

Brains On (APM) | Smash Boom Best Tardigrades vs. Elephants 01GV1RV9CT52TVAKRN2FVANWAC

ANNOUNCER: From the brains behind *BrainsOn*, it's *SmashBoomBest*, the show for people with big opinions.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

MOLLY BLOOM: Hi. I'm Molly Bloom, and this is *Smash Boom Best*, the show where we take two things, smash them together, and ask you to decide which one is best. Today's debate is an extreme animal face-off. One team is large in charge and loves to eat peanuts. The other is smaller than a peanut but stronger than steel. It's tardigrades versus elephants.

Over on team tardigrades, it's actor, director, playwright, and creative extraordinaire Duck Washington.

DUCK Get ready to have a tardi-great time.

WASHINGTON:

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] And for team tusks, it's actor, writer, instructor, improv maven, and elephant enthusiast Lauren Anderson.

LAUREN Sound the trumpets for all you elephanatics!

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] And here to judge it all is Bijou from Saint Paul, Minnesota. Bijou loves theater, drawing, stickers, and even makes their own podcast. Welcome, Bijou.

BIJOU: Hi there.

MOLLY BLOOM: So Bijou, you love stickers.

BIJOU: Mhm.

MOLLY BLOOM: You have your own sticker shop.

BIJOU: That I do.

MOLLY BLOOM: Oh, my gosh. Please tell us about it.

BIJOU: Yeah. I make all my stickers by hand. I design them myself. My personal favorite are these little cows. They're just cows, but their spots are the colors of different pride flags.

MOLLY BLOOM: Oh, very nice.

BIJOU: Yeah.

MOLLY BLOOM: Very, very cool. Well, who will Bijou choose? Only they can tell. Bijou, are you ready to judge this thing?

BIJOU: Oh, I'm very ready.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wonderful. Before we get into this debate, it's time to review the rules of the game.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Round one is the declaration of greatness, where our debaters present fact-filled arguments in favor of their side. And they 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 received in advance.

Round three 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 six, where each team will have just six words to sum up the glory of their side.

Our judge, Bijou, will award two points in the first round-- one for their favorite rebuttal, the other for the declaration they liked best. Then they'll award one point in each round after that, but they'll keep their 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. Lauren, Duck, and Bijou-- are you ready?

DUCK Oh, yeah.

WASHINGTON:

LAUREN All right.

ANDERSON:

DUCK Let's get it on.

WASHINGTON:

BIJOU: Woo! Let's do this.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wonderful. Then it's time for the declaration of greatness.

[FANFARE]

We've flipped a coin, and Duck, you're up first. Tell us why tardigrades are top tier.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

DUCK Hello. Hello and welcome to the world's greatest game show, "Extreme Tardigrade." We've got there eight-

WASHINGTON: legged microorganisms ready to expose themselves to the most extreme conditions in the world and beyond. Say hello to our hardy contestants.

CHARLIE: Hey. Sup, y'all? My name's Charlie. I'm a tardigrade, and since I'm 0.06 millimeters long, people say I'm pretty swole. I eat plants. I can survive literally everything.

BECKY: Becky's in the house! I'm also a tardigrade, originally from New York. But I've been found living in Australia, Antarctica, and even outer space. You better watch out. Just because I'm a water bear doesn't mean I'm cuddly. Mama bear's got claws.

MICHAEL: Hey there, whippersnappers. My name's Michael, and I'm a tardigrade degree too! I know quite a few things, partially because I was a Rhodes scholar, but mainly because I'm 110 years old.

DUCK Wow. That is an extreme group of tardigrades. Y'all ready to travel the world to see who's the most extreme?

WASHINGTON:

CHARLIE: I was laid ready.

DUCK Wow. What an aggressive group of microscopic animals. Tardigrades go by many names-- moss piglets, water
WASHINGTON: bears, or my personal nickname, itty-bitty-gritty potato monsters. They've also got eight stubby legs and a puffy panda-like body that would be so huggable if you could hug them. They're actually smaller than the tip of a pencil.

