people celebrating with their free Kanga burgers and free Kanga fries and free Kanga shakes. See? He's wearing pink and so is she. Pink, pink, pink. It's science. Here, can you take my picture of me with my winning cup and totally fashion pink bucket hat?

SANDRA: OK. Your hat is cute. But you didn't win because you're wearing it.

[BUZZER]

TAYLOR LINCOLN: Woof! Brian used a correlation fallacy to try to prove that wearing pink and getting a winning ticket are connected. But they're not.

TODD DOUGLAS: Sorry, Bry. Try again.

DOUGLAS:

TAYLOR Remember, debate heads, check those assumptions. And we'll catch you next time on--

LINCOLN:

BOTH: State of Debate.

(SINGING)

Boom.

Boom.

Boom-boom.

Boom.

Boom.

Boom.

Boom-boom.

Boom.

Smash.

Boom.

Best.

MOLLY BLOOM: You're listening to *Smash Boom Best*. I'm your host, Molly Bloom.

MAEVE: And I'm your judge, Maeve.

MOLLY BLOOM: So, Maeve, how is it going? Are you enjoying the debate?

MAEVE: I really like it. It is fantastic.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wonderful. What is one of the wildest facts you've learned today?

MAEVE: Probably that possum's body temp is lower and so they don't get rabies as often.

MOLLY BLOOM: It's a good fact. We love getting debate suggestions from our listeners. Here's an epic idea we got from Maxwell.

MAXWELL: My debate idea is hide-and-seek versus tag.

MOLLY BLOOM: We'll check back with Maxwell at the end of this episode to see which side he thinks should win.

MAEVE: And now, it's back to today's debate. Opossums versus raccoons.

MOLLY BLOOM: That's right. And it's time for round 2, the--

ANNOUNCER: Micro Round.

MOLLY BLOOM: Today's Micro Round challenge is called Basic cable. Rose and Roy, we asked you to pretend you're channel surfing and spoof various forms of TV shows, all while showcasing the glory of your side. Roy went first last time. So Rose, you're up. Let's tune in.

ROSE DUPONT: Let's see what's on Trash Panda TV. Ooh, it's the NPR Raccoon. I love her. She climbed a 23-story building in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

ANNOUNCER: And she's at it again. The NPR Raccoon is back in Saint Paul. And she says she's here to scale an even taller tower. Ms. Raccoon, what inspired this ambitious new goal?

MS. RACCOON: I love a challenge, whether it's breaking into a school cafeteria or opening a jar of smoked mackerel, I'm ready for it.

ANNOUNCER: Very impressed. And I've heard you have your sights set on Jackson Tower.

MS. RACCOON: Yeah, it's double the height of the last tower. 46 stories.

ANNOUNCER: Wow! This raccoon is shooting for the moon. Next up on--

ROSE DUPONT: Oh, I love my little forbidden cats. Ugh, is that an opossum playing dead? This is the whole show? Boring. Ooh, the history channel.

NARRATOR: Rebecca the raccoon was shipped from Mississippi to the White House shortly before Thanksgiving, 1926.

ROSE DUPONT: Oh, Rebecca the White House raccoon.

NARRATOR: Raccoon meat was once a common delicacy. And Rebecca was supposed to be served for the presidential Thanksgiving meal. But President Calvin Coolidge couldn't bear the idea of eating such a sweet, little animal. So he kept her as a pet instead. She was famous for unscrewing light bulbs, opening cabinets, and unpotting plants.

ROSE DUPONT: Oh, she reminds me of Roxy.

ROXY Did someone say my name?

RACCOON:

ROSE DUPONT: [GASPS]

Roxy, how did you get in here?

ROXY What's on the menu for midnight lunch?

RACCOON:

MAEVE: There is no lunch.

[LAUGHTER]

MOLLY BLOOM: Wow. That was wonderful. Some really good channel surfing. Hanging 10 on that remote control. Roy, it's your turn. Let's hear your channel surfing.

