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Hello everybody and welcome to Chapter Select, a seasonal podcast where we bounce back and

forth between a series of games exploring their evolution, design, and legacy. For this

season 3E, we are covering the Banjo-Kazooie series. My name is Max Roberts and I am joined

as always by Logan Moore. Hi Logan.

Ekem Bokem. Hello.

Is that the correct way to greet someone in the world of Spiral Mountain?

I didn't want to say "guh-huh" even though I guess I've now said "guh-huh."

There's a lot of good sound effects in Banjo games.

But yes, hi.

We're doing Banjo.

We've done, uh...

I don't know if we did this intentionally when we set this up, but we've now done Nintendo exclusive series, a PlayStation exclusive series, and now we're giving Xbox some love with season 3.

That was not a part of the decision process, but technically it's a Nintendo and an Xbox video game. Yeah, but Phil Spencer owns it now and he's locked away the bear and the bird in a cage where they can't escape. Up there with Master Chief and um... Master Chief's been let loose! Who's the person in Perfect Dark? Uh, Joanna something? It might just be Joanna Dark or something. I don't know, I've never played those games. So there we Yeah, they own all of Rare. So for this first episode of the season, like I said at the

top, we bounce back and forth between the games throughout the entire season. So this episode one is Banjo-Kazooie, the first game in this series. But our second episode is going to be Banjo-Kazooie Nuts and Bolts, followed by Banjo-Tooie. And then wrapping the whole season up, we are going to be playing the Game Boy Advance game, also developed

by Rare, Banjo-Kazooie, Grunty's Revenge. Logan was very adamant about not playing the other Banjo

game for Game Boy Advance. Banjo Pilot, he was adamant about doing that. I don't think we could

get a full episode out of that. It's just a Game Boy- But we could do it with Grunty's Revenge.

Maybe. Maybe we'll look into it. I mean, obviously, at the time we're recording this, we haven't

Solely locked in our plans for the coming episodes. We've only got this episode squared away right now

So maybe we can I I don't I I just know that I had to pay a pretty penny to get Grunty's revenge on its own

So if banjo here of our Lord

2020 yeah, so if banjo pilot a physical version of that game is anything close to being the same price for

Game Boy Advance nowadays, maybe we skip it could I I just yeah, I don't know

There's a discussion to be had about that one, but I'm gonna guess there's not a lot to say about that

I I definitely don't own banjo pilot. I do own Grunty's revenge

Just out of simple curiosity looked it up

banjo pilot pretty much up until 2019

early 2020 was coasting around

11 to 15 dollars and then I'm bad within no within the last like year and a half. It's gone up to 40

Okay, well then never mind. What? Man, why is everything so expensive right now?

A complete... it is a lot of... it's a lot. A complete boxed copy of the game is over

170 dollars. People are nuts. That's all I'm gonna say.

Nuts and bolts is what people are.

And that'll be our next episode. So, but for this particular episode, just focusing on the first game Banjo Kazooie. It was developed by Rare in arguably their golden age on the N64 coming off of the Super Nintendo with Donkey Kong Country. I don't think that's an argument really. I mean well I guess you could say the Super Nintendo stuff they made was pretty noteworthy too with the Donkey Kong Country games. Yes and I think they've reentered a really good period of time with Sea of Thieves. I know some of the they're working on now. I think one of them straight up cancelled. So it is a little bit- No, I think it just get- are you talking about Everwild? I think that's what it's called. Yeah. I think that's just cancelled.

I think it's just like got totally rebooted internally. Yeah.

Okay. So yeah, so the golden age of Rare, arguably SNES, N64, undoubtedly. They definitely were

cranking them out. Plenty of games besides Banjo. But like I said, N64, Nintendo 64, and the Xbox 360, which happened in 2008.

So it came out on the Nintendo 64 on June 29th of 1998.

Logan and I were a whopping four years old.

To the, like, I think your birthday is a day before, if not?

- Yeah, it would have been a week before.

- Yeah, a week before, yes, that's right.

- 27. - So, you know,

we're very young.

I never owned it, but Logan did.

And then it came out for the 360 in November 26th of 2008.

So this was after the Microsoft acquisition.

And then they ported those over to Xbox Live Arcade,

both Kazooie and Tooie,

right before Nuts and Bolts came out actually.

So it was a way to get all of those games on there.

- And then it eventually came to,
I mean, we don't have this down,
but came to Rare Replay eventually,
which was still the 360 versions.

They're just forward compatible on that same hardware.

So I mean the version of the game is not different.

I mean we played it, I mean we talk about this,
but I played on Series X.

Still the same version of the game,
a little nicer though, but it is available
on a number of different platforms,
even though the 360 version is the main one.

- And you know now on Series X, it's like 4K HDR,
well beyond the scope of the original Nintendo 64.
It's pretty, actually pretty wild.

The game directors, Greg Moles.

- Moles, I think.

- Moles, Greg Moles and George Andreas.

The producers were Tim and Chris Stamper.

And then the music, the famous music done by Grant Kirkhope.

It got a 92 out of 100 on Metacritic
for the Nintendo 64 version back in '98.

And then the Xbox 360 ports in 2008,
those were given a 77.

One of the things I didn't look up was what Rare Replay got,
which isn't necessarily reflective of just Banjo.

- Rare Replay got an 84 out of 100.

- There you go.

And granted, this includes almost the entirety
of Rare's back catalog.

I think only missing probably was--

- Anything licensed, I think.

- Yeah, so GoldenEye and then Donkey Kong 64.

and maybe there's something else that slipped through the cracks I'm not aware of.

But anyway, that's kind of the standing of where Banjo has been.

And really we haven't gotten a Banjo because we came since 2008.

So...

Very relevant podcast season we're doing here.

Yes! I mean, honestly, Banjo's most recent appearance is Super Smash Brothers Ultimate on the Nintendo Switch.

So, the bear and the bird are still alive. People love them.

I have an amiibo right over there.

But, as we-- - I mean, it was a big deal

when the game came to Switch Online, too.

So. - Yes, which just happened

maybe a month or so ago. - Within the past couple months.

- Yeah.

So, but to move forward with our discussion here

about Banjo and Kazooie,

Logan and I have a guest with us

for this inaugural episode,

inaugural's not the right word,

but the kickoff to season three here,

we have a guest with us to talk about the rest of the game.

And now to welcome our guest to the show
for this very special episode, Michael Coswara.

Welcome to Chapter Select.

- Hi, thank you for inviting me.

I'm very excited to talk about Banjo.

- Well, thank you for agreeing to play this game with us.

I don't think though that was necessarily too tough of an ask
because of how much you love Banjo Kazooie,
would that be correct?

- Oh yeah, definitely.

I'm basically replaying this game.

Anytime you ask me, I'm in the process of playing this game again, so it's no problem at all.

Yeah, you were the first person that came to mind when we agreed on Banjo.

Logan had the idea, "Let's play Banjo for season three" or "season three-ee" as we've been
calling it.

You were the first person that came to mind for Kasui.

So thank you for joining us.

Why don't you tell the people a little bit about your experiences with Banjo Kazooie
and like why you came to mind for me because I think if anyone follows your work they know
why I chose you.

So sure I mean outside just my undying love for this game.

I love this game so much.

It doesn't make sense most of the time how much I love this game.

But because I'm so attached to this series and this particular original first game, I
have ventured off into the deeper side of the community where people are modding the
game, where people are creating their own levels and actually making them playable in
the original game.

And I've more than dabbled in that.

And I've created my own stuff
and I'm still creating my own stuff
and people watch me stream as I make levels and stuff.

It's a whole thing.

Banjo is involved in my life constantly.

It just never ends.

And frankly, I'm happy.

I'm glad about it.

- I mean, I was gonna ask you that.

Like, I'm somebody who I think gets tired of games
the more I spend time around them.

Like, is it the total opposite for you then?

Like to just have this one thing that you're always kind of playing or maybe
tooling around with in the background?

I, you know, I like that question a lot because there are moments where I,
I wonder, do I actually like this so much?

Like as much as I do, because it's just constantly there, but there are every
so often like, Oh dang, yeah, this game's really good.

I remember why I like it so much.

That said, I don't get nostalgic about this game.

There's nothing nostalgic about it anymore.

The experiences around the game are nostalgic.

I remember when we first got it for Christmas,
when we played it on this specific day
in this specific place, that stuff's nostalgic.

But when I see the actual gameplay,
screenshot, characters, whatever, it's not nostalgic

because it's very much a active part of my life.

- Yeah, for sure.

Which, and that sucks because I do like to look at old games

and get that feeling of like, oh yeah,

I remember playing this, I remember this moment

and stuff about the game itself, not the stuff around it.

So it's unfortunate, but, and okay, try it off.

- I mean, that's fine.

I mean, I'll jump in here, Max,

'cause I know you're gonna ask me

about my history with the game.

And mine is 100% just a nostalgia shot in the arm.

This was, for me, this was literally the first game I got

with my Nintendo 64.

Whenever I got it, it was either '98 or '99.

I wanna say it was Christmas '98, is what I'm thinking.

'Cause this game came out in the summer,

and I had seen it on store shelves for a long time,

and I was always like,

"I want that game with the bear up there!"

And they're like, "Well, we don't own that console.

"We can't play that."

And eventually, somebody in my family got it for,

the Nintendo 64 for me, and my parents got me

banjo with it and that was the first game I had.

So yeah, this is like just more so than any other game from that era, this is 100% just

a pure nostalgia trip for me every time I think about this game or go back to it.

It's hard for me to, I mean obviously we'll talk about how we feel about the game nowadays as the show proceeds here, but it's almost hard for me to separate my feelings on this game from the five year old version of me that is still somewhere in me to this day and is just like "I like this game with the bear and the bird in it, this game makes me happy, I like this game, it's silly!"

So yeah, I have so many memories of this game just from being a kid and trying to beat it.

And I told Max, the funny thing is when I started playing it this time, I was like "In my head this game is very long because when I was a kid I was you know four or five the first time I played this and I don't know how to I didn't know how to play video games all that great when I was a kid so it took me months and months and months and months to you know get to these level like every time I'd get to a new level it would take me like a month of progress in the game until I finally got there so yeah there's no telling how many hours I poured into this as a kid but never actually beat it until the 360 port came out. I guess that would be when I finally, like when I was a teenager, I was like "oh they ported this to Xbox Live Arcade, I guess I'll

play this now and maybe actually try to beat it as I'm in high school" and at some point or another

I did that. But yeah, this game is very much tied to my childhood so it's hard for me to think of it in any other way. And for me, this game wasn't actually a part of my childhood.

It was always the N64 game that kind of one of many that got away that I never ever really played. The kids across the street, they had Banjo-Tooie. So I was aware of Banjo and played a lot of Tooie at their house, but I'd never Kazooie was never really in my life. and then I didn't have a 360, so I never bought the Xbox port. And so when I got an Xbox One, it came with Rare Replay bundled in, but I, my brain was like, "This is an N64 game. I can't play this with an Xbox gamepad. This is weird. Give me my three-pronged controller, you know, let me play with that." And I, so I just never really played it. And now, ironically, we play it for the show, I play it on Xbox because it's the most convenient, it's certainly the prettiest,

and it makes capture way, way easier. That's also right when Nintendo and Microsoft put it on Nintendo Switch Online, the N64 version. So it was kind of ironic that I waited all this time to play it on N64, and then I never actually did because the just priorities changed. And I had fun with it. It was kind of cool to see a game that really I should have played back in early 2000, the late 90s, early 2000, but come to it as like a...