Tardigrades live in wet areas and eat tiny bits of plants and microscopic creatures. But don't be fooled by the cuteness overload. These little guys can survive some of the most dangerous conditions in the world.

CHARLIE: Yeah, because we're hardcore!

DUCK Yes, but also because they're really good at getting rid of water from their tiny bodies. You see, when the going
WASHINGTON: gets tough, tardigrades get dehydrated. They enter a special state called cryptobiosis. In this form, they lose 97% of the water in their bodies.

When you're as small as they are, losing that much water makes your cells extremely hard to destroy. So when they are dried out like this, they can endure a lot.

MICHAEL: Oh, yeah! Which is why I'm not afraid of jumping in this rocket headed straight to the moon!

[WHOOSH]

CHARLIE: Whatever. I'm jumping into the deepest trench in the ocean.

BECKY: Oh, yeah? Well, I'm going to get hit by an asteroid.

[KABOOM]

DUCK Now, that is extreme, but those are all situations these tardigrades can survive. Some of it is due to those drying
WASHINGTON: up powers, but scientists say there's probably more to it that we just haven't figured out yet. Their toughness makes them natural explorers.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Tardigrades are usually the first ones to find and live in uninhabited spaces. Then their micro-predators, like amoebas and nematodes, follow them into these new areas. Soon, there's a thriving mini-ecosystem building up around these little micro-piglets. That's why scientists believe that tardigrades may have been the first animals to leave the ocean and live on land.

MICHAEL: Well, I'm a real explorer. I make Marco Polo look like a Cub Scout.

DUCK That's quite the claim, but it's true. You can find tardigrades everywhere-- in the hot springs of the Himalayas,
WASHINGTON: the bone-chilling ice of the Antarctic. They may even be on the moon, not because they have a teeny, tiny space program, although cute, but because they probably hitched a ride on our rockets and landed on the moon without dying.

But you don't have to go to all the trouble of going to the moon to find a tardigrade. Just check out your very own backyard. Collect a small clump of moss, place that moss in a shallow dish to soak in water overnight, then lightly squeeze the water from the soaked moss into a Petri dish. If you look at the water in a microscope, you'll probably find tardigrades in there.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

It's time to announce the winner and declare the most extreme tardigrade in the world. And you know what? It's a tie!

BECKY: All three of us are the most extreme?

DUCK Nope. It's over a one billion way tie. There are so many tardigrades out there that naming the most extreme is

WASHINGTON: practically impossible.

CHARLIE: No! Participation trophies are not extreme!

[MUSIC PLAYING]

MOLLY BLOOM: [CHUCKLES] An extremely delightful declaration there for tardigrades.

DUCK Thank you.

WASHINGTON:

MOLLY BLOOM: Bijou, what stood out to you about Duck's argument?

BIJOU: Well, first off, I really enjoyed the extreme format. That was very entertaining. I liked that a lot.

I knew that tardigrades were microscopic and could survive anything. But I was very interested to learn just exactly how that worked. And for them to have lived in space, I didn't know they could do that. That's really cool, and I really like the tutorial on how to see tardigrades yourself. That's awesome.

DUCK We aim to be helpful.

WASHINGTON:

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] All right. Lauren, it's time for your rebuttal. You've got 30 seconds to stop Duck's argument, and your time starts now.

LAUREN All right. Why would you be a moss piglet when you could be a boss biglet like the elephants?

ANDERSON:

[LAUGHTER]

I mean, why settle for surviving when you could be thriving like the mighty elephant? And if tardigrades are everywhere, that must mean that they're not that special. I mean, dehydrated? What are tardigrades afraid of?

Are they tardi-afraid of water?

[LAUGHTER]

Speaking of water, elephants literally drink millions of tardigrades for breakfast. Like, literally.

[LAUGHTER]

DUCK All right. Gloves off. Gloves off.

WASHINGTON:

[LAUGHTER]

MOLLY BLOOM: All right, Lauren. I want to hear more about those elephants. Tell us why they are extraordinary.

