

Leaplings have a birthday; a chilly job up for grabs; Meta on AI election watch; and footy fever is here.

That's what's making news, kid's style...

THE LOWDOWN

Is it your birthday today? If you're born on February 29, you are super rare! That's right kids, today is a leap day, those special days that pop up every four years when an extra day is tacked onto the end of February to give it 29 days.

So why do we have leap days? Settle in, and let me explain. Earth takes 365 days to travel its 940 million kilometre journey around the Sun each year, right? [BomBom] Wrong! It's close but it's not exactly 365—it's more like 365.24219 days. Wayyy back in 45 BCE, Julius Caesar, a very famous Roman dude, implemented a new calendar, that he named after himself - the Julian calendar, and threw an extra day in every four years to keep things in check. But, oops, his math was a smidge off.

Fast forward to the 1570s, and things got messy. The calendar was now a whole ten days ahead. Crops were being planted out of season, and astronomers were pulling their hair out because the moon phases and eclipses weren't showing up on time. Enter Pope Gregory, introducing, you guessed it - the Gregorian calendar, which is still in use today. This calendar fine-tunes things, with leap seconds added now and then to keep our watches ticking in harmony with the cosmos; and nowadays, that's really important because the satellites whizzing around the Earth that control GPS and a whole host of other things rely on it.

And so a big happy birthday again to you leaplings! Make the most of it because four years is a really long time to wait for a birthday.

SPIN THE GLOBE

Each day, we give the world globe a spin and find a news story from wherever it stops, and today, we've landed in Antarctica, where a British Charity is recruiting (that means they're looking for people to do a job) at the bottom of the globe.

The work on offer includes managing a museum, a post office and a gift shop as well as conducting penguin counts and other conservation tasks. This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity also comes with majestic views

of glaciers, parades of penguins and pods of whales passing by just outside the window. Sounds great right?!

But make sure you read the fine print, because the temperature never goes above zero, there are no flushing toilets or running water and each of the thousands of penguins has a call just like a trumpet.

Sadly, only British citizens can apply. Awww

SPORT TIME

Have you been feeling down lately? Parked on the couch wondering what's missing? Well make sure your parents have party pies on the shopping list this week, because the footy season is ramping up!

The National Rugby League, or NRL, tells us in their new ad, that the off-season has been a whole 13, 276, 980 seconds long, but at 1.30 pm Australian Eastern Daylight Saving time on Sunday the wait will finally be over. The season kicks off with a double-header featuring the Manly Sea Eagles and the South Sydney Rabbitohs, followed by the Sydney Roosters taking on the Brisbane Broncos at 3.30 pm all in Las Vegas, USA. This first round will be split, with the rest of the games being played in Australia and New Zealand next week.

And, the AFL will be continuing its preseason games this weekend before the season launches in full on Thursday the 7th of March.

Sydney. v. Melbourne will be first up in a series of four clashes which form the first half of another split opening round.

Can the Penny Pathers take out the comp for a fourth-year running? Will the Collingwood Pies have their beaks sharpened or will Carlton finally break a loooong losing streak? Time will tell.

As it did for the Matildas last night

NEWSHOUNDS

Every Thursday, Squiz-E the Newshound sticks his snout into Squiz Kids HQ to report back on fishy things he's sniffed out on the internet.

And this week, his nose is twitching because rapid advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), are blurring the lines between reality and computer-generated content, which is a significant concern in politics.

With elections approaching for all 27 European Union countries, including France and Germany, there's a risk of misinformation swaying

voters' opinions through deepfakes—highly realistic AI-generated videos and audio.

The big tech company Meta, that owns Facebook and Instagram is on the case, pledging to combat deepfakes with a 15,000-member team, that speaks 70 different languages. But, some experts worry that the technology is so good the fakes could be difficult to spot.

I've included a deepfake voice quiz in the episode notes if you'd like to have a go at telling the real Donald Trump and Joe Biden from the faked ones.

And, teachers and parents, if you haven't yet checked out Newshounds, our eight-part podcast series with classroom resources on navigating misinformation online, hop onto our website squizkids.com.au today and check it out. It's absolutely free. Thanks Squiz-E, you've done it again.

THE S'QUIZ

This is the part of the podcast where you get to test how well you've been listening ...

1. What is the name of the calendar used by most countries around the world today?
2. Which two teams are playing the very first game in the rugby league season that kicks off on Sunday?
3. Name the company that owns Facebook and Instagram and has pledged to help combat misinformation in upcoming elections.

SHOUT OUTS

It's February 29 On this day waaayyy back in 1964, Aussie swimmer Dawn Fraser broke her own world record for the 100 metres freestyle for the 9th time in her career! She swum it in 58.9 seconds, a record which stood for almost eight years.

It's also a very special day for this Squiz Kid celebrating a birthday today ... happy birthday to Monique from Camden

Happy belated birthday to...

Classroom shoutouts today go to... class UP with Ms Shane at Rapid Bay Primary School, class MS6 with Mr Hall at Fairholme College in Toowoomba, all of the students at Irymple Secondary College in Toowoomba, class 5A with Craig at Niddrie Primary School, class 7W with Mr Knight at Overnewton Anglican College in Keilor, class 5 green

with Ms Grace at Mt Carmel School in Yass, class 5V with Miss Vantarakis at Livingstone Primary School and lastly today the Year 4 Wategos with Mrs Powell at St Finbarr's Catholic Primary School in Byron Bay.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. The Gregorian Calendar
2. Manly Sea Eagles and South Sydney Rabbitohs
3. Meta