It's not a stranger, I guess more an acquaintance. Like I know Banjo and Kazooie. I played Grunty's

Revenge on my Game Boy as a kid. That was the game, one of the games that I just really sunk

a lot of time into. I was familiar with these characters but never familiar with their origin.

And so it was cool to see that for the first time now in 2022 in 4K HDR at 60 frames a second.

This is a weird alternate world where, even though it's not alternate, where Banjo survived for the past 20 years.

It was cool to see it like that.

Before we get too much further, I am curious for you, Michael, have you played like every version of this game over the years starting with N64 and then Xbox 360 and then whatever the I guess it would have just been the 360 version that was included in Rare Replay but then now there's like the Series X version that's kind of more enhanced or whatever it looks very pretty actually that's where I played it this time around. How many platforms have you played this on? I've at least I'm pretty sure I've at least tried it on every place it's been released

Essentially there's two versions, the N64 one and the Xbox Arcade one.

The other ones, they're all the same, basically.

So I've obviously played the original.

I remember when it first came out on Arcade, we were borrowing a 360 at the time.

Oh, no, no.

My brother would fix the Red Ring of Death.

No.

Was it that?

I don't know.

He'd fix some problem that people would have, buy them cheap, fix it.

we'd have it for like a few weeks and then sell it. So we had it during that time when

Ganja was released so we played some multiplayer on Tuohy and messed around with it. Then
I

replayed it when it came out on Rare Replay and for the N64 version on Switch I played

it for an hour, got through two worlds and said "Yep, this is the game, this is the same
one, it's all good still."

- So then Michael is kind of the expert

within our little group here, which version is better?

The N64 version or the Xbox Live Arcade version?

- I would say the Xbox Live Arcade version is better.

If you really want the challenge

and the fear of losing your note progress,

you should properly play the N64 version.

That doesn't add a good amount of challenge.

- Hold on, wait.

You lose all your notes?

Well, you don't lose all your notes.

Let's say you go into Rusty Bucket Bay,

you get 99 notes and you die.

Well, you have to go back and you have to collect them

all again and the missing one for it to count.

- Oh no. - So.

- I would definitely, there's no way

I would have got all 900 notes this time around.

- I was gonna say, the Rare Replay version

does not do that then, does it?

Or did they change it at some point?

Because that definitely-- - I definitely died.

- Yeah, that definitely didn't happen in my version of it
playing on Xbox this time.

So maybe they changed something along the lines?

- It should only be the N64 version that does not count them.

- That sounds like a modern enhancement.

- Oh, you said it's the--

- The 360 would have provided.

- I got you.

- That's pretty well.

- And then I guess there's also achievements, sure, why not?

- Sure.

- Did you get all of them, Max?

- No, I did not find the honeycombs.

I need to find this Cheeto one more time.

So it was that and I feel like there's a third achievement

I didn't get, but yeah, that was it.

The honeycombs are really what I didn't find all of.

Those are hidden pretty well.

And where they are hidden is in all of the worlds

'cause there's a lot of different levels

and a lot of different worlds within Banjo-Kazooie.

And I'll be honest, with my experience of Tooie,

This was not the layout of like the world and how it's connected that I was expecting and

Now I really understand a lot of comparisons

To Super Mario 64. Yeah, I really get that now

because they're they both take place in a

Pretty much a single structure that then has all these worlds within it a hub world now you understand the holy war

I've been waging over it over the years. I

I suppose. I don't know if... well you don't need to touch on said holy war at the time.

I mean long story short I think this game's better than Mario 64 and I'm very loud about that fact so...

I was just waiting to hear which side you were on.

Which side of the war? And I assume Michael is on the banjo side as well.

It would appear so.

I'll be Switzerland. I'll be neutral in this war.

especially considering I've only played... I just finished Banjo like an hour ago.

Yeah, within the past hour you finished it for the first time.

As of recording. But all in all there are, let's see, I gotta count it out, there's 1, 2, 3, 4,

5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 total worlds or levels in Banjo Kazooie. Well, Gruntilda's Lair is like the

hub, so does that count? Does Spiral Mountain really count? It's like a tutorial zone, yeah.

Yeah, so I guess you take that away then you have nine total worlds with ten jigsaws, not jiggies.

Jigsaws. I thought they would be called jiggies, but apparently that's introduced in Tooie. They

give them the cute name. Yep. Yeah, I didn't know that. So I've been calling them the wrong thing

my entire life apparently, at least in the context of the first game. And I think to kind of guide us

through all these worlds. Logan had the idea and I think it's a pretty fun one.

He wanted to rank them. This is something I... To make this clear up front, this is something I

would like to do over the course of the whole season. So this isn't just... I don't know how

that'll apply to Grunty's Revenge really, but this is something I would like to do in the three

mainline games that I think we should do with all of our different guests. Yeah, and I'm totally

down for that. So I guess, do you want to, I guess, figure out what the bottom is and work our way up?

Oh, I'm curious, like, obviously we just can't go, "Oh, this was the worst," like, as a group, because I found out last night just through a brief conversation with Max that the levels that I think are the best in this game, he thinks are the worst. So we're already coming at this from very different angles. Again, as Banjo expert here amongst the group, I'm curious to hear what your knee-jerk reaction would be to some of the ones that you think are top tier and which ones you think are... I wouldn't say there's a really horrible level in this game, but there are some that I definitely don't like compared to the others. I guess That's how, what would your own hierarchy look like here?

Do you want to hear mine first?

I don't want to give you the definitive list here.

No, I don't think we need it.

We don't need to make it definitive and speak for the rest of forever with Banjo, but I think it'd be fun to try to figure out how we feel about them here.

But yeah, I guess to start off, which ones would, what would you think is the worst?

I'm curious.

I'm more curious about that than what you would think is the best, honestly.

Sure.

saying I don't think there's any that I think are bad I would say that the one

that is just kind of good / okay I I would say clankers cavern yeah yeah

water levels water levels do a night from the 90s not always water levels

from the 90s clankers cavern is one I would put near the bottom as well

personally. I don't, I assume Max kind of mentioned to me that he did not like that level so I assume

he's kind of... Yeah, no, that's toward the bottom as well. Oh, I don't know what to say after this.

It's just that one that's kind of like... I'll chime in and say I don't like Rusty Bucket Bay

personally. That's never been a favorite. It's kind of, again, very, uh, it's got a lot of water in it once again, which is a through line with why I don't really care for it. I think it's lacking a lot of personality and unique characters that some of the other levels have, which is another one of my issues with it. There's really only the dolphin that is like the side character in this level, and then I guess the TNT box, or not the TNT box, but just the box boss in general. So creative. Yeah. And then it's got the most annoying jiggy in the whole game in my opinion, which is the one behind the propeller, which I hate that one always got to do it first though always first uh dude it's it is literally so in this current playthrough i got uh nine or i got 899 notes and i got 99 jiggies and that was the one jiggy that i just decided to not go back and get it was a rusty bucket bay i was like i don't feel like dealing with this one right now i'm just gonna keep going and uh i would say that one's near the bottom i don't know where you're at on that max or what either of you think about that personally. Rusty Bucket Bay is so... it's like a water level that doesn't want to be a water level.

Almost everything is outside of the water and the water is only a means to get there occasionally.

Like, you know, to free the dolphin you have to swim but you just go up through where the anchor

drops, fix the problem inside and come out. The propeller, you gotta do the maze, hit the switches

inside and then swim to get the that. Most of the gingos are out of the water.

More jiggies are on the boats and the crane. None of it really is happening in the water, but it makes it very difficult to get around. You like it's to go from one side to the other you're either crossing over the ship or swimming and hopping on by it just it almost feels artificially lengthened like travel like navigation is is hot is long and hard compared to previous levels at least it's just it's like a hike to get where you want to go and it's because there's a big boat in the middle and water surrounding it and wherever you want to go it either costs a bunch of eggs which I may or may not have used all on the box because I thought that's how you hit the box. So then I couldn't afford the

tolls. Why are the tolls, the tolls are just a weird thing that are checked is chunked in this level as well I think like it does I don't know like there's no real point to it other than just making you do that. I guess that's true it might also just be hey look we're making this 3d platformer look at cool things we can do in 1998. I think it might just be a case of that.

Yeah, it just feels artificially travel inflated. If you want to get here, you have to be very careful not to fall in the water, which also happens to take two air bubbles or take your air twice as fast, which is also not super fun. But there are some good things about this level. And I will say about the whole distance travel thing.

It would be beneficial if there were more points on the ship that branch out to the different sections.

You have your little central area and move out that does kind of break that travel thing that the game wanted you to do.

Yeah, I guess they're just trying to do something different whether you like it or not, you know, I don't know if it's necessarily bad design.

It's just a different way to play this game and it may not have worked as well as they thought. The music, an absolute banger. Okay, this is a great theme. I could just I want to play this level just to hear the soundtrack. It's great. Okay, I guess I don't have all good things to say about this level because there are some things I don't like the most about games in general and some things about Banjo Kazooie are the things that are unfair.

There's one jiggy in particular, not the super challenging one, the one where you have to break a window to get into the captain's quarter or something.

And there's a jiggy in there.

How are you supposed to know that?

But you just randomly hit a window.

I mean, obviously the texture is different,

but like when you're a kid,

you're not looking at windows and it's like,

well, that one's--

- But it's only like slightly different too.

Like it's very close to what the other ones are, I think.

'Cause usually in other,

or some of the other windows in this game,

I think are pretty well like.

- Like the haunted mansion.

- Yeah, like those- - Or monster mansion, yes.

- Mad monster mansion.

Yeah, like I feel like those are kind of like telling you,

"Hey, you should hit this."

- At least those are three dimensional.

Like you can see inside past the window.

With this one, it's a flat texture.

And the only reason it looks different

is because it's a separate texture.

The others are not.

They're part of that ship texture.

That's the only reason it's different.

And stuff like that, that's not,

I would say that is bad design.

That's not good.

If they added another character,
maybe give this world some more life,
add a character that talks about their cabin over there,
somewhere, if you can find it, I don't know.

Something like that.

But that wasn't there, so bad.

- Yes, I wholeheartedly agree.

The other thing I wanted to bring up with this,
I don't know if this was just, I don't know if Michael would share this in a minute, maybe
because he's played this game so much, but I think the way you unlock this level is a
little bit more obtuse than some of the other ones with how you have to do the rising water
levels and stuff like that and you have to find both of the switches before you can then
access the, and it's also rare that you find the entryway for Rusty Bucket Bay before you
you find the jigsaw puzzle before you find the entrance for a lot of the levels in this
game.

This one is in the reverse.

You will straight up pass where Rusty Bucket Bay is going to be and then the puzzle you
have to solve is past it or above it or whatever.

Which I think is different.

time around I almost forgot like did I miss something was it in another area
because it's been like 10 years since I played this game and so I was like
tripping myself up trying to try to remember that so actually I think that
this no that does happen earlier - I'm you pass with goby's Valley click lock
what Woods is the other one too but there's like a dis that one's kind of
like unique I feel like well that that one's like sir you just came to the
the jigsaw place super early.

- Yeah.

- And I actually love that.

I love that idea that like, oh dang,
there's this really hard one to complete.

And like, you just know it for the future
that something was there.

It's like a, it's an well earned thing to remember.