LAUREN When my siblings and I were born, our mom gave us each an animal to inspire us as we grew up. Marna got the
ANDERSON: bear, Kevin got the lion, Timmy got the tiger, Abigail got the giraffe and I got--

[DRUM ROLL]

--the mighty elephant! And I've been obsessed ever since.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

I have over 300 elephant objects in my house, from potted plants to bookends, even an elephant toothbrush. I relate to them, too. Is that because my mom chose this creature for me, or was I born this way? I called her to find out.

MOTHER: Well, therein lies the mystery, the nature versus nurture. Yeah. Elephants, they're very compassionate. They care about one another. We do see them care for their dead.

You do see them protect their children. They're fierce. They're brave. They're extremely large, but they're gentle. They remember.

LAUREN Yeah.

ANDERSON:

MOTHER: They're loyal. They're many things that I would describe you as, yes.

LAUREN Aw.

ANDERSON:

MOTHER: Yeah, for sure.

LAUREN Thanks, mom. That's wonderful.

ANDERSON:

MOTHER: Yeah.

LAUREN [SIGHS] She's right. Elephants are amazing. For starters, they're the biggest land animals on Earth.

ANDERSON:

[RUMBLING]

They're found in Asia and Africa, and African savanna elephants are the biggest species. Adult males can be the height of a basketball hoop and weigh as much as three cars!

[CAR HONKS]

But these giants are gentle animals that show us how to love, communicate, and be good to our friends and family. For example, female elephants live in herds and work together to take care of their young. If a baby elephant complains, the entire family will go over to soothe it.

[ELEPHANT TRUMPETING]

They're also constantly communicating with each other. They use that classic trumpet call, touch, scent, body language, and even seismic signals to send each other messages. Seismic signals are vibrations that travel through the Earth.

[RUMBLING]

And elephants make them by singing.

[CHORAL SINGING]

Elephant voices are so low humans can't hear most of these songs, but elephants use their feet to feel the rumbles up to 20 miles away. Hey, Marsha. Have you heard from the herd? Well, I don't know where they stomped off to.

[RUMBLING]

Ooh. Getting a rumble now. My toes will know. Elephants are also known as the gardeners of the planet. One reason-- their poop.

The mighty elephant takes a mighty poop, and they produce between 200 and 250 pounds of it a day. And that poop is usually full of seeds that can help grow new plants. Wow. Marsha, you never stop gardening. Do you? Poo poo, it's just what I do.

Elephants shape their environment, too, by creating paths and digging watering holes for other animals to enjoy during dry seasons. They have even been known to stomp out forest fires.

[ROARING]

[SPLASHING]

Finally, you've probably heard that an elephant never forgets. That's because elephants have excellent memories. One of my favorite stories about their amazing minds stars an elephant named Shirley.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

When Shirley was just five years old, she was captured in Indonesia and sold to a circus. She performed all over the world for over 25 years. And when she finally retired, she was sent to live at a small zoo, where she was the only elephant.

She was well cared for but very lonely. After years without seeing an elephant friend, Shirley was sent to an elephant sanctuary in Tennessee. And something amazing happened. She was put in a pen next to another elephant named Jenny, who she'd been in the circus with 23 years earlier. And they remembered each other!

They were so excited to see each other that they bent the steel bars separating them to get closer.

[ELEPHANT TRUMPETING]

Once they were reunited, they held each other with their trunks. And they were inseparable for the next seven years. Elephants are enormously awesome, with enormous hearts to match.

Tardigrades? More like tardi-played-out. Let's hear it for the elegant, benevolent elephants.

[ELEPHANT TRUMPETING]

MOLLY BLOOM: Wow. A truly unforgettable declaration of greatness there about elephants.

LAUREN Thank you.

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: Bijou, what stood out to you about Lauren's argument?

BIJOU: Well, to start off, I thought the personal element of the call from your mom was really nice. I thought the seismic signals part was very interesting. I did not know that, and the story about Shirley was awesome. I had always heard elephants never forget.

LAUREN Yeah. It's a beautiful story. There's video online, and every time-- I've watched it multiple times, and I cry every
ANDERSON: time.