JOEY Hold on to your prehensile tail, sports fans. This is Joey Pouchman reporting live from the 50-yard line. In a

POUCHMAN: surprise turn of events, a full team of baby opossums have suited up and are ready to play some football. Joining me as always is my co-host, Whiskers McSnout.

WHISKERS This is riveting, Joey. These young joeys just turned five months old and said goodbye to mom and hello football.

MCSNOUT: They just hit the field and are showing us an interesting formation. I think it's called the cuddle formation?

JOEY That's right, Whiskers. Opossums are known to be avid cuddlers. Oh no! There's a flag on the play. It looks like

POUCHMAN: one of the opossums bit a little too hard and deflated the football.

WHISKERS I am not surprised. Possums have 50 teeth. That's the most teeth of any mammal in the animal kingdom.

MCSNOUT:

[WHISTLE]

JOEY Looks like we need to take a timeout to get another football. But don't touch that--

POUCHMAN:

[CHANNEL CHANGE]

BOB ROSSUM: Howdy, friends. It's me, Bob Rossum. Let's get to painting. Today, we're going to be painting the noble opossum, such beautiful little creatures. OK, let's grab some paint and a brush. Then just start making the body of that happy, little puffball.

Opossums have some of the cleanest fur in the animal kingdom. They spend most of their waking hours cleaning their coats. So you'll think twice before calling these little guys dirty. Their fur is cleaner than my painting apron, that's for sure.

[CHANNEL CHANGE]

NARRATOR: Welcome back to "Opossums, the History of the Hiss." Most US presidents have had pets during their time in the White House. Believe it or not, two US presidents kept opossums as pets.

President Herbert Hoover named his opossum Billy after President William Taft. And President Benjamin Harrison had two opossums in the White House, Mr. Reciprocity and Mr. Protection. It goes to show opossums are number one, even among the presidents.

MOLLY BLOOM: Ugh! Wow. I am amazed that the White House has had both raccoons and opossums as pets. I'm shocked. Did you know that, Maeve?

MAEVE: No. I only knew about dogs and cats and birds.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wow.

MAEVE: The usual.

MOLLY BLOOM: Yeah.

ROSE DUPONT: Presidential debate, yeah.

MOLLY BLOOM: Did anything else stand out to you about those channel surfings we just experienced?

MAEVE: I liked how there was the raccoon scaling the building in the first one. And then, with opossums, how it was just-- the joeys were just the cuddle pile.

MOLLY BLOOM: Yeah, that's pretty cute.

ROSE DUPONT: I will admit that.

MOLLY BLOOM: The little cuddle pile. All right, Maeve, time to award another point. Don't tell us who it's going to. Again, the criteria, up to you. Which shows would you rather watch? Who got some facts in there? Again, up to you. Have you made your decision?

MAEVE: Yeah. This one was a bit quicker.

MOLLY BLOOM: All right. Then it's time for our third around, the super stealthy--

ANNOUNCER: Sneak Attack.

MOLLY BLOOM: Your Sneak Attack is called On Broadway. We want you to come up with a song from a Broadway musical starring your side. Tell us a bit about where your song appears in the show. Is it the opening "I wish" song, is it the exciting closer of the first act, or maybe a romantic love ballad?

And then sing us a sample of the music. It doesn't have to be the whole song, but we'd like a sample, a taste of this song. Does that make sense?

ROSE DUPONT: Yes, it does.

ROY Absolutely.

RODRIGUEZ:

MOLLY BLOOM: OK. So Rose went first last time, so Roy is going to start. Are you ready, Roy?

ROY Let's do this.

RODRIGUEZ:

MOLLY BLOOM: All right, let's get operatic for opossums.

ROY So when I think of opossums in a Broadway musical, I think of someone who's also misunderstood. That person
RODRIGUEZ: being Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton.

[LAUGHTER]

ROSE DUPONT: Oh my God.

ROY And so what I have done for you today is done a re-reimagined version of my shots, but it's called, "My schnout."

RODRIGUEZ: And it's about the noble opossum. Would you like a sample?

MOLLY BLOOM: I would love--

MAEVE: We would love that.