I guess you finally make it to the Click Lock Wood area.

And you're like, wait, where's the jigsaw thing?

Oh yeah, there was that one place long time ago.

Although that's not necessarily true

'cause there's a switch and then it shows you
exactly where it is.

You gotta backtrack to get them back there.

- Right, it's kind of a, I guess what people would refer
like a Metroidvania kind of moment or a Zelda moment.

It's like, oh, this item now unlocks this thing or whatever.

But this is, oh, I have found the bill,

the doorway to the level and the jigsaw puzzles
all the way at the beginning.

Like I remember that this is cool.

The music comes in too, right?

When you go to that puzzle in the beginning

and it's really good and you remember it

and then you find this area and it comes back and it digs it back up, hopefully.

And I think that's why I love Gruntilla's Lair so much, because of moments... like everything
that we just talked about, you said it in a negative way.

I actually love that kind of stuff.

No, I totally do too.

I didn't mean it in a negative way, it was more just like, you do feel a little bit more lost I feel like when trying to find this one.

Which again, isn't a bad thing because it makes you try to go explore the castle a little bit more.

What have I seen already?

What are some avenues that I can now access that maybe I couldn't have accessed before?

Things like that.

- I think an early example of this, at least in my case, this did not happen to either of you this time around.

I know this for sure.

But after, I guess, Mumbo's Mountain and Treasure Trove Cove, the game pretty guides you to those two fairly easy.

I'm like, oh, well this is going to be a very linear thing.

It will just walk me to the next puzzle and I'll go on.

But then I couldn't figure out where Clanker's Cavern is.

And I think that's very intentional.

Because where did I go?

I went in the water and swam in the hole I saw and what did I find?

The Click Clack Wood puzzle, which they want you to find early on.

And then I think I go in the sewer pipe, but it doesn't lead to the thing, the entrance is above the sewer pipe.

And early on I was like, how, where?

I'm running around trying to find the next thing

and I finally just jumped onto the pipe and found it.

I was like, "Okay, now I know where to go."

And they do this throughout the rest of Gruntilda's Lair

and I think, at least Michael and I

will specifically touch on one a little later

when we get to some other worlds.

But that, I think, is an early example of that,

showing you that there's more to this

than just A, B, C, D, and so on and so forth.

Yeah, you're supposed to... it is really about exploration.

You really... they really do want you to explore every nook and cranny, you know.

And I like that it becomes a little bit more of a challenge just in the later segments of the game.

And it's really hard to talk about what's difficult and what's not because I know this game so well now.

What was actually difficult for me when I first played, it's hard to remember.

What was funny about my replay of it this time was that anything anytime I was having a hard enough time

I found that if I just

Sat and like pause the game and just thought for a second. I would quickly remember

I was like, I'm trying to dig through the the the the files in my brain and pull out the pull out the files and

that I've got all the the Banjo Kazooie strats tucked away in somewhere because I used to have the I

Told Maxis the other day because I strangely saw it at a store. I used to have the

The pro guide or whatever for this when I was a kid

Yeah, and so I read I read that book or maybe not like I actually read it
but I thumbed through that thing and looked at all the pictures and stuff and it more times than
I actually

Beat the game or whatever

So I have all of those images still somewhere in in my head to this day

And I believe you if you said you actually read the book I sure no

Oh, I just looked at the pictures as a kid, for sure.

The one other thing I want to say about Rusty Bucket
before we move on, and this isn't even really a discussion
with that level specifically,
but more about the game in general.

The reason I hate the one jiggy behind the rudder
is because it's timed,

but the time in this game is not accurate.

It is moving at like 1.5 times speed, right?

Like I am, I'm not out of my mind, right?

Like they give you like 60 to 70 seconds
to get to that one on the back of the rudder
and it feels like it's like 40 maybe or so,
something around there.

'Cause there's no way that like,

I haven't actually tried to line it up with,

I should have actually tried to line it up
with like a timer on my phone or something like that.

But there's no way that is a second by second countdown
on the timers in this game.

- So I can't confirm if you're right,
but you saying this, it feels familiar.

Like I've checked before.

So it's something, I think something is off and it is,
you're probably right.

I think that's the answer.

You are probably right.

- I mean, I don't, maybe it's not as,
maybe it's not as much of a gap as like,
like I said, like 1.5 times the speed
or something like that. - As egregious as 1.5, yeah.

- Yeah, but it feels like it's faster than it should be.

And again, that's-- - The power,
the power of the Xbox is just too much.

All those teraflops are running the clocks way too fast.

- Yeah, the Xbox port's bad it turns out.

No, but I mean, again, I should actually try to test that,
but yeah, anything that's timed in this game,
I feel that way about.

And that one is the most apparent to me
because I just hate that jiggy.

But I feel the same way about any of the time situations
in the game, so yeah.

- So what would we dub next?

So it was clean. I mean, just kind of the flow here.

I wanted to, I wanted to pose that we try to go to the top now because personally,
I have a hard time separating the middle pack of this game.

There are like a bunch of levels that I think are prone, pretty equal footing.

And I'm curious what you guys think are near the top instead. Um,

I'm,

I appreciate you taking a chapter select style approach to our discussion of these worlds.

Personally speaking, and I, I, this is the,

This is the one that I said I know Max and I differ on.

He can maybe explain his reasoning here.

I think ClickClockWood is the best world in a game, personally.

I think it is one of the most unique platforming worlds ever.

I know it is just recycling the same environment four times over, and maybe that's what Max's problem is with it.

But I think the entire format and evolution of that world is more unique than anything a lot of platformers have ever done.

I love it.

I think that level is phenomenal from front to back.

And it's one of the more expansive ones in the whole game and I think you really get a little bit more time to breathe in that world and kind of, maybe not root around and figure things out, but I don't know.

I just like that it's small and intimate like a lot of the other levels in the game, but it's always changing and you're trying to figure out what is changing from season to season and stuff like that and I think that's really cool.

I would agree.

Click Lockwood is in my top three.

I think it's battling for second place with another one.

Yeah, everything you said, completely agree.

It's got a very unique idea

and I think it executes it very well.

One thing to remember about most platforming levels,

not just Banjo-Kazooie, but Banjo-Kazooie especially,
is that there's usually a center focus,
center something that the player will either be drawn to most of the time
or just kind of always be aware of and drawn to right so in Click Lock Wood
it's just the base of the tree just going up spiraling across and it's a
simple thing to do but there's always something different to do each time and
you get to see how it changes and evolves and it's actually like the theme
the changing of seasons, you get to see how the levels change. It's a great concept.
And again, the music is so good. The music is great. It's one of my favorite
level songs. Absolutely. Yeah, very very good. And it's the last level. This is like a
great way to say, "Hey, you made it to Rusty Bucket Bay.

Have Click-Clack Wood. Congrats." Yes. Yeah, that's good pacing. Max, what is your...

I mean, I alluded to it, you don't like this level as much, but I'm curious what

- Yeah, I know.

- What is your wrong opinion here?

- Yes.

And to be fair, going into this,

I knew about the existence of Click Clockwood

and that it was a level that changed with the seasons.

I wasn't entirely sure of the mechanic of it.

I thought it was actually like,

you would push a button or maybe like

an Oracle of Seasons type thing

where you could just kind of wave a wand

and it would change seasons.

When you say that out loud and you think about it.

- You thought they were gonna give Banjo a wand

in this level, all right.

The bad 64 would not do that.

I don't think that would have been possible.

So I wasn't familiar with how it worked,

I just knew that the level existed

and that people liked it.

So that possibly has set some form of expectation

over the past some 20 odd years or so.

But I think Banjo is 20, right?

It was, I ain't.

- No, it's almost, it's 24 now.

- Yeah. - Okay.

Anyway. - It's going on 24,

I should say.

I agree with the theme.

I really do like the seasons and changing

and seeing it change overall.

My big beef is it is all padding.

All it is is go up the tree, kill the same birds,

and get to the top to get a jiggy

and usually there's one more jiggy on the way.

And it's either the bees or I think the house has one.

Yeah, the house has one.

So all that changes is where the jiggy is on the way up

and I guess stairs, so you get more stairs

the further into the seasons you go.

And maybe this is because I am not

familiar with banjo and the platforming,

but I have footage of it.

The amount of times I fell from this tree.

And it's not like--

- You sound like me as a kid.

- Only two seasons have water,

So it's not like I'm landing and surviving,

I'm dying and starting all over again,

was way too much.

And there's player error for sure.

'Cause I swear to God those leaves,

really none of the edge of the leaf counts.

It's just one little dot in the middle you can land on.

- Did you have trouble jumping out and then back in?

- No, that-- - To the holes in the tree?

- That was okay.

I think I only fell from that once.

it was like back flipping onto leaves or the wood planks

or landing on that weird bridge

that should not be floating at all.

I don't know how those bridges are supported

to where the structure is for that at all.

But I just, I really struggled climbing the tree.

And the whole point of the level is to climb the tree.

And you know, the bee in spring is great

'cause you can just fly.

But then Mumbo takes a big fat vacation

for the other three, essentially.

And I think part of that is also,

I was gonna bring this up with you off Air Logan,

but I think it's applicable here.

Like the last, technically the last one I got

was the flower 'cause I needed to go back

and get enough for the red honeycombs.

But the last jigsaw that I got in Click Lock Wood

was the beaver.

And the beaver, the solution is obvious

from the first time you meet him, get rid of the rock.

And you can clearly do so in summer, it was easy.

but you can't go up in his house.

I'm like, well, I guess that's in the next season

or whatever.

And I get to the fall and I'm exploring the fall area

and I died.

And my brain wasn't thinking that everything has reset now.

So I could see the beaver and the rocks there.

I'm like, well, where's the permanence in this?

What is the point of this?

So my brain just thought you had to figure out

how to do it in summer.

And the only thing that was staying consistent

was the bird, I guess, the big eagle.

But yeah, that tree, I just did not like climbing it.

I was very frustrated with the tree and climbing up it

and those dumb birds that poke their head out and hit you.

I'm not a fan of them, even though they're just the lizard creature thing re-skinned as a bird.

Yeah, I was not a fan of, oh, and those dumb snowmen show their heads up in winter.

And flying to hit them is the only way to kill them, least in my my understanding it's the only way to kill them the snowmen can go away and they can build some stairs on that tree I don't know well so I think you all right good point I can see how some of it can be considered padding because you do I do do it four times if you don't fall three really because winter you can just fly everywhere so it's like does that really count?

If you well if you can kill the snowmen and not keep getting hit by them sure.

I think just going back to talking about the evolution of the stage I think that's what makes it less padding and more like discovery.

Sure discovery.

You have everything that changes the squirrel, the beehive, the eagle, even some of the paths change. So there at the beginning in spring you have like I guess you could call the little bud of a leaf. That doesn't, I don't think that's a thing, but the leaf is very small and you can kind of use it to go up but you shouldn't. You should just go the normal way. But then as time goes on

you can now start using those leaves. You have a new path. So I think one way that this level could have been improved is just more dramatic changes in the paths instead of having that wooden path that keeps getting broken up, just make a new alternate path somewhere else.

Doing something completely different. Yeah, not re-tread, literally re-tread the same ground over

and over. Fall does that a little bit with the addition of the leaves piles, but that's about it.

Yeah. I guess. Fall makes it very easy to get around. I actually like those leaf piles because you can get up and you can get up to the tree and other areas surrounding it very quickly.