MOLLY BLOOM: Aw.

LAUREN Even though I know what's coming.

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] All right, Duck. It's time for your rebuttal. You have 30 seconds to tell us why these tuskers are irrelephant. And your time starts now.

DUCK Well, I'm glad that Shirley and Jenny have people like Lauren looking out for them because they need all the help
WASHINGTON: that they can get.

[LAUGHTER]

Pack your trunks, elephants. You're going away-- destination, extinction.

[EXCLAIMING]

Yeah. I mean, tardigrades don't have to worry about that. They were here before the elephants, and they'll be here long after the elephants. And that's fine because elephants are actually really dangerous. About 500 people a year are killed by elephants. And you don't have to worry about tardigrades taking your rights away.

[LAUGHTER]

LAUREN OK.

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: Can't I?

[LAUGHTER]

LAUREN Zing!

ANDERSON:

BIJOU: Wow.

LAUREN [LAUGHS] OK.

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: All right. All right. Well, we have a lot to work with there.

[LAUGHTER]

Bijou, it's time to award some points. You should give one point to the declaration of greatness that you liked best and one point to the most awesome rebuttal. You get to decide what makes a winning argument.

Did one team make you laugh? Maybe someone used a legendary logic. Award your points, but don't tell us who's getting them. Both could go to the same person. One could go to each.

It's up to you. Have you made your decision?

BIJOU: I have.

[BELL RINGS]

MOLLY BLOOM: Wonderful. Lauren and Duck, how are you two feeling so far?

DUCK Ooh. Pumped and ready for the next round of this bout.

WASHINGTON:

LAUREN I'm dancing. I'm dancing.

ANDERSON:

[LAUGHTER]

Dancing around. Elephants make excellent dancers, by the way. [LAUGHS]

MOLLY BLOOM: Mm. Tardigrades-- do they dance?

DUCK Well, they have a bunch of little pudgy feet, which means that they can do some really unique choreography.

WASHINGTON:

[LAUGHTER]

MOLLY BLOOM: All right. It's time for a quick break. Munch on some algae or trumpet around. And we'll be right back with more *Smash Boom Best*.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

TODD DOUGLASS: Hey, debatearinos. Todd Douglass here, with argumentation maven Taylor Lincoln. And she's got a big old logical fallacy on the line.

TAYLOR LINCOLN: That's right, Todd. Logical fallacies are debate no-nos that make your arguments easy to destroy. And this one is called a straw man fallacy.

TODD DOUGLASS: That's when you exaggerate your opponent's argument so it's easier to attack.

TAYLOR LINCOLN: Pew, pew, pew, pew! And this fallacy is going down! Check it out.

[VIDEO GAME MUSIC]

DAD: Elijah, enough with the video games. Outside, now!

ELIJAH: What? You want me to live outside? [SIGHS]

DAD: [SIGHS] That's not what I said.

ELIJAH: That's pretty extreme, dad. I understand that you don't like how much I play video games. But thinking I need to live like this paleo lifestyle is out of control. Just because my ancestors spent their days sleeping under the stars, sharpening sticks, and running around killing animals doesn't mean I need to too.

DAD: I just think you should spend more time--

ELIJAH: Living in the forest inside of a hollow tree, with only the little forest animals to keep me company? Uh. Dad, that's no way for a kid to grow up.

[BUZZER]

TAYLOR LINCOLN: Wowza! That dad did not just tell his son to live in the forest. He just wanted the kid to get some air!

TODD DOUGLASS: That was a big-time straw man fallacy.

TAYLOR LINCOLN: But it does sound kind of nice to have little forest animals as friends.

TODD DOUGLASS: I know! Like that little chipmunk over there?

[SQUEAKING]

TAYLOR Hey, chipmunk! What are you doing later? Want to go get pizza with us?

LINCOLN:

[SQUEAKING]

TODD We'll see you next time on "State of Debate."

DOUGLASS:

[MUSIC PLAYING]

THEME SONG: Boom, boom, boom, boom. Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. Smash, Boom, Best.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

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

BIJOU: And I'm your judge, Bijou.