ROY Great, OK. Here we go. This is like the opening of the musical just like where it is in *Hamilton*. Because you have--
RODRIGUEZ: you've got to figure out who this person is and understand how this creature rise up against all the negativity like what we heard in the debate earlier from the side of the raccoons. So here we go.

(SINGING) I am not throwing away my schnout. And you know I'm just like my country, I'm fun hissing and hungry, and I'm not throwing away my schnout. We're going to rise up, possums. We're going to rise up! We're going to rise up! Possums, show the raccoons on what it's all about possums!

OK. Yeah, thank you. Thank you very much.

MOLLY BLOOM: I felt the passion. Very nicely done.

ROY Thank you.

RODRIGUEZ:

MOLLY BLOOM: Rose, you are up. We're ready for a raccoon rhapsody.

ROSE DUPONT: All right, I'm not a musical theater guru, but I am a fan of the theater. So I think I can come up with something. So I want you to think of this song as a love song in a community theater piece produced by a band of little raccoons living in an alley in New York City.

They're a scrappy, off-broadway kind of gang. And this love song is actually inspired by this one raccoon-- his name is Ronalds-- and his feelings for Roxy, who you met earlier.

MAEVE: [GASPS]

Ooh!

ROSE DUPONT: So here we go. It's a little juicy.

MAEVE: There's a story arc here.

ROSE DUPONT: Yeah.

[LAUGHING]

And this is him singing to her at the climax of the show where he's realized that he's madly in love with her.

(SINGING) My sweetest raccoon, fly my heart to the moon. It's for you I swoon. I can't help but sing this tune for you, my perfect Roxy Raccoon.

MOLLY BLOOM: Ugh. Very heartfelt.

ROY Beautiful.

RODRIGUEZ:

MOLLY BLOOM: Very passionate

ROY Slow tear rolling down my face.

RODRIGUEZ:

MOLLY BLOOM: This is going to be a tough decision.

MAEVE: I could imagine the scenery of a moon as he's strumming a guitar or something.

MOLLY BLOOM: Oh, beautiful.

ROY But it's community theater so the moon is a little off kilter. The moon's kind of--

RODRIGUEZ:

[LAUGHTER]

The string has broken, and the moon is little sideways. That's how I imagined that.

MOLLY BLOOM: All right. Maeve, think about what you just heard. Did one side impress you with their melodies? Did another make you laugh? Who belted best? Award your fourth point to the team that impressed you the most. It's tough, I know.

MAEVE: They're both really good. It's either *Hamilton* or the love song for Roxy.

MOLLY BLOOM: It's tough, but you are our very smart judge. So I know you can make an excellent decision.

MAEVE: I have made my choice.

MOLLY BLOOM: Excellent. Then it's time for our final around--

ANNOUNCER: The Final 6.

MOLLY BLOOM: Rose, you've got just six words to wrap this thing up.

MAEVE: Use them wisely.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHING]

ROSE DUPONT: OK. A short preface. Julius Caesar, the famous Roman general and statesman, famously said, "Veni, vidi, vici," which means, "I came, I saw, I conquered." With that in mind, Maeve, here is my Final 6. Raccoons came, they pawed, they raccoon-quered.

MOLLY BLOOM: Oh!

ROSE DUPONT: OK.

MAEVE: History.

MOLLY BLOOM: Very, Very nicely done.

MAEVE: I've always liked my-- I liked history, especially because I had a good American studies teacher.

MOLLY BLOOM: That'll go far away. All right. Roy, it's your turn. Give us your Final 6.

ROY OK, since I'm a teacher, I'm going to go back to the facts here. Former debate coach speaking straight to the

RODRIGUEZ: listening audience and to Maeve, our wonderful judge. Raccoons are rabid, opossums are awesome.

MOLLY BLOOM: To the point. All right. This debate has been quite the creature competition, but who will win? There's only one person who can make the call, Maeve.

MAEVE: Me. Wa-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!

MOLLY BLOOM: Have you awarded a point for that Final 6?

MAEVE: Yes.

MOLLY BLOOM: Maeve, are you ready to crown one team the Smash Boom Best?