I like fall. Fall is my favorite of the the four. I think so too for me. Fall. Beautiful.

Yes it's very very good looking. Okay so we're gonna have to debate that one.

It's placement later. If we're agreeing to clanker's cavern and rusty bucket or the bottom we'll figure out the others. Michael I guess what is your if you have a clear number one what is it because you said Clickclockwood would only be fighting for a second or third for you yeah uh my favorite would be Treasure Trove Cove that this is the correct answer okay so then this

is our number one because Treasure Trove Cove is my second favorite I think behind the Clickclock. Treasure Trove Cove is the best level in the game that is a fact why do you think that

because the music slaps. The music is the best in probably. It also it also feels like an open world.

I think it's so I love the structure of it. The way that you get the flying ability and then you can fly under the cove and there's a lighthouse at the tippy tippy top and then there's the giant snail turtle thing. It's hermit crab. Which I didn't realize you could just hit. I thought you you had to like destroy the shell some way.

I was just like, how do I kill him?

I can't get close to him.

Apparently you just pack his face

after he clips a few times.

It just seems like there were so many different things.

You have to figure out how to get the water to go down to open up the little sand castle with the floor puzzle.

You chase treasure around.

Like they, I think they use the space really well and it truly feels like an open exploratory space.

And I think it's the perfect world to give players after you did your kind of so you did your spiral mountain your tutorial

you did mumbles Mountain, which is your first world, but it's like it's pretty easy.

And now traditional Cove.

Not only do you have something that looks great sounds great is interesting and is great for exploration.

Well, I guess that's my point those three things and then it's really great at showing you look how you can explore

Look at all the different things you can do.

Look at all these new moves.

This is where you get both your pads.

This is where you learn the jumping and the flying.

And like you said, flying around.

Oh, look, there's a lighthouse.

Obviously, you're in a platform where you want to go to the top of the hill.

You can.

There's a lighthouse.

Great.

All these little touches about this world make it a very good second world.

The only thing I don't like is the one honeycomb on a crate out in the distance on the water.

They may have changed this in the Xbox version, but the draw distance on the N64 was very bad.

You had to be basically almost in the water to see that empty honeycomb pop up, which is bad.

You would never find it unless you were just in that area.

That's it.

I can say the draw distance in the Xbox Series X at least, I can't speak for the 360, is almost like you just see the entire world.

Which I realized was an advantage of modern hardware.

Like I could see, oh, there's an item spinning over there that I want, like make a mental note, go get that later.

But in the N64, you can correct me if I'm wrong, but I assume this fog is used.

just a haze or something in the distance or there's just pop in as you approach things.

It's pop in. Once you get close enough, boof, there it is. Otherwise, no idea.

Which then makes the game harder. Way harder.

Yeah, I think for me this really does have like ten of the most unique jiggies in a level that are making you do very different things in a single level to earn each of them. So that's one of the main reasons I like this level a lot. And then by comparison to Rusty Bucket Bay, I just think this level is chock full of charm with the characters. Like, every single thing in this level is full of characters, whether you are immediately going in right into the hermit crab, or you're running onto the boat and you're seeing the crying hippo, or even if you're just going swimming, there's all of a sudden a shark that's talking to you and is telling you that he's about to eat you.

Or even the chest that you find at the end.

It's like, oh hey, you finally found me,
but please don't break me or whatever.

Like, just there's so much charm in this level
that it really like, when you compare it to a level
like Rusty Bucket Bay, it's like, how did they really,
there's like no real interesting characters
or fun in Rusty Bucket Bay.

And then you look at a level like this

and it's just that it's everywhere.

So yeah, I love this level. This is top two for me, and I really cannot understate that this is probably my favorite song in the game.

Um, it's up there. Like when I think of Banjo Kazooie Jams, like this is top of the list for sure.

Like this is immediately what comes to my mind, so I really like this level a lot.

And that smash remix of this song is really good too.

Yes, it is very good.

They're too good to us. Smash Brothers is too good to us.

I wanted to say one more thing about Church of Gold. You mentioned the shark, Snacker.

I think that's such an appropriate thing to add to this level because being in the water is really not that important.

There's two collectibles that I can think of where you gotta get in the water to do something.

So Snacker is just there as this threat. Actually a really scary threat because you do not swim.

swam much at this point do not want to be in that water it is actually it's

scary it scared me a lot as a kid it's still kind of like gave me butterflies

and made me nervous this time around music and they teach you about snacker

early because they bait you with the jinjo right away level yeah and so you

that's what I did I jumped in the water and then the dun dun dun dun comes in

and you're like, "Oh!" It also helps push you toward land and then adds pressure to the

platforming. If you don't land on this box or on this bridge or, you know, the wind up to the

lighthouse and stuff, now you have to deal with getting out of the water. So Snacker is good.
He

pushes you in but also adds tension surrounding you. It's actually super smart to sign.

I don't have any hard feelings about the rest of the levels here on our list. I have trouble separating them. So I'm curious where you guys are at. Do you have any left that we haven't talked about that you either really love or you really dislike for one reason or another?

I know how to separate them from myself.

Alright, well Michael, show us the way.

You said you got a top 3 in mind, right?

So you want another good one or do you want a harp on one a little bit?

Let's do another good one for now.

Okay, and I think this is very common that people really like this one, but Freezyzy Peak.

Another fantastic level.

This one has more to do with just the theming and the like atmosphere and the feel of the love

Yeah more so than the actual what you do

Because I think it's generally kind of I don't say basic, but it's not

The most inventive or the most exciting but just being in that level is such a joy

Just a delight to be in this level

And that makes it my number three just for that. I

I like this level on the most, on the whole, I do.

There are specific gameplay elements in it.

- The second race?

- The second race, that's rigged.

He pushes you out of the way, he just clips into you.

- Literally the strategy is let him get ahead.

So it actually--

- To beat it, I actually had to mute the TV.

'Cause the music is so fast that,

(mimics air horn)

of the shoes and stuff is, I was like,

I played it like six times in a row,

my mother's trying to talk to me

while I'm trying to win this race

and this bear keeps pushing me out of the way.

It was a very tense situation.

I was like, mute, focus, beat the bear.

I wasn't a fan of that in particular.

And I don't like the snowmen, how,

'cause the fly, like flying and getting him dead,

if there were crosshairs or just something

that could help me point directly ahead.

That would be super great.

But I think the theme is awesome

and it's tight and very vertical.

And they alleviate that a little bit with the flying,

but also there's this big wonderful scarf to walk and cross.

It's just a captivating level visually

and it's a lot of fun.

It's not just to freeze easy peak.

I think it applies a lot throughout all of the levels where Mumbo is present.

The transformations, which I think fit here well, because you turn into a walrus to get one of the jiggies, which is fine.

You go in there and you get the jiggy.

But the walrus doesn't do anything.

It just lets you walk somewhere else.

You can walk in the water that doesn't freeze you now.

Sure.

and the other walrus will let you in. And this also applies to say Mad Monster

Mansion where you turn into a pumpkin and you can walk places and do stuff you can do before.

Okay but the places, I mean we'll talk about that one in a second, but the places you can walk to in that are a little bit more fun.

Sure, alright. For sure.

Bubble Gloop Swamp. You turn into an alligator who, granted does have an attack unlike the walrus and the pumpkin but you can get inside the nose of a bigger gator and also walk in the water. Play enemy game. And so what you're saying is you hate Mumbo and you think he's bad at giving you abilities. That was what was actually a little disappointing to me and this is entirely warped by my the nostalgia of playing Tooie at my friend's house as a kid because we'll find out when I play Tui here in a few weeks but I remember the transformations in Tui being way more interesting at the very least. Maybe they're all just the same thing you just look at to walk somewhere else but I just feel like what you turned into was more interesting and dynamic and I had fun with it. That's also like six seven year old max not 27 year old max. So I was a little disappointed that Mumbo's abilities really didn't let you do too much. The B in Click Clock Wood does. What else do you turn into? I'm trying to think now. Looking at the list. Yeah, I just... Am I off base here? Is it just because my brain expected Tooie? No, you're not too wrong. I agree with you, I think. I was just gonna say, I still like the moments when you transform into things but you're not wrong that there's not a lot to do with them most of the time.

And I'll also say I never would have known that you could leave a level as a transformation if Logan had not told me that.

Oh yeah.

Like I think it was you told, because I was trying to find...

It was one of the jigsaw puzzle behind...

Puzzle behind a bubble gloop.

Yep.

I was like, "I can't figure out how to get there."

I couldn't find the stilts.

And he's like, "Just turn into the gator."

I'm like, "You can leave the level?"

- Yeah.

- So how'd you get the one,
the grunty switch from Bumble's Mountain?

- Did you just run up it?

- On top of the mountain, outside of the level?

- Outside of the level.

- Yeah.

- No, I didn't get it.

I couldn't figure out how to get up there.

(laughing)

So that, all right, so that's Jigsaw 99 that I didn't get.

I don't have two of them.

Well that's easy.

I at least know where that is.

But I think you make a great point.

Once again you found a flaw in this perfect video game.

It's interesting to come at it so far removed from its target audience, which is clearly
kids in the 90s.

I think the transformations could have used more.

Some were better than others like you mentioned I think the tick or whatever the ones with
abilities like that one can go up very steep slopes and something the croc can bite whatever
the beak and fly quickly those were those were great the walrus for example basically
a key just a key to get places that sucks but you still could have done a lot of cool
stuff with that. They just, they did it. Each transformation has like two things to do each
and it just varied if they were cool or useful or not.

I think the one thing I would chuck in about Mumbo 2 personally is that I feel like he

doesn't get as characterized in this game as I felt like I remembered he did. Maybe I'm totally wrong on that front, but I felt like he got more fleshed out as a character in this game than I remember and maybe I'm kind of crossing my wires with Toohey where I feel like he gets maybe not a bigger role.

I remember Bumbo a lot in Toohey.

Yeah I feel like they kind of put him...

His personality.

They place him more into a central role in that game I feel like and they give him more stuff to do in a more direct role at least.

Yeah absolutely in that game especially because there's like a whole rivalry he has and you actually play as him so it's like this bigger connection.

For sure.

like he makes me laugh yes turn me into a frog thanks yeah yeah it's not much of

there it's very much just a high high by situation with him for the record I I

like free ZZ peak - I know I didn't say too much about it but I do think that's

a one of the upper mid levels for sure mm-hmm I do want to if it's okay I do

want to bring up I it's one I don't think we will talk about very much but I

I think Mumbo's Mountain is really good. It's a starter level, obviously, and it's largely

a tutorial level, but I think for what that level is supposed to be, I really can't think

of any faults with it. I think the most obtuse Jiggy is probably the one where you have to

go climb up the tree and maybe get the orange and throw it to the little monkey, maybe just

because you don't realize that that's what you have to do to help him. But other than

I really think that that level teaches you just about everything that you need to know about the game there from the start, especially coming off of Spiral Mountain.

If Spiral Mountain is what's teaching you the basic moves and stuff like that, this level teaches you no.

Here's everything you're gonna need for the most part. These are the jiggies, these are the notes, these are...

This is kind of the general format of how each of these levels are going to be.

And it's only, like, I think this time with my playthrough I had 100% in and got everything in the level within 20 minutes, so it's very short.

But I think for what it is, it's a very sound, strong opening level.

I would agree.

I would agree.

I personally don't like it that much because I've played it 3,000 times.