MOLLY BLOOM: And we love getting debate suggestions from our listeners. Take a listen to this awesome debate idea from Kate.

KATE: My *Smash Boom Best* idea is kids versus grownups.

BIJOU: How about team teenagers? Best of both worlds.

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

BIJOU: And now it's back to today's debate, tardigrades versus elephants.

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

ANNOUNCER: Micro-round.

[BELL RINGS]

MOLLY BLOOM: Today's micro-round challenge is called babysitter. Duck and Lauren, we asked you to tell us why we should hire your team to take care of some human kids. Duck went first last time, so Lauren, you're up. Tell us why elephants are excellent sitters.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

LAUREN
ANDERSON: Looking for super-cali-fragi-listic-elephantastic childcare? Join Elsie's Elephant Herd. The world renowned Mary Poppins of pachyderms is here to care for your child.

Our herd is huge, so there will be plenty of friends for your little tyke to play with. Having arty kid? Well, we've been known to dance with ribbons and paint pretty pictures. Got more of a sporty child? We offer swimming lessons because the elephants are excellent swimmers.

And come snack time, we'll never feed your child spoonfuls of sugar because we elephants prefer leafy greens. But Elsie, you might ask, my child is a real handful-- can you handle a kid so precocious? Well, frankly, the sound of that is something quite atrocious, but fear not. We elephants have really thick skin, like, literally. It's like 2.5 centimeters thick in most places. Nothing gets to us, and remember an elephant never forgets. Truly, your phone number, where you keep the pasta, all of your kids' favorite board games-- it'll go in one giant ear, and it will stay there forever, in the most delightful way.

So don't just sit around feeding the birds. Go fly a kite and leave your little one with us. The Mary Poppins of pachyderms has got you covered.

MOLLY BLOOM: Is she available this Saturday?

[LAUGHTER]

Could be.

LAUREN Yes.

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: Very useful. All right, Duck. It is your turn. Why should we trust our tykes with tardigrades?

[DOORBELL RINGS]

[DOOR OPENS]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

WOMAN: Hello. Is anyone there?

TERRENCE: Down here. I'm Terrence the tardigrade. I'm here for the babysitting job.

WOMAN: But you're so tiny.

TERRENCE: Indeed I am, but our size is just one of the things that makes tardigrades awesome babysitters. Unlike some other giant babysitters, kids find me super approachable and cute. I'm pocket-sized. Plus, if little baby Sophie is near a scary fire or abducted by aliens, I won't be afraid. Radiation, extreme temperatures, the vastness of space-- I can survive it all.

WOMAN: Great. I'm glad to know you won't freeze when my husband turns the thermostat down. [CHUCKLES] What other qualifications do you have?

TERRENCE: Well, when Sophie feels lonely, I'll hug her using all eight of my cute pudgy arms, and I can't starve. So I'm cheap to feed. Can I be transparent with you?

WOMAN: Please. Go ahead.

TERRENCE: Oh, I don't have secrets. I meant can I be transparent like see-through because that's how I naturally am.

WOMAN: Oh, neat. That must help you keep an eye on kids without them noticing.

TERRENCE: Technically, my eyes are pretty simple, and I can't see much. But I will 100% keep them on her.

WOMAN: You're hired.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

MOLLY BLOOM: Unconventional choice but also interested. So please give me the number.

DUCK You got it.

WASHINGTON:

MOLLY BLOOM: Bijou, what did you like best about Lauren and Duck's micro-rounds?

BIJOU: Well, I thought the Mary Poppins references and the elephant ones were so fun. I love Mary Poppins. Great movie.

I thought how just the little tardigrade character was very funny. I enjoyed it a lot.

MOLLY BLOOM: All right. It's time to award another point. That criteria is totally up to you. It could be the babysitter you most want to hire, the one who sounds fun to hang out with.

Maybe some facts were snuck in there. They made you laugh. Up to you who gets the point.

DUCK Just a spoonful of sugar makes the elephants go down!

