

**Year of the Snake slithers in; explosive thieves nab treasure; a peeing pup goes viral; and tennis players go bananas.**

Hello and welcome to Squiz Kids Today ... your fresh take on what's happening in the world around you.

I'm Christie Kijurina

It's Wednesday, January 29

In Squiz Kids Today ... Year of the Snake slithers in; explosive thieves nab treasure; a peeing pup goes viral; and tennis players go bananas.

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

## **THE LOWDOWN**

-----

As I mentioned, today is January 29, which this year marks the start of Lunar New Year—a festival celebrated far and wide, from China to Vietnam, South Korea, and beyond. It's one of the biggest holidays in the world, and this year in China alone, over **9 billion trips** are expected to be taken, as families travel to reunite and celebrate! Imagine 510 million train journeys and 90 million flights, all in the next few weeks.

So, what exactly is Lunar New Year? Often called Chinese New Year, it follows the cycles of the moon—so the date changes every year. Celebrations continue until February 12, ending with a dazzling full moon. And following the Chinese Zodiac, this year, it's the **Year of the Snake**, and those born in a snake year (like me!) are said to be wise, charming, and determined.

Each country celebrating Lunar New Year has its own traditions, but one thread ties them together: starting the year with hope, family, and good fortune. Traditions include wearing new clothes, enjoying a huge family feast, and giving red envelopes filled with crisp new money for good luck. Now that's a holiday I can get behind!

Oh, and check the episode notes—I've added a link to the story of the Chinese Zodiac and another to discover which animal represents your birth year. Are you a Snake, a Dragon, or maybe a Monkey? Maybe don't answer that one, Mums and Dads.

## **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 the Netherlands, where the townspeople of Assen were rocked awake by a loud explosion early Saturday morning.

At 3:45 am, four brazen thieves blew the doors off a small museum in this Dutch city, making off with priceless treasures, including a 2,400-year-old solid gold warrior's helmet—a national treasure of Romania.

The helmet, covered in intricate engravings of mythological creatures, has an incredible history. It was first found by a child in a Romanian village in 1927, used as a toy, and even as a water bowl for chickens before being restored to its former glory.

Grainy security footage shows the thieves were in and out in minutes, stealing the helmet and three other artefacts. Experts fear the helmet may be melted down because it's so recognisable. The international police force, Interpol, is now on the case, working with local police to track down the culprits before it's too late.

Check out today's episode notes for a video of the stunning helmet!

## **ANIMAL KINGDOM**

Have you ever had a tough day at school? Maybe that day was today. Well, you'll be able to empathise with Fu Zai, a Chinese police bomb-detection dog. This adorable little Corgi worked hard throughout 2024, training and serving with distinction—only to have his year-end bonus taken away. But 'Why?' I hear you ask.

Well, it was all a bit of fun. In a video posted to social media last week by the Weifang police, where Fu Zai works, he is shown being awarded a red flower, treats, and toys for his excellent explosive detection skills. But then—oh no!!—his rewards are taken back after he's accused of falling asleep on the job and, worse, peeing in his food bowl.

Fu Zai's more than 300,000 loyal online fans quickly came to his defence, calling for his rewards to be reinstated. And it seems their protests worked—a follow-up post revealed that Fu Zai received a generous Lunar New Year gift package instead, complete with dumplings and meatballs.

## **FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD**

Speaking of meatballs, here's a smashing food story to wrap things up.

Has your family been glued to the tennis lately? All those strong, fit players darting around the court—yep, it's been on at my house too! But have you noticed what they're all eating?

It turns out, the tournament dishes out 200 kilograms of bananas to players every day. Yep, that's a lot of fruit fuel! These bananas—mostly the Cavendish variety we love here in Australia—come from sunny Queensland.

While athletes also turn to fancy sports drinks and energy gels, dietitians say bananas can't be beaten. They're packed with carbohydrates for energy, fibre to help our guts and digestion, and minerals like magnesium and potassium to help keep those muscle cramps away.... And they're much tastier than pickle juice... eww

And guess what? You don't have to be a tennis champ to benefit from this portable powerhouse. Maybe there's even one in your lunchbox right now!

So, while Madison Keys and Jannik Sinner might have snagged the Australian Open trophies, the it's the humble banana wins the *Game, Set, and Match!*

## **THE S'QUIZ**

-----

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

1. Which animal is the star of the Chinese Zodiac for 2025?
2. Which precious metal was the stolen warrior helmet made of?
3. Name the variety of banana that is most popular in Australia... and it turns out around the world?

## **SHOUT OUTS**

-----

It's Wednesday, January 29... Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day. If you listened to our Bumper Holiday S'Quiz over the school hols... Spoiler Alert... You'll know that bubble wrap was originally invented as a textured wallpaper but... it didn't really *burst* into *pop*-ularity....[MUM JOKE BUZZER] Yes! Mum joke buzzer first podcast of the year. Woo-Hoo!

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids celebrating a birthday today... Jack from Yankalilla and Theo from Canberra.

For those of you that missed the cut off for a shout out in our holiday episodes - we will do our best to include as many belated shout outs as we can, over the coming weeks... starting today with...

Tze-Ning (pronounced Sare-Ning) from Chatswood West, Isabelle from St Ives, Clara from Bathurst, Jessica from Belmont, Ethan from Balwyn, Lucas from Kingscliff, Xavier from Glebe, Ellie from Kirkstall, Maggie, Adrika, Christopher, Olivia and Mayanna all from Forest Lake and Nate listening over in Chicago, USA and Rachel listening from Johor, Malaysia.

Don't forget .. if you've got a birthday coming up and you want a shout out - or, teachers, if you want to start the year with a special classroom shout out for your brand new class - drop us a line at [squizkids@thesquiz.com.au](mailto:squizkids@thesquiz.com.au) or fill out the form on our website.

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

1. The Snake
2. Gold
3. The Cavendish Banana

Well - that's all we have time for. Thanks for listening to Squiz Kids Today - We'll be back again tomorrow.

In the meantime, get out there and have a most excellent day. Over and out.