But I acknowledge that it's just a good starter level.

Yeah, but compared to what the rest of the game does, it's kind of bland in what it does, but it's clearly not trying to be anything more than that.

I kind of like have a fondness and respect for it or maybe not respect but I just don't have anything bad to say about it necessarily is I guess is what I would say so it's I think it's very tight in its focus if like you said Logan if spiral mountain is how you move then Mumbo's mountain is what you're doing in the other eight eight or nine worlds is this is what you're actually going for and collecting and so on and so forth and it introduces you pretty much to every type of mechanic except the pads like Michael mentioned which are introduced in the second level Treasure Trove Cove so it's a great start it's small quick I you know it's fun I some of the like why is there a bull and a monkey and ants like some of the character stuff is interesting it's very fairy tale I suppose in that way but it fits it's the logical choice after a spiral mountain and then getting into Gruntilda's lair it's the logical thing to like put a player to next before getting into the fun crazy stuff that you can do later it's a good base I mumble Mountain fine solid start now that we're kind of in the middle or I don't know the whole things got muddled we'll go back and do a count in a second let's just go down the list for the last ones we have here. I guess if that I feel like that makes the most sense at this point in time. How do you guys feel about Bubble Gloop Swamp? Because I think it's a little lower on my list personally. I like a lot

of things in this level but it also feels very disjointed in a lot of ways like where is a lot of levels feel like they're click-clock wood is kind of centered around the tree or whatever the snowman for freez-e-z peak like this feels like it's just got different sections and there's an alligator over here and there's a maze up on this hill and there's a turtle over here and there's we're gonna throw in these crocodiles that you got a spit eggs in their mouth like it's just a bunch of things kind of thrown together and I've never been a huge fan of the croc minigame either it's not bad but you also have to make sure that you have the running shoes first which is a little annoying because typically you do this level out of order if I because you don't get the shoes until the you don't get the shoes until the where do you get them again you get them in goby's valley yeah but it is very possible to win without them it is it is wait hold on hold on hold on hold on hold on you need the shoes to beat the Gator crocodile thing didn't you see them in the background they're there for your help. Yeah but I didn't I didn't have it online I just... You can do it no you can totally beat them without it. But you can wear those as an alligator? Yeah. Yeah the game also doesn't tell you that and no other transformation can do that but here we are. What? So it just makes you run around really fast to eat

all of the little gobies or whatever? Yeah. This makes sense why shoes were there when I was in the

Wait, did I say even in the game show part you didn't do that?

I didn't touch him because I was a gator I wasn't kazooie.

That's funny.

Oh my gosh.

This changes everything.

Wow, that must have, I can't imagine how hard that must have been for you then.

Especially when you got to the end with the game show, which we'll talk about as well.

Well to prove Michael's point it is possible to beat it without the shoes because I definitely did that twice. It is. But I mean yeah I don't know if you guys have anything else you really want to say. Music in this one too if I'm gonna hate on Grant Kirkhope at any point.

It's not great. This is like near the bottom of the music list for me maybe too. It's not my favorite. I don't hate this level by any means though. I really like this level in a general sense. But probably lower on the list for me personally I think.

Yeah for me also lower and I think I think the biggest you've mentioned the disjointed feeling of it which yes it is disjointed it's got a bunch of different little sections and it reminds me of a game that I now hate is a very strong word but Donkey Kong 64, oof, really loved it as a kid but not anymore.

No, when I replayed on the Virtual Console for Wii U, no no no not good.

That game's very, that game's very disjointed.

It's Area Hallway.

Area for hallways.

For areas, hallways.

It's not good and this kind of gives that vibe a little bit.

just I don't know if it was like a N64 limitation thing but if this level was more just circular and had the alligator in the middle that central point yeah then maybe something different but yeah agree on that point I can't believe you would take the name of Donkey Kong 64 and besmirch it like this it's been a long time since I played that game but one of the notes and it's been a long time since I've played it um Michael you know most likely have played it more recently which I would definitely defer to you there but one of the things I kept thinking about in this game in general was I nostalgia glasses are definitely on here but I feel like 2d and Donkey Kong 64 felt more like open worlds but I spent a ton of time as a kid playing Donkey Kong 64 because I owned that one just a ton of time trying to find those darn bananas if you know

this was collectathon on steroids and then um tui at the friend's house so like my brain definitely is wired to like those more i was like wow these you know they really took the foundation of kazooie and built it up anyway i donkeycon 64 i will not stand for i kept hearing music too like if you go into mumbo's hut i'm like this is donkeycon music this man to near but I guess really Donkey Kong music is mumbo music is banjo music yeah yeah first yes but my brain was was wired a little differently bubbleloop fine yeah I'm kind of feeling the same way about gobies Valley personally kind of destroying it again as well no not not to the level bit bubbleloop is I don't think I think my thing with this level the more I think about it is there's no one jiggy in this level that I can remember that I feel very satisfied with getting. Maybe the one with the camel. What about the maze? The maze is okay I guess. I was more satisfied getting the Grunty switch in the maze like figuring out how to get over there. Yeah yeah I I almost agree with that but figuring out that that's back there. Yeah I don't have exact problems with this level but I also don't have any sort of great praise for it necessarily either.

Gobi's Valley I'm very torn on. I like the theme and I actually like the segmentation here I think it fits thematically like there's the Sphinx and the pyramid and magic carpets like I just feel like the theme of it all kind of comes together and it makes it clear to just you know to find out where you need to go and what you need to do. But then the slanted hills tiles which look like just quick running quicksand waterfalls the beginning of the game I was like am I allowed to walk on these this doesn't seem very safe visually it just doesn't seem kind of great in that way and then my biggest beef is you can get every jigsaw except one because you need this special like flying dash attack from Free ZZ peak but the game clearly clearly is guiding you to goby's valley before Free ZZ peak I think maybe that's because that's where

ended up but you definitely take your right to gobe's valley and go can't get this one yet.

Yeah okay so that is that's my biggest beef with this game. I hate that so much because it's it's actually an interchangeable thing. You can't do one or the other. It doesn't matter which one

you do first because both of them will be missing something from the other. It's the only time in this entire game that it does that and that sucks when you you set a precedent early on with the

world how they function how you collect everything and you follow that for four worlds and you expect

the rest to do the same and then this happens and you're confused will it happen again and the answer is the answer is no this is the only world where that happens and that sucks and I think it's

it's so important to make sure you have that down

in a collect-a-thon because what makes a collect-a-thon work

is not so much like the amount of things that you collect.

Well, actually that's not true, that's very important.

But it very much has to do with expectations

and knowing what you can accomplish

and what you can't accomplish.

So going into that world, for example,

if I was playing a game like that today,

and I ran into world five and I couldn't get this one jiggy,

I'd be searching that level up, down, left, right,

every single corner for however I unlock the shoes

and in FreezyZPeak.

And it would never occur to me that it's later

because this game has not taught me.

That sucks, you just can't have that.

And there's a level of with collect-a-thons, it's important to have a good balance of unknown

and like the expectation thing I was talking about.

So you know you have a hundred notes, but you also know that you can collect all of them.

You can and you should.

And it's bad if they just cut you off five notes short or something.

That's bad.

That was something I always reminded myself when I got to like 95 notes or something.

It applied in Gobi's Valley because some of the notes are inside the pyramid that is opened after you fly and dash into the target.

I was like, "Well, I found them all.

They must be in here or a different level."

It's like, "There's some building I haven't been in yet or some place I haven't gone.

What am I missing?"

And that would incentivize me to explore and push and try to find it.

and I think that it works very well, I think, in that way.

But some of the design is just like,

how do you even do this?

Kind of one theme, I really probably should have

just mentally taken this note and learned it much sooner

and just kind of stuck to it.

But one of the notes that I wrote for myself

was when in doubt, eggs.

It never would have occurred to me in ClickLock would

to like put the eggs in the hole in the ground

to make a flower grow or do that in the mad monster mansion

for all the pots.

If you can't figure out how to open,

yeah, if you can't figure out how to do something,
it probably involved shooting out or pooping out eggs.

And I don't think that's quite natural or instinctive,
at least to me today.

My brain just wasn't like, spam eggs.

if you can't figure it out, so.

- Especially because they don't really make you ever
have to do anything with that.

Like when they introduce the eggs mechanic,

they're just kinda like, "Oh yeah, by the way,

"you can also poop them out the back

"if you press this button instead.

"Just heads up, okay, thank you, bye."

Like they teach you how to do it the one way,

but then they just kind of add the caveat on it.

Like, "Oh, you can also do this, by the way, anyway, see ya."

- That leaves us with one.

Mad Monster Mansion, the spooky level.

Yeah. What do you think about this one, Michael?

This one is I like it and I enjoy it.

I think it'd be like a five or four.

That's what I'm thinking. I'm not sure.

It's really this is another one where it's really about the atmosphere, the theme.

Honestly, I think everything about it, I'm trying to think like, what?

What about this sucks?

I'm sure there's something out there, but for the most part, it's you're exploring a
mansion.

That's cool.

You're going into these bedrooms, into this old church.

There's not as much, if I remember correctly, there's not as many characters.

You have the toilet.

The hand, which isn't really a character.

The hand.

Kind of a...

Yeah, I guess you have a fair amount.

But it's really about like the enemies.

really give the the level life and personality and they're just about to kill they make you spell banjo-kazooie again just in a different way other than ground pounding the floor they make you trace a glass with a weebie board yeah oh it is a Ouija board I guess I didn't even that didn't even occur to me I think I think that's what it's supposed to be for sure yeah I think my favorite part of this level is when you turn into the pumpkin you jump in the toilet mouth and then Grunty says like wow you're disgusting except she says it with whatever rhyme she says I think that's a great moment because she really doesn't talk too much in any of the levels or anything but she makes one exception for when you jump in the toilet she chives in like what are you doing which is a which is a really great moment well actually I think this is her this is like her house yeah it seems like the location her bedroom yeah uh-huh so she has a house inside her lair. Yeah sure. Yes. It's pretty big. It's pretty meta. She also has a desert. Max, I am... Ship. If I never told you that you could have turned into the croc at Bubble Gloop Swap, how long would it have taken you to realize that you have to be the pumpkin to go get into the side to go to go hit the switch? For Mumbo? Yeah. When you leave the level like in that little... Yeah when you leave the level and you go off into the little the offshoot path or whatever

and then the only way you wouldn't have figured it out I would have looked it up or is if you are the pumpkin yeah no I would have looked it up I would have been like how how do you fit in this space it my brain thought transformations were bound to the world they occurred in and they they technically are because you leave and there's a sphere. But that's the one time it like totally forces you to do it right? Like for sure? Because I think you can get the jigsaw puzzle behind Bubble Gloop another way. You can get the shoot. The shoot, yeah. The stilts. I think this is the only time in the game that forces you to leave a level as the transformation and then go do something else to unlock another area of the game. Which is pretty obtuse in some ways because yeah like you said it's it's it's something they show you and they introduce like oh hey you can do this and that's the only time we're gonna tell you that you can do it the whole game or that you at least that you need to do it there's one more if you take a step one step backwards it becomes even more obnoxious because there's actually a gate there yeah you have to knock down as Banjo Kazooie if you for people who have played this game if you forget to do that and you you come on out with the pumpkins like well I actually have to go change back destroy it turn into the pumpkin again This half and it's one of those textures again It really doesn't look like there we go a gate that you should be able to knock down But you can obviously but it's just it looks ever so it looks slightly off But it also looks like it fits in with the back Well, it also has a giant padlock on it. Yeah as a part of the texture. So it's inherently didn't convey to me that Kazooie's beat could just destroy the entire gate

Yeah

Okay, let's rank these so we're agreeing that clankers cavern is the worst which we didn't even talk about that level very much

I do think that level has charm with clanker himself and I like the idea that he's just a giant garbage garbage

Disposal fish. I think that's funny. I wish clanker appeared in rusty bucket bag. That would be good. I

I think that level yeah, I mean it sucks cuz it's a water level, but I think clinker himself is like a pretty

Memorable character. That's the best thing I can say about anyway, I

Would still say that's the bottom though, right?