WASHINGTON:

[EXCLAIMING, LAUGHTER]

MOLLY BLOOM: All right, Bijou. Have you made your decision?

BIJOU: Yes, I have.

[BELL RINGS]

MOLLY BLOOM: Fantastic. And then it's time for our third around, the super stealthy sneak attack. Your sneak attack is called Oscar-winning moment. For this challenge, we want you to pretend that your side is the star of the next best motion picture.

Make up a scene on the spot that deserves an Oscar nom. We want drama, eye-popping effects, incredible costumes. Before you start, tell us a bit about the movie, your character, and where your scene lands in the story. Does that make sense?

**LAUREN
ANDERSON:**

DUCK Mhm.

WASHINGTON:

MOLLY BLOOM: OK. Lauren went first last time. So Duck, you are up. Time to fluoresce with a tremendous tardigrade performance.

DUCK All right. So this is for a Tardigrade Cruise from the movie "Top Water Bug."

WASHINGTON:

[LAUGHTER]

And this is the scene where Tardigrade Cruise has to talk to his partner who died who was an elephant's son--

[LAUGHTER]

--into how to be brave.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Elephant, I know that you don't trust me because when our plane went down your father died and I survived. But I just want you to know that it is OK. There are elephants who have flown before.

[LAUGHTER]

Dumbo is the one I can think of, but there have been some that have flown before. And I think that you can do it, too. Just because your father couldn't survive the explosion or the missile doesn't mean that you have to suffer the same fate. I mean, I walked away just fine. And I believe if you just try to be a little bit more like me and a little bit less like your elephant father, then perhaps, just perhaps you too can be one of the best pilots that this Navy extreme force has ever seen.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wow. Gorgeous. The academy reaching for the Kleenex.

[APPLAUSE]

Oh, wonderful. All right.

LAUREN Amazing.

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: Lauren, we're ready for your elevated elephant monologue.

LAUREN Oh. Well, this movie takes place on the African savanna. And I will be playing the part of Ella Fitzgerald--

ANDERSON:

[LAUGHTER]

--who is the matriarch of her herd. And this is her Oscar-winning clip from the movie "Like Water for Chocolate for Elephants"

[LAUGHTER]

My humble herd, I know I have led you all astray. I am responsible for tracking the migration patterns so that we all may seek water. But I have led you to the chocolate rivers of Willy Wonka!

[LAUGHTER]

And we cannot survive on chocolate alone, but I'll tell you one thing. I'll tell you this right here right now-- the elephants can eat anything we choose. So if we put our minds together, we can suck down this chocolate river and lead us to a bigger tomorrow. Now, who's with me? Sound the trumpets, elephants! Sound the trumpets!

MOLLY BLOOM: [GASPS]

BIJOU: Wow.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wow. What a moment.

[LAUGHTER]

LAUREN I mean--

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: Unforgettable. Truly amazing.

LAUREN You've never seen anything like it.

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] All right, Bijou. Think about which side impressed you the most and award your fourth point. Again, criteria totally up to you. Who would you give an Oscar to? Which movie would you see again?

Which would inspire the best sticker collection? We want to know.

BIJOU: This one is tricky for sure.

MOLLY BLOOM: All right. Have you made your decision?

BIJOU: Yes. Yes, I have.

[BELL RINGS]

MOLLY BLOOM: Perfect. Then it's time for our final around, the final six. Lauren, you've got six words to tell us why elephants are elite.

LAUREN All right. Here we go. Confident, benevolent, large, and in charge.

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: Oh, very nice. All right, Duck. It's time to prove why tardigrades are never tardy to the party. Let's hear your final six.

DUCK Elephants are gone. Tardigrades, still here.

WASHINGTON:

[LAUGHTER]

LAUREN Oh, man.

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: All right, Bijou. Time to award your final point for this final six. Have you made your decision?

BIJOU: Yes, I have.

[BELL RINGS]

MOLLY BLOOM: Wonderful. Please tally your points. Are you ready to crown one team the smash boom best?

BIJOU: That I am.

