

## **Pandas to stay in Adelaide; Iceland's village munching volcano; a fake Royal scandal; and Ariana's record-breaking grandma.**

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

### **THE LOWDOWN**

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We get to keep our pandas! That was the big news out of Canberra yesterday - well, for us at least - after Australia's Foreign Minister Penny Wong met with her Chinese government counterpart and - among other things - negotiated for Adelaide Zoo's star attractions, Wang Wang and Fu Ni to remain in Australia for the foreseeable future.

Wang Wang and Fu Ni are a pair of giant pandas who have been on loan to Adelaide Zoo for the past 15 years.

China has a program of lending giant pandas to zoos around the world - as part of an effort to conserve and protect them - but also for what's called 'soft diplomacy'. According to data, there are currently 63 giant pandas on loan to 19 countries.

Diplomacy is a word used to describe relationship between countries - and China cleverly uses the mind-boggling cuteness of the giant panda as a way to improve relations between it and other countries.

The news was met with much celebration in South Australia yesterday, with zookeepers there doing cartwheels at the prospect of getting to keep looking after Wang Wang and Fu Ni. And it also means the 14 hectare bamboo forest the zoo has planted to make sure the pandas have plenty of their favourite food continues to have a use.

Win-win.

### **SPIN THE GLOBE**

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Each day we give the world globe a spin and find a news story from wherever it stops - and today we've landed in Iceland - where the residents of a small fishing village are waiting and watching to see whether their town gets eaten up by lava.

Iceland is an amazing country - a huge volcanic island in the middle of the sea to the north of Europe. It's famous for its landscapes, carved by millions of years of volcanic activity - that make you feel like you're walking on the moon.

Right now, there's a volcano erupting which is spewing a whole lot of lava. Lava is molten rock - which is to say, rock that is so incredibly hot that it's been turned into liquid. We're talking anywhere between 700 to 1200 degrees celsius. And when you consider boiling water is 100 degrees - that's really, really hot.

I've stuck a link to video of the volcanic activity in today's episode notes.

The village of Grindavik - on the coast - has been evacuated and some homes have already been swallowed up by the lava - as residents can now only watch on helplessly and watch nature at her most awesome.

## **POP CULTURE CORNER**

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Have you ever had a singalong with your grandma? Maybe she's taught you songs that she loved to sing when she was growing up - maybe you've taught her the latest Tay Tay hit. Well pop princess Ariana Grande loves having a sing-along with her grandma Marjorie - or Nonna as she calls her. And now Nonna has made history by becoming the oldest living person to be on the Billboard Hot 100 charts.

At the sprightly age of 98 - Nonna is featured on Ariana's new song, 'Ordinary Things' - giving her granddaughter - and anyone else who will listen - advice on how to have a happy marriage.

And yes, of course I've stuck a link to it in today's episode notes. Because who doesn't love a bit of Ariana on a Thursday?

## **NEWSHOUNDS**

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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 snout is all twitchy with another royal fake news scandal. You'll remember last week we talked about the Photoshopped family portrait that Princess Kate - from England's Royal Family - sent out into the world - and the uproar is caused? Well that was what's called 'misinformation' - information that is shared but not expressly intended to do harm.

Today, Squiz E has stumbled across a piece of disinformation .. which is fake news created with the intention of tricking people and causing harm.

In this instance, it's a fake news report that originated in Russia this week claiming that the King of England, King Charles, had died. Which he hasn't. He's alive and well. It started as a post to a couple of popular Russian social media sites and was then reported in mainstream Russian media - prompting Buckingham Palace to issue an official denial.

But not before many thousands of people believed the fake report was true ..

It's another excellent reason to always do as Squiz E tells us - and that's to Stop, Think and Check before believing everything we see, read or hear online. And another excellent reason to make sure your class is among the more than 2000 around the country that have signed up to use Squiz Kids very own, free media literacy resource, Newshounds - check it out via our website: [www.squizkids.com.au](http://www.squizkids.com.au).

And a shout out to the kids at John Palmer School in The Ponds in Sydney and their teacher Ms Whiteside - I can't wait to come out to your school tomorrow with your local member of parliament - Federal Communications Minister Michelle Rowland - to see Newshounds in action. It's gonna be fun!

## **Q+A CALLOUT**

Have you ever wondered who pays the bills for Australia? Who decides how to spend the money that the government collects? And what it should be spent on? How much should be spent on roads or hospitals, schools or sports? It's all decided by a person called The Treasurer - a politician in Canberra, who, after the Prime Minister, is probably the most important person in our government.

At the moment, that job is held by a man called Jim Chalmers from sunny Queensland - and we're delighted to report that he's agreed to take the Squiz Kids Q+A hotseat and answer any questions you might have for him.

Like: how did he get his job? Why did he want to become a politician and work in CANberra? What exactly is the Federal Budget and why is it important? What do his three kids - Jack, Annabelle and Leo think about his job? What was he like as a kid? Why is his mum so important in his life? Who was his favourite teacher? What would he have done for a job if he didn't become a politician? Why is he such a fan of hip hop music and who's his favourite artist? And *why does his daughter Annabelle paints his toes with glitter nail polish before he goes to Canberra to help run the country?*

Send your questions to [squizkids@thesquiz.com.au](mailto:squizkids@thesquiz.com.au) .... And we'll pick the best ten to put to the Treasurer. Teachers: send through questions your class might have .. just don't dilly dally! The man has a budget to prepare and school holidays are looming - so time is of the essence ..

## **THE S'QUIZ**

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

1. In which country is a volcanic eruption threatening to swallow villages?
2. Which pop star enlisted her grandma to appear on her latest track?
3. What are the names of the pandas on loan from China in Adelaide Zoo?

## **SHOUT OUTS**

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It's March 21 .... Get your motors running - because the Australian Formula 1 Grand Prix kicks off in Melbourne today - it will be a festival of fast cars, incredible engineering and lovers of things that are fast and loud ..

It's also a very special day for these Squiz Kids celebrating a birthday today...

Lucas from Yass, Winnie and Ruby from Willunga, Sarvin from Spring Mountain, Leedan from Caringbah, Indigo from Caloundra, Angus from Nelson Bay, Tama from Millfield and Yi-June listening over in South Korea.

Belated shout outs go to... Siya from Wheelers Hill, Marcus listening from Hanoi in Vietnam and a special belated shout out to Miss Tickner from Marulan Public School.

Classroom shoutouts today go to... Prep class B and Ms Nona at Mater Dei Catholic Primary School in Ashgrove West, class 3D and Mr Davies at Epping West Public School, class 4A and Miss Houghton at Gardenvale Primary School in Brighton East, class 5S and Mrs Smeaton at Livingstone Primary School, class 3 Blue and Mrs Bell at Cedars Christian College in Unanderra and lastly class 7J and Mr Jarred at Freshwater Christian College in Cairns.

## **The S'Quiz Answers:**

1. Iceland
2. Ariana Grande
3. Fu Ni and Wang Wang