Mmm. Yeah. Yeah, I'm so that would be nine if we're if we're ordering them here

I guess we'll go bottom the top. I feel like that might be

Well, we've already got number one with treasure trove Cove. So we've got treasure trove Cove one

All suspense removed. Yeah, we'll bounce back and forth here

Rusty bucket very eight we said

What are we feeling like goes above that

Bubble gloop, I think probably seven stuff our vibe. Yeah, I feel like I don't agree, but that's fine

What did what did you what would you voice your opinion?

I probably put bubbles mountain, but you guys like mumbles mountain more so that's fine - against

I just have less I think Mumbo's Mountain goes right above bubble gloop personally

Cuz I just like I have like key design problems with bubble gloop. I think

Mumbo's I don't I just don't really have design problems with but it is just

Unremarkable I guess yeah, okay, so that's seven and six and then five

I would say it's between like gobies and mad monster mansion I put monster

Above that's yeah, I would I would I put go be it go be a five five and monster at four max

I'm gonna guess this is gonna say click clock would it three three or

Or well, what do you like between free ZZ peak and click like what was it?

Cuz this is what we're down to free free ZZ would be my two

Okay, and click lock would be three but I know Michael click clock fights for second. I'm flipped

I'm click clock at two personally. I mean, I'm I'm fine consenting and giving click clock -

Is that what you said? You are Michael click clock what? Yes. Okay, that's fine

so then it goes

From one to nine it goes treasure trove Cove click clock wood free ZZ peak

mad monster mansion goby's valley

Mumbo's mountain

bubble gloop swamp

rusty bucket Bay and clinkers cavern

This is the official ranking and cannot be changed by anyone else.

Please add this to the official banjo because it will be Wikipedia entry somebody.

So we've left the worlds and we've touched on the gameplay and kind of the design of these worlds.

They're, it's very intimate. They're, it's all woven together I think quite well. They're integral to each other. It's not just world and applied gameplay to it. World and gameplay go hand in hand and to create the interesting game scenarios. But the game at the end gives you an ending and then gives you an end game which I think is pretty interesting for the time. You don't really see that a lot today but you get to the end which is a giant pad of 2D's face which gave me a lot of Donkey Kong 64 vibes but again Banjo was first. And You walk in and it's, "Come on down, let's do the game show."

And let me tell you boys,

having this under a imaginary time crunch

'cause I had the wrong time in my head

when we were going to start by an hour,

it was probably more frustrating than normal, I think,

adding an external crunch.

But all in all, I actually like the game show part.

- I think it sucks.

(laughing)

Or maybe it doesn't suck,

but as somebody who was totally not on a time crunch,

I just did not like it.

I think everything with Brintilda is just

something that this game doesn't need necessarily.

I think-- - The sister?

- Yeah, I think it encourages you to explore

the lair a little bit more to go find her.

But I don't want to take notes in an eight to ten hour game of things that all need to remember at hour

Nine and a half or whatever

Maybe it's not it's it's not that long of a game. I guess depending on how fast you beat it. But anyway, yeah

It's it's annoying in that regard and again, not everything that you need to do during the game show relies on those facts

It's just a couple of them. I just don't like it

I think my problem is that this game has a very good flow otherwise where you are constantly

moving forward and constantly doing something and then this just like, it just grinds to

a halt depending on if you can, I mean maybe Michael feels differently because I'm going

to guess that he could beat the game show with his eyes closed at this point.

Well.

Maybe not with your eyes closed but I'm going to guess you know most of the answers other

than the Gruntilda facts which are, I found out this time playing it are different every

single time you play the game, correct?

You mean the question that they present to you?

No, the Gruntilda facts specifically.

So it'll say like, "Oh, did you know Gruntilda went to her favorite magazine is this?"

And then it'll give you one of, what is it, like three options.

It'll randomize what the three options are every time you play.

That's what I read on the Banjo-Kazooie Wiki, at least.

Because I tried to look up the answers for this and it said, "We straight up can't give you the answers for this because they're randomized depending on your game so there's probably a pool i would imagine maybe i'm wrong about that but that's what i read on the interwebs so so if you think that gruntilda went to fat hag high maybe she went to whatever some other school in somebody else's game i don't know if the answers are consistent

I'm not sure. I don't know about that. I can't confirm or deny, but that would be annoying.

Maybe the wiki lied to me. Maybe it did.

That's the thing about wikis, Logan. Anyone can contribute.

The thing I read though said that you can't give definitive answers because it's always going to be wrong for some players.

Okay, so that's obnoxious. That would be obnoxious if that's the way it is, then it's not great.

I think it is a for if you're playing for the first time, I think it's a cool thing to to encounter where like, what what is this? How do I figure this out? I had no idea this was in the game. Exactly. Most people don't care to talk to Brintilda. And then especially during that time, especially as a kid, you go to school, you talk about the games you play. And you can kind of figure something out based on Oh, somebody else did it. And told me you have to talk to some to that one witch that's nice that I saw one time where I didn't even know that that existed I go I gotta go find that out now it was just different than looking it up so I think that added to why that worked at that time and I still think it works because it doesn't I mean you just you played it today does it happen very often these questions these like really oh the grunty spacing no I think it's like once the route that I ended up on maybe had four. I was gonna say it's once every like five or six spots I feel like it asks you one of them something around there. Yeah. So if you really don't want to do

that stuff then you just have to be better at these questions I guess. I honestly preferred those questions because I did write everything down that the the sister said and so you know when you write down your notes and you read your notes then you it's easier to remember so I was

- That was fairly confident. - Why did you do that?

Why did you write all those notes?

Did you know going in that that would happen?

- Well, the words were squiggly.

Means it's important, there's emphasis.

- I've never encountered another human who's done this.

- This man's been playing video games for 25 years.

He knows, he knows that something was happening.

- I have my notes for the show.

She said three things.

like squiggly line this is important where who knows congratulations good job how do you guys feel about the game like yeah essentially you do save 2d after you beat this and then the credits kind of they roll and then you have to kind of if you want to complete it and kill grumpy you have to go back it like do you think that do you like how that's structured and then and we can talk about the final boss fight after this too but like I forgot that that happened I guess when I played it this time and I thought it was like bizarre that you just don't run up the stairs and go fight her right away and then you have to watch credits and then it spits you back out at the front of the lair again and you got to go all the way it was kind of odd and I'm wondering what their reasoning for that was because they clearly want you to go kill grunty afterwards but did they just assume that not everybody has 100 jiggies in their pocket to go do that right away? I don't know.

I love it. I love that it's this way, actually. I like it for two reasons. Number one, if you are a kid or even if you're playing now, you play the game, you get to Grunty, and this is your final boss, a game show. And you save two and you get credits and whatever, it's over. But then it's like, wait, oh no, there's just a little bit more for you. It's not over. There's a special feeling to that, especially as a kid when you're not like me where I read a game that's 20 minutes or 20 hours and I want to cry. I'd rather it be five hours, you know? But back then, no, more game. Good. And it's also good because there are games out there where you do get to the final boss, you fight the final boss, the credits roll, and then you can't turn the game off and you can't progress.

You're just stuck there.

You restart back right before the final boss before your conclusion.

And yes, fighting Gruntilda here is the actual conclusion of the game, but at least here you have saved your sister, you have done your task.

And the game is finished.

And you're like safe point.

I don't know you have saved the thing and it's done.

You can save there and you can be done.

Not that you actually would.

And I just I think it's so cool that you could be convinced that it's over then you're like, oh, well, let me walk up here and it's actually a dark and creepy tower.

And you get to the big room and just a giant portrait of Gruntilda the main boss, and you need all these jiggies for it that the doors open and there's the cauldron and there's this train machine has been seen in the game over screens the entire game as well that I like that I took away in the side room which which that that I told Max is that cutscene used to scare me so badly as a kid I don't know why 2d going rawr used to like horrified me when I was four years I don't know why you get scared of weird things that you're a kid but that used to scare me I

I had a moment you were you know talking about why you like it so much and I do too I think this is actually really a clever incentive to go get enough jiggies to like do you know to finish the game to do everything and see everything that the game has to offer I think it's very clever in that way and it's a good incentive it's almost like the click clock would where you see the puzzle early and you get the level at the end the whole game Grunty has been teasing you and then you get to the end and you save your sister and then they tease you again with like, "Well, if you actually want to take her out, yeah, I get to the top of the tower and fight her and stuff."

But you talked about that, bait and switch isn't the right phrase, but you save your sister and then there's more to the game.

It's kind of a nice surprise.

And my brain immediately went to Wind Waker because the goal of Wind Waker is save your sister and then it turns out well there's a legend and I'm actually a part of an ancient prophecy and there's more to the game and I remember that same feeling of oh wait there's more in Wind Waker and I'm sure that also applies Logan you might go I'm sure I don't know if you played it when you were a kid I know my Logan did but I ocarina of time another n64 you probably had a similar thing where it's like oh I'm a kid I got all the things I need oh no wait now I'm time traveling and I'm an adult and there's more now those are different those are more in the middle it's not the very end of the game and now there's a little bit more but I do like that there is one more thing and it's the thing you really have wanted to do the entire game which is fight grunty and win I think it's very clever very smart and fun design so what do we think about about the actual boss fight.

- I like it.

It's very challenging appropriately for a final boss.

I think there is a little too much at the start
with the eggs and trying to like hop on the little ledges
and like that goes on for a little bit,
but it is a challenge, it's long
and it feels very rewarding, especially as a kid
when you do it by yourself and nobody helps you
to get that done.

And I like that it's so hard because it makes getting all the Jiggies in the game worth
it because then you get the red honeycombs and that is such a great reward that is actually
useful for the final boss.

Which is what I told Max he needed to do because I knew he would probably need the help.

And I just had 97 Jigsaw's by the end of the game.

You need 98.

If you would have got the one on top of one of those mountains, you wouldn't have had that
problem.

I had to go back. I went back to Click Clock Wood and planted eggs to grow flour.

You never did that? That was the thing you never did?

Again, I didn't think egg equals flour.

Uh, I think my favorite part about this is just that, uh,

I don't think the fight's bad by any means,

but I just love that the Jinjos get some comeuppance at the very end of the game,
just out of nowhere.

That's because I do like the idea that

Banjo is underpowered and the witch is clearly strong
and she's clearly had a stranglehold on him the whole game.

And he's not gonna be able to overcome that
just because it's a final fight.

So he has to lean on the Jinjos,

which you wouldn't really expect to come out of nowhere.

And the Jinjonator, which shows up

and it's all very random and goofy

and then none of it's hinted at before.

It just shows up out of nowhere.

"Oh, the Jinjos are here. You spit the eggs in these statues and they'll kill her."

