

**A volcano gets a voice; DeepSeek disrupts tech world; a record-breaking spacewalk; a VanGogh in the garage.**

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 Monday, February 3

In Squiz Kids Today ... A volcano gets a voice; DeepSeek disrupts tech world; a record-breaking spacewalk; a VanGogh in the garage.

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

***THE LOWDOWN***

-----

Have you heard the name DeepSeek? If not, don't feel too bad—it even took the world's tech experts by surprise when it burst onto the scene last week.

DeepSeek is a new AI chatbot, kinda like ChatGPT, CoPilot or Gemini—but with a big difference. While ChatGPT took hundreds of millions of dollars to build and runs on thousands of the world's most advanced computer chips, DeepSeek's creators claim their chatbot cost under \$10 million, runs on just 2,000 older chips, is completely free, and open source—meaning anyone can build their own custom AI tools using its code.

Now, none of this has been officially verified, but DeepSeek quickly hit 5-6 million users and shot to number one in Apple's App Store last week, overtaking ChatGPT.

Sounds exciting, right? But not everyone is happy. DeepSeek's sudden rise wiped nearly a trillion Aussie dollars (that's one with 12 zeros!) off the value of an American company called Nvidia – that specialises in making the high-tech chips powering AI.

Then there are concerns about security and censorship. Some worry that, because DeepSeek is Chinese-owned, the government could monitor or limit what it says.

And the creator of ChatGPT, Sam Altman, at first welcomed DeepSeek—but now questions whether it used ChatGPT’s data without permission.

One thing’s clear: AI is getting cheaper, faster, and more accessible—changing the future of school, home-life, work, and play in ways we’re only beginning to imagine.

## **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 on a volcano on the west coast of New Zealand’s North Island, where something pretty incredible has just happened...

Now, you might already know about Mount Taranaki—especially if you’ve seen the 2024 kids movie, *The Mountain*, that showcases its breathtaking beauty. And if you haven’t—well, what are you waiting for? But here’s the big news: Taranaki Maunga (it’s original Māori name) is now officially a person. Well, sort of.

Under New Zealand law, the towering 2,518-metre volcano has been granted the same legal rights as a human being. That means it has the right to be protected, respected, and even have specially chosen people speak and act on its behalf. It might sound wild, but for the Māori people, Taranaki Maunga has always been an ancestor—a living, sacred part of their world.

And Taranaki isn’t alone! It joins Te Urewera Forest and the Whanganui River in being recognised as a legal person—an idea that helps to protect these natural wonders while still allowing people to visit, hike, ski, and soak in the scenery.

So, if you are lucky enough to visit Taranaki Maunga, remember—you’re not just looking at a mountain. You’re looking at a legal person with more rights than your little brother when it comes to bedtime negotiations!

## **SPACED OUT**

Imagine booking an Airbnb for a week... and getting stuck there for eight months. That’s pretty much what happened to NASA astronauts Suni Williams and Butch Wilmore—except their "Airbnb" was the International Space Station.

Way back in June last year, you might remember they blasted off aboard Boeing’s Starliner, expecting to stay in space for just eight days. But, when their spacecraft’s thrusters malfunctioned, their return trip was put on hold—again and again.

And just last Thursday, after eight months, they finally got to step outside... outside the ISS, that is into the blackness of space! Their spacewalk wasn't just for fresh air (not too much of that up there)—they were out there fixing a faulty antenna. And, get this... It was Suni's ninth spacewalk, breaking the record for most time spent spacewalking by a female astronaut—over 62 hours in total!

All going to plan, the pair are set to return to Earth in March or April aboard a SpaceX Crew Dragon—because when one spaceship leaves you stranded, you just catch a ride home with another!

### ***BELIEVE IT OR NOT***

Ever been to a garage or a yard sale? Maybe you've even scored a cool toy, a boogie board, or a funky lamp... but I'm willing to bet you've never walked away with a lost masterpiece worth \$15 million!

Well, that's what might have happened when a bargain hunter in Minnesota, in the USA, picked up a painting for \$50 back in 2019. Fast forward six years, and some experts now believe it's a long-lost work by Vincent van Gogh—one of history's most famous artists!

Van Gogh, the Dutch painter behind *Starry Night*, *Sunflowers*, and *The Bedroom* (I've stuck a link in the episode notes for you to take a look) Van Gogh may have created the piece—titled *Elmar*—in 1889 while living in a French hospital for mental illnesses. A team of 15 experts have spent years examining the painting's materials, brushstrokes, and even a red hair found in the paint—which turned out to belong to a human male (cue dramatic music!).

If authenticated, it'll be worth a fortune. So, next time your parents drag you to a garage sale, don't roll your eyes... you might just uncover a masterpiece!

### ***THE S'QUIZ***

-----

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

1. Name the Chinese AI ChatBot rivalling Chat GPT
2. For how many months have the NASA astronauts been stuck on the ISS?
3. Which nationality was painter Vincent VanGogh?

### ***SHOUT OUTS***

-----  
It's Monday, February 3... and music's biggest party—the 67th Grammy Awards—is happening today in Los Angeles, California! This morning, three stars will be strutting their stuff on the red carpet, and the big awards show kicks off around lunchtime Aussie time. With performances from Chappell Roan, Sabrina Carpenter, and Charli XCX, it's set to be a show packed with music, sparkle, and plenty of excitement!

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids celebrating a birthday today and tomorrow... Leah from Rose Bay, Edison from Vermont South, Hayden from Cherrybrook, Archie from Castlemaine, Divjot from Forest Lake and Lucas and Ace from Shanghai, China but currently travelling in Melbourne!

And belated shout outs go to... Nicholas from Ivanhoe, Henry from Annerley, Hayley from Cherrybrook and Abbigail from Yamanto.

And for those States back at school - classroom shoutouts go to ... class 6E with Miss Harford at Sherwood State School, class 5/6E with Miss Kotairs at Dandenong South Primary School, class 5A with Mr Guy at Mansfield State School and the year 6 class with Miss Bailey from Eimeo Road State School in Rural View.

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

1. DeepSeek
2. 8
3. Dutch/ Netherlands

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.

Well - that's all we have time for. Thanks for listening to Squiz Kids Today - We'll be back again tomorrow with a Shortcut to Learning Disabilities. A fascinating topic and the more we understand one another, the stronger and kinder our world becomes.

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