MAEVE: Yes.

MOLLY BLOOM: Drumroll, please.

[DRUMROLL]

The winner is--

MAEVE: Raccoons!

ROSE DUPONT: Wee!

ROY Oh, well done, raccoon.

RODRIGUEZ:

ROSE DUPONT: Woo, woo, raccoons!

MAEVE: Yup.

[LAUGHTER]

MOLLY BLOOM: So Maeve, was there a moment that decided things for you? What put raccoons over the top?

MAEVE: The song. The song, I like the song-- because there's a story behind it. There is a story. And it was for Roxy, a character that showed up before. And I was like, I like the relevance--

MOLLY BLOOM: You got attached to Roxy?

MAEVE: Yeah.

MOLLY BLOOM: Then that was a good tactic there, Rose. Nicely done.

ROSE DUPONT: Thank you.

ROY Rose, it was such a joy to debate you. And I learned so much about raccoons and those sneaky, little hands of

RODRIGUEZ: theirs and just how smart they are. In combination with those hands and the things that they can do, those raccoons are pretty impressive. And you did a great job of showing the world how absolutely cool those raccoons are.

ROSE DUPONT: Thank you, Roy. It was so awesome debating you. You did a stellar job. You are a consummate performer, and I'm still in awe of your *Hamilton* track. So great job.

MOLLY BLOOM: And that's it for today's debate battle. Maeve crowned raccoons the Smash Boom Best, but what about you?

MAEVE: Head to smashboom.org and vote to tell us who you think won.

MOLLY BLOOM: *Smash Boom Best* is brought to you by *Brains On* and APM Studios.

ROSE DUPONT: It's produced by Molly Bloom, Ruby Guthrie, and me, Rose Dupont.

MOLLY BLOOM: We had engineering help from Gary O'Keefe, Evan Clark, and Matt Ditman.

ROY Our editors are Sanden Totten and Shahla Farzan.

RODRIGUEZ:

ROSE DUPONT: And we had production help from Anna Goldfield, Mark Sanchez, Anna Weggel, and Nico Gonzalez Wisler.

MOLLY BLOOM: Our executive producer is Beth Pearlman, and the APM Studios executives in charge are Chandra Kavati, Alex Shaffer, and Joanne Griffith. Our announcer is Marley Feuerwerker-Otto. And we want to give a special thanks to Austin Cross, Taylor Coffman, Pablo Sandy, David Brancaccio, Marielle Segarra, Erika Romero, and Ilo. Roy, is there anyone you'd like to thank today?

ROY I'd like to give a special shoutout to my resident opossum expert, my dear daughter, Dorothy, and to Paws and
RODRIGUEZ: Claws Rescue in College Station for allowing us to help rehabilitate their raccoons and possums alike and to the wonderful staff here at KAMU in College Station on the campus of Texas A&M University.

MOLLY BLOOM: That's wonderful. And Rose, how about you? Any special shout outs?

ROSE DUPONT: Oh my gosh. A special shout out to the entire *Brains On* team that I work with. You guys are amazing. And also to Marielle Segarra who played Roxy Raccoon.

MOLLY BLOOM: And how about you, Maeve? Do you want to give me a special thanks or shout outs?

MAEVE: My dad who came with me here today, because he's awesome.

MOLLY BLOOM: Dads are awesome. All right, before we go, let's check in with Maxwell and see who he thinks should win his hide-and-seek versus tag debate.

MAXWELL: I think tag should win because tag is a really fun game to play with your friends. And you can play it in a lot of different ways.

MOLLY BLOOM: Do you have an idea for a knockdown, drag-out debate? Head to smashboom.org and tell us about it. We'll be back with a new debate battle next week.

MAEVE: Bye.

ROY Adios, opossum friends.

RODRIGUEZ:

ROSE DUPONT: Goodbye.

[THEME MUSIC]

MOLLY BLOOM: I just have a question. Glitter poop, pro or con? I don't know.

MAEVE: I mean, if my sparkled--

MOLLY BLOOM: It's pretty amazing.