It's really silly, but I loved that that was always how she got taken out rather than,

you know, Banjo and her just throwing hands or something like that.

It was instead Banjo summoning the power of the Jinjos to take her down.

I thought that was always one of the funniest parts of the fight and I still really like that a lot.

But to the Jinjo's credit, I'm pretty sure I think the story behind them is that Grunty took them and

placed them here that they need to be rescued. And I think that might just be in when you first

collect a Jinjo they'll say that in one line or something and that's the only time you ever think

about that so they do have their like their revenge. So there's something to it but it is

yes very random at the end well it's very random that there's an ancient

Jinjo nader statue standing on top of this tower that you could that's the

random part about it but but yeah they do establish it I think once you grab

the first one on the Bumbos Mountain they say like that one line of dialogue

that you're talking about so hmm I like the fight all in all actually by the the

last run, I think the first three phases, the patterns are fairly straightforward. My

beef is more with just the flying mechanics than the actual goal of hitting her while flying.

I think that makes sense. I just wish I could aim better, basically. I'm not very good at it.

So that part was always frustrating. And then I think, Michael, what you were saying,

it's just hard enough. And I had a moment, now granted I did go back and get the red

Honey Homes because again I was trying to get it done before we recorded the show tonight,

but there was a moment I think on my third attempt I died, but I realized the pattern

that I needed to take to like you know bring the ginger nator to life, which at least my strategy at that point when she is just throwing fireballs like crazy was hop on Kazooie's legs and just go back and forth to dodge those and then when she throws the homing magic sparkly ball go invincible and then there's a pause and then I would do one of the holes on the side the gingineer with eggs and then repeat and just do that four times. And when I've... It was one of the satisfying boss moments of, "I know what I need to do now. Now I just have to execute it."

And then the next time I did it and I won. And if I had done better on the flying part, I could have done it without losing all the red honeycombs, which means I could have done it without the red honeycomb. So I think there's a very satisfying learning curve to her, at least as an adult. As a kid, I have no idea how hard they may or may not have thought this was.

- Very hard. Very hard.

- I guess where that leaves us really is just kind of what is the legacy of this game as a whole, you know, it's the first game in a series of five total games. Two of, you know, one of those is a racing game on the Game Boy Advance and yet Rare made a ton of games on the N64 and this was you know Banjo's big debut but the bear and the bird still feel very relevant today and sure if Smash has helped I think the younger generation really identify at least know who these two are but for people our age Banjo feels actually very alive right now even though there hasn't been a new game since Nuts and Bolts. Michael, what do you think about the legacy of this game as someone who has, it's such a part of their life that you'll even, you make your own types of levels and you just know this game way more than I ever could.

I'm glad that I'm not just some random person losing their mind over this game nobody knows about, people forgot about, because it is everything you said. Very, very relevant for a game that doesn't do, for a series that doesn't do anything. Very relevant. I'm, I am very happy that it has the legacy it has. I think it's also well deserved. When you think of the N64, you think of Mario 64, Ocarina of Time, you think of Panjkazooie, and I think

that's appropriate that that that's how people how people think about that and even in terms of 3D

platformers I I love to use Banjo Kazooie as a like hey this is how you do it right this is how

and it's not perfect we talked about a lot of the flaws but like this is a great base

look at this look at the level design here look at the collectathon criteria here and build from

there even when comparing to Mario 64 it's just it shows how much how much you can do even with

limitations to really give your game personality to give it what's the word like the just personality

this is a great base for that. I love this game. I'm just starting to ramble now so

somebody take it away. I'm gonna start crying. This game is so good.

What's the legacy for you Logan?

Yeah, I mean I think Michael really nailed it. It's like they don't

make games with this type of charm and personality. I feel like everything feels very...

This is something I've been feeling, I think this actually dawned on me the other day a little bit more, and I know this is something not unique by any means, but like,

games are feeling very corporate nowadays, which is ironic because Banjo is currently owned by one of the biggest corporations on the planet, so it's not that Banjo currently is not

I would say the product of a corporate company because it's not like they're doing much with it or making anything new out of it

But like this feels like a game from a bygone era and it doesn't feel like we get games like this anymore

And I think that's why this game still has a very

special place in my heart and I feel like it's kind of like you were saying, Max, why this game is still

relevant in a lot of ways to this day is because people

Don't see things like this being made anymore, and when would things like this do feel like they're trying to like ukulele is a good example

I feel like well, maybe you will mention this a time or two over the course of this season

It feels hollow because it's trying to emulate what this is rather than just being a natural creation

this game just feels

Unique in so many ways, and I can't think of anything that is really

Made like this nowadays. They wouldn't necessarily be they wouldn't come from a triple-a dev

I would say I feel like a lot of things that you feel like

That are made nowadays with this level of charm and style come from the indie scene rather than from triple-a devs or publishers

so yeah, I think that's why it stands out a lot and

It's just a good game still to this day like even playing this again and that within the past week like

Still holds up still a very good game still very fun game

I enjoyed my time with it a lot.

- Yeah, I agree with that.

As someone who's played it for the first time,

I think it holds up remarkably well.

Even with the understanding of some hardware limitations and design choices that they would have made on the N64.

And I think the kind of support,

the fact that a game from that time and on that system

is being treated, is treated so well as a port

to a new console in a modern era, I think, you know,

Microsoft just came in and bought Rare

and the properties and things associated with it.

And I think the level of care that they've let Rare

show that series and those games over the years

is actually really nice.

And I think another testament to Microsoft's incredible

back compatibility that they've been able to maintain

through their generations and stuff,

and the respect that they seem to have

have for their own legacy of games, especially the part of the big three that's been in the video game industry the shortest amount of time, at least in a home console aspect.

And so I think it's awesome.

I'm excited to see...

I'm excited to play Tooie on my own for the very first time instead of at a neighbor's house whenever we would go over there.

I'm excited to revisit Crunty's Revenge because I just liked that game a lot as a kid and I'm

- Notice you're not saying you're excited to play Nuts and Bolts there.

- Well, I'm morbidly curious about Nuts and Bolts.

So we will see how that experience goes on the next episode of season three year of chapter select.

Thank you so much for listening.

You can find myself on Twitter at maxroberts143 and my writing over at maxfrequency.net.

You can find Logan on Twitter @moreman12 and his writing over at comicbook.com.

And you can find Michael on Twitter @superzambesi, Z-A-M-B-E-Z-I, and he is a content editor at DigiPen.

Michael, is there anything you would like to share with the audience, point them toward anything?

- Just that if you did have any interest

in the Banshe Kazooie level modeling nonsense

shenanigans. I do that. Oh, I don't do that every Wednesday anymore because I have this new job. So I do it at some point in the week. I don't know when yet, but that's on my Twitch at the same username. So check that out. And also thank you both for having me on. I am

always happy to talk about Banjo-Kazooie and it's always a pleasure to chat with you both.

So thank you.

>>Steve, Thanks, man. Well, thank you for joining us, Michael. And you can find links to Michael's Twitch and Twitter and stuff in the show notes and links to anything that we talked about as well. So thank you all very much for listening and until next time, adios.

Hi everybody. You may have noticed that we just wrapped up the show, but now you hear my voice once again. Logan and I are here. We had a couple of other things we wanted to touch on with Banjo-Kazooie that we kind of realized after we had wrapped up the show with Michael. Part of it was the episode was going much on much longer than we had thought and so now we're making it even longer. But there were just a few things we wanted to touch on specifically around just the characters and story and the music to specifically kind to call some of that stuff out. Logan, the cast of this game is both big and small.

Yeah, and they don't get, there's a lot of different side characters in the game. A lot of them we talked about with Michael over the course of our conversation with him, but we never really touched on the main cast, which is Banjo-Kazooie and then Grunty, and And then I guess to a lesser extent, Bottles and 2D.

Bottles is more of a tutorial companion, teaches you how to do everything in the game for the most part.

And then 2D is really not in a ton.

But yeah, I don't know.

I just wanted to talk a little bit about Banjo-Kazooie and Grunty because I felt like we didn't ever

really discuss them too much as characters.

And they're all great characters and they're all, I think, a lot of the reason why people like these games.

I just think the design of it, I mean aside from like their characteristics and stuff

like that, I think the design of them all is just fantastic.

I still think it's one of the more inventive like character designs ever.

Like oh hey we'll create a bear that's the main character and then we'll shove his best friend in a backpack that he wears on his back and he flies around with like it's just so out there in a lot of ways and I like it a lot.

clever it's a lot of personality but it's not it's not like a ton of traits

or characteristics it's one or two things for each character that is really

amplified and that generate that creates the charm surrounding them grunty rhymes

and at least in this first game really only cares about becoming thin and

beautiful like yeah you know fairest of them all kind of snow white type

situation which is funny when countering that against all of the things that she does in her life which is

wash her hair with a rancid milk or eat

Tadpoles on toast or what like things like that. So she's like, oh I want to be hot

Also, I would like to live this lifestyle. That is the horribly disgusting

Yes, I'm it's and then her rhyming the way she interjects and taunts you the entire game is

It's that nice reminder that she's around and you're inside her lair and yeah all that stuff

It's so it's so great and then banjo

It's pretty like a easy. He's pretty dumb. Just yeah, he's kind of

like

I mean, that's kind of his guys very he's very he's very obtuse and just kind of a se yeah

But he has a good heart of wanting to help people and then Kazooie is the swing in the opposite direction

very chatty very sarcastic very rude and

self-serving to it, but

Ultimately willing to help in the end. It's never

ah, this is terrible and I the pairing of them is is iconic you really

Can't be beat. Yeah, I mean that one or one of them alone doesn't

Carry the game like it really does have to be a combo of both of them which sounds

Dumb to say because the game is literally called banjo-kazooie

So but like if they had just come up with one character or the other to somehow

Be in the starring role like if this was just about banjo and there was no kazooie present

Be a much different game. I think people would still like it, but it really it really is about how they bounce off one another and how

personalities mesh and the writing in the game like overall I think is fantastic I

like that it's very

This is something that happens more in the later games more so in this one

But it's very aware that it's a game and it's not trying to take itself too seriously which I love

as you said grunt grunt ill does sort of

rhyming scheme as she as she's talking with everything that she does is

It's over the top, but I just love the idea that they they came up with this idea while developing the game

They just totally commit to it and it's something they commit to and every one other one of the games thereafter

I mean, it's got to be very difficult to come up with

inventive lines for Gruntilda I

Today I was thinking just about that and it's like man

How do you even come up with some of these and rhymes and it's so creative

It's so fun and it makes me want to read her dialogue. It keeps me engaged with her for sure

Yeah, because I think a lot of games it's very easy because this game is not very heavy on story or

Characters are writing. I mean there are moments of it, but it's it's not the main thing you are doing by any means

It's a very it's a collect-a-thon. It's a gameplay focused game. So you it

The things like the story and stuff are mainly just to serve you

Jumping around and go into different worlds and things like that

But yeah, it does make you want to read the dialogue in the game because it is so engaging and witty and just overall funny

Yeah, very I love a banjo is kind of like

Argument to convince Kazooie to go fight grunty at the end is you can peck her butt

it's just like

What like this is how you convince your bared friend. It's very

Childish they knew what the target was

In the audience, but it it still works today, and then I think it I think it works very well with

Tutorials as well like anytime you learn a new move Kazooie's like you're gonna do what to me here

Like yes, it's hilarious that Kazooie takes

Pretty much is beaten up as the attack. Yes like all of the attacks in the game somehow involve that

And she usually comments on it in some sort of snide way

Which is which is great. I love that the the bickering between her and bottles is also just yes a fun fun fun thing

Yeah, and how Kazooie treats a lot of the characters that you come across in the game too is funny

Yeah, just the constant sarcasm and the constant the constant wittiness that's flowing from Kazooie really

It leads to a lot of the funnier moments when you run across characters in the game and then of course

How they all interact with grunty as well

yeah, Kazooie Kazooie is my favorite out of the whole bunch of people and

You know, I was surprised that some of the characters I recall being pretty important in

Tui are

Either have very small roles here in Kazooie or don't even exist

You know, so I was surprised to see that in this retroactive way. So

the other

the other big

I think Core Pillar, I almost,

you can't have Banjo-Kazooie without Banjo or Kazooie,

but you also can't have it without the music.