MOLLY BLOOM: Drum roll, please.

[DRUM ROLL]

And the winner is--

BIJOU: Tardigrades!

[EXCLAIMING, CHEERING]

DUCK Yeah! Extreme!

WASHINGTON:

LAUREN Oh, Bijou. I'm tardi-dismayed.

ANDERSON:

[LAUGHTER]

MOLLY BLOOM: So Bijou, was there a moment that really sealed the deal for tardigrades?

BIJOU: I really just appreciated Tardigrade Cruise. That is a pun that really got to me.

DUCK Yes.

WASHINGTON:

LAUREN Tardigrade Cruise has that star power.

ANDERSON:

BIJOU: Yeah. It was very close, though.

LAUREN [LAUGHS] Thank you. Well, elephants are so benevolent that they're very forgiving. So--

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: Mhm. Mhm.

DUCK Lauren, I got to say I know a lot about elephants already. But knowing your personal connection to elephants is

WASHINGTON: really kind of inspiring. I'm a huge animal fan all around. And so to know that some of our more endangered creatures have amazing people looking after them, I think, is really special because I would love for people to be able to enjoy elephants as long as they possibly can.

LAUREN Well, Duck, before this podcast, I didn't know about tardigrades at all. I never learned about them in school. And
ANDERSON: the fact that they're called water bears-- bears are my second favorite animal. So I was like, oh, they're like water teddy bears. Because they are kind of cute, even though they are also kind of gross but in like a cool way.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS]

LAUREN And I love the fact that they can survive anything. I think one of the strongest things to know about yourself is to
ANDERSON: go through something difficult, survive it, and meet yourself on the other side. So the fact that they do that daily in any kind of condition, mad respect for the tardigrade.

MOLLY BLOOM: Absolutely. And they survived today's smash boom battle.

LAUREN We killed it.

ANDERSON:

[MUSIC PLAYING]

MOLLY BLOOM: That's it for today. Bijou crowned tardigrades the smash boom best. But what about you?

BIJOU: 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.

LAUREN It's produced by Molly Bloom, Rosie DuPont, Ruby Guthrie and Aron Woldeslassie.

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: We had engineering help from Josh Savage Joe, with sound design by Rachel Breeze.

DUCK Our editors are Shahla Farzan and Sanden Totten.

WASHINGTON:

LAUREN And we had production help from Anna Goldfield, Marc Sanchez, Anna Weggel, and Nico Gonzalez Wisler.

ANDERSON:

MOLLY BLOOM: Our executive producer is Beth Perlman. And the APM Studios executives in charge are Chandra Kavati, Alex Shaffer, and Joanne Griffith. Our announcer is Marley Foiricootto, and we want to give a special thanks to Austin Cross and Taylor Coffman.

Duck, is there anyone you'd like to give a shout-out to today?

DUCK Yeah. I would love to give a shout-out to my first employer, Potter Park Zoo of Lansing, Michigan, who really

WASHINGTON: instilled to me a lot of my love for all things animals.

MOLLY BLOOM: Aw. And how about you, Lauren? Any special shout-out?

LAUREN Yes. I'd like to shout out my mom, Janice Jacobson, for her special guest appearance and for instilling a love of

ANDERSON: animals and especially elephants in me at a very early age.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wonderful. And Bijou, any special thanks or shout-outs?

BIJOU: I'd like to shout out my parents. Hi, mom. Hi, dad. And I'd like to shout out Ms. Rocco at Highland Park for just showing me this opportunity.

MOLLY BLOOM: Very cool. Before we go, let's check in with Kate and see who she thinks should win her kids versus grownups debate.

KATE: I think kids should win because they play together a lot.

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. Ta-ta!

DUCK See ya later!

WASHINGTON:

[MUSIC PLAYING]

SINGER: (SINGS) Ooh, you're the smash boom best. Ooh, put you through the test. Ooh, you're the smash boom best. Ooh, better than the rest.

It's a smash boom best. It's a smash boom best.

LAUREN I think we knocked the ele-pants off that one.

ANDERSON:

[LAUGHTER]