You can't have Banjo and Kazooie without Grant Kirkhope.

- Yeah. - The composer

for these games has created music that has been around
for 25 or so years, just came out with a new remix album
of said songs from this game.

Like this music still follows him to this day and is very signature.

You can tell when it's a Grant Kirkup track and this is a part of that.

The thing I wanted to talk about and the reason we're kind of tacking this on here at the
end is I think we talked a lot with Michael about, you know, "Oh, this song is great
in the game.

This is one of my favorite songs.

I love Treasure Trove Cove.

I love Click Clock Wood.

Whatever."

I feel like we talked about the songs that we really like in the game.

The thing I wanted to talk more about though in regards to the soundtrack and the sound
of the game overall is like, it's how unique it is.

In the sound design, beyond the soundtrack,

I think the sound design in this game is just so memorable.

Like all this different sound effects

from all of the different characters that are in the game.

I mean, the first thing we always say

whenever we bring up Banjo is "Guh-huh."

Like, it's so, all the little sounds

that they throw in this game are so...

- The way each character talks.

- Yeah, it's all super unique.

It's all super iconic and synonymous with Banjo-Kazooie.

Like I can hear the way that Grunty and Mumba,

like obviously the writing is not,

or the dialogue in the game is not English.

It's a (imitates game sounds)

but I can hear all of their different, unique,

little fake dialogue that they do in the game as well.

Like it's sealed into my head.

I think that's all super unique and incredibly well done.

And it's something that I don't remember a lot of other games from that era doing.

Like even if you compare it to something like Mario 64, it's just like text would

just appear on the screen or same sort of thing with the Zelda or something like that.

Not saying you want a Zelda game to be like, but like it is, it is that one

extra thing where like, even though they are not speaking English, it's like, you

know how the characters talk at the same time, like they, they, they

have a voice. It gives it personality. It's just like when the credits roll in the game,

you go and visit. It cuts to all the different characters, side characters and stuff. And

they all have voices and personality. It just makes them more memorable, which I think helps

ultimately then the game stick with people for the past 20+ years. It's a part of that

identity. I will say though that some of these sound effects can get annoying. Like which

Kazooie walking.

Like that?

Yes.

The talentrot move?

Yes, we can calm that down a little bit.

Thankfully, usually the gameplay is engaging enough where my brain will process that out, but when you start at the beginning of Gruntilda's Lair and you have to walk all the way super deep and you have to do the talentrot to get there.

to get there. Well don't worry because in Nuts and Bolts they replaced that with cars instead of a talent shot so there you go. Okay good all right well then Nuts and Bolts is already a better game obviously. So you know that was a little bit much and I remember you know the second race in Freezy Z Peak the music on top of the super talent trot was just too much as yeah overload noise levels so those sound effects are definitely used quite a bit and I'm sure it's the same in "Tooie" and if not the same in "Nuts and Bolts" and "Gruntty's Revenge" I don't really recall too much because it's a bit more limited in scope. So some kind of get a little old over time.

Yeah. The one thing I wanted to call attention to with the soundtrack specifically outside of just the music is how it is used. Like the most unique thing about Banjo-Kazooie to me is that there are varying, there are variations of each of the songs, or maybe not each of the songs, but a lot of the songs in the game depending on what you are doing in the game. Like, it still is just so, and especially for its time, like I cannot think of another game out there that where like if you dive underwater it's gonna make the music in the background sound submerged like you are going underwater and that's a different,

Like the transition between those is so seamless but it is a different style of track depending on what is going on.

And I don't know how exactly he did that or if that's just like a filter that they put that through or something like that or if he straight up re-recorded it to sound a certain way like that.

I mean obviously I know these answers are surely on the internet that you can go find.

But that's just, that's taking it one step further that a lot of games I can't ever think of have done. So like, going underwater, running around Gruntilda's Lair is another great example

of this, where Gruntilda's Lair has a specific theme, but they constantly change it depending on where you're going. Like if you're on the lead up to Mad Monster Mansion, it's gonna start to sound a little bit more spooky, or if you're heading towards Goby's Valley, it's gonna sound more Egyptian-y or desert-like or whatever. Like, the overworld theme of Gruntilda's lair changes depending on where you are at in her lair.

So again, I cannot think of other games that really have done that.

Especially games of this style.

All these years later that stands out to me as one of the most impressive things about this game and just shows the amount of care and attention that they put into the soundtrack specifically and the sound design.

Very quick googling and ultimately landing on a Reddit thread so you know this is 100% true but it does sound at least logical to me as far as the water, underwater tracks and stuff.

It is, they are separate instrument tracks that are playing the same song at the same time, just at zero volume, and then they become unmuted when you go in the water.

- So it's just the sliders basically change the second--

- So it's just as soon as you're in water, it flips, but the songs were playing at the same time, so they're in the same location, that's how, again.

- Makes sense.

- Is this really how it works?

I don't know, but at least it makes sense.

- That would make sense, yeah.

Who knows how video games really work?

Not us.

Definitely not us.

Was there anything else you wanted to touch on?

No, I mean, again, I feel like as far as the soundtrack goes, we really talked about a lot of the tracks that I think we specifically liked and stuff with Michael.

Yeah, I just felt bad that we didn't call attention to some of those intricacies of the sound design and what this game does.

Like I said, to this day, can you think of any other games even in 2022 that are doing anything like what this game was doing almost 25 years ago with how it was mixing the music and stuff like that?

Just still to this day is very, very impressive to me.

The only other ones I can think of are games that have followed in Rare's footsteps.

Things like modern Donkey Kong Country games, which is not even Rare.

Or I haven't played it, you could tell me.

I'm sure Yooka-Laylee does it.

Yeah, I think Yooka-Laylee does do it.

So, there are games that have, I'm sure, a hat in time, probably does something similar.

So, games that have followed in their footsteps, but beyond that-

It's games that are trying to emulate Banjo to a certain degree.

And that is a part of those games in spirit, and I do appreciate it when that happens.

So I think that actually truly wraps it up now. So thank you all for listening to this little extended conversation about Banjo and Kazooie, and we look forward to sharing our next episode

with you about Nuts and Bolts.

Chapter Select is a Max Frequency production.

This episode was research produced and edited by me, Max Roberts.

Season three is hosted by Logan Moore and myself.

Season three is all about Banjo-Kazooie.

For more on the season, go to chapterselect.com/seasonthree.

the show @ChapterSelect and check out previous seasons at ChapterSelect.com.

Alright gentlemen, that went way long. Logan, is this going to be longer than God of War 2018? I don't think so.

Oh, that's hilarious. I think it's because of the structure that we took to talk about.

Yeah, I definitely felt bad as we were getting like halfway in. I was like, "Oh man, this is going over." I feel, I'm very sorry if we kept you over, Michael, because we really

I'm sorry because I'm like, "Oh no, we are still talking about all this? That's why I made a message."

No, for sure. I just didn't want to eat up all your night.

I would also... it is longer than God of War 2018.

Is it really?

And that's without our intro, Logan.

Interesting. Well, shorter season, longer episodes, I guess.

I guess. I mean, that's good value at least to the audience because it'll be interesting and shorter.

Thanks again, Michael. I did have one dev question for you. I'm just a curiosity. Do you play the levels that you make on just your computer or do you like have an EverDrive for your N64? Do you

play it on real hardware? I don't know. I don't have an EverDrive. It'd be cool to test that out and to play a bunch of the other mods. I should have mentioned that there are a lot of really cool mods out there already. Yeah, you were the one that played Max, you're the one that played the Ocarina of Time link missing link missing link. Yeah, that's fine. You enjoyed that. Yeah. Yeah. There's another there's a Banjo Kazooie mod, where the guy his name's Kirk. Oh, he took the levels of Ocarina of Time and remade them in Banjo Kazooie. And It's this really cool crossover with a ton of personality, a ton of Easter eggs.

It's very good.

It's called Jiggies of Time.

Jiggies of Time.

I've heard of that.

Jiggies of Time.

Jiggies of Time.

It's very, very good.

I highly recommend it.

And that's among maybe a good five, six, seven mods that are worth checking out.

I don't know if you want to check it out right after having played the original, but I don't

You know, Logan, if that sounds interesting to you, that is very much a thing that exists.

Complete mods that are done and not being worked on.

Does this run on real hardware?

It should.

It should.

That's insane.

That's crazy.

I'm looking at an article right now.

This is so cool.

And the music's really good.

Oh my gosh.

I'm definitely going to download this.

So I guess you patch a banjo ROM?

Or do you patch an up-tempo ROM?

Which one?

He has banjo.

Wow, this is neat.

One more question.

Because I think we're all leaving.

But have any of you guys, are any of you watching Severance?

I literally watched the pilot last night.

It is.

It's on my...

So yes.

Well, you're welcome, Logan, because I gave you the Apple TV+ trial.

No.

PlayStation gave me six months more on top of that.

But I gave you the three months.

So I'm actually good through the rest of this year now because of that.

Very good. It is on my list, Michael. I've been Apple TV+ guy from the get-go just because I guess I fall at the feet of Tim Apple. But it's on my list and then everyone has been talking about

it. I even have seen you even tweeting about it. It sounds very, very good. I did just start Slow

Horses, another show on there. It's got Gary Orton on it. I've seen ads for it, yeah. I'm enjoying that,

but Severance is on my shortlist. Yeah, it's very good. It is very, very good, and as soon as I get off this call I'm gonna go check if the series... series... season finale is up. It's supposed to be up like now-ish. I will be watching that and I am very excited. I just want to know if anyone's here.

It did get removed for season two, I saw a headline about that.

So it is one of those things that just gets progressively better.

I very much like the pitch from the jump, but I was like,

"What kind of legs is this gonna have?" That was my concern.

What kind of legs are we talking about? What do you mean by that?

I just didn't know how the season was going to develop.

I was very into the pitch and the idea behind it, but I was more...

I'm not concerned, but I'm just like, "Okay, so what do they do with this from here?"

And I think the end of the first episode kind of teases when you find out who his neighbor is,

I guess is what I'll say there. That was when I was kind of like, "Okay, I'm kind of seeing how

this can develop from here." But yeah, I want to watch more.

That's what I'm going to say. It is good. I would say it might... I think for some people, they might say it gets a little bit slower towards the middle, which I'm totally fine with. Because I don't think there's a really a moment where it's just kind of like, okay, like, what's going on? Like, filler? I'd never not once thought that. But it does slow down a little bit before like, ramping it up, like, currently. Yeah. Okay. I'm very excited for that. Please watch. Let Let me know what you guys think, I guess.