

**Record rain in North Queensland; a cave-dwelling zombie spider; scientists under the sea; and Queen Bey's Grammy grab.**

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, February 5

In Squiz Kids Today ...Record rain in North Queensland; a cave-dwelling zombie spider; scientists under the sea; and Queen Bey's Grammy grab.

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

***THE LOWDOWN***

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I hope you're safe and dry wherever you're listening today, but let's spare a thought for the people of North Queensland, who've been hit with record-breaking rain and major flooding over the past few days.

Some towns have been completely cut off, with roads washed away and thousands of homes left without power. Schools have had to close, and supermarket shelves are bare as deliveries struggle to get through. Some places saw over two metres of rain in just three days! That's about as tall as Brisbane Heat's Big Bash player, Tall Paul!

While the rain is finally easing, floodwaters are still rising as rivers overflow. And as if that wasn't enough, crocodiles have been spotted cruising through flooded streets!

But in true North Queensland style, people are helping each other through it neighbours are helping each other to evacuate and keeping their spirits high. The Australian Defence Force has sent helicopters, trucks, and troops to assist with rescues and delivery of food and other essentials.

For some farmers, the rain is a welcome relief after a dry summer, but for banana growers, it's a disaster and could mean huge crop losses.. And with dirty floodwater

everywhere, health officials are warning people to be careful—small cuts and scratches can lead to serious infections.

If you're listening from North Queensland, we're thinking of you, and we hope you stay safe and dry!

## ***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 an old flooded quarry on the border of Wales and England, where scientists are working on a mind-blowing project—living under the sea!

A team of experts is building underwater pods called sentinels, designed to be lowered 200 metres beneath the ocean—deep into the twilight zone, where sunlight fades and strange deep-sea creatures roam. Think glowing jellyfish, vampire squid, and animals so bizarre they look like aliens!

More than 90% of ocean life exists within 200 metres of the surface, yet we've only explored about 20% of it. That's why the team behind Deep is working to make long-term underwater living a reality, allowing scientists—and maybe even tourists—to explore like never before.

And it's not just the ocean hiding secrets! Scientists in the United States and Germany have also found life thriving up to 4 kilometres underground, conserving their energy and moving so slowly that some microbes only divide once every thousand years.

If there's still so much to uncover beneath our feet and below the waves... I wonder what might we discover next?

## ***ANIMAL KINGDOM***

Well folks, they say curiosity leads to discovery—but sometimes, what you find is more than you bargained for...

During the filming of the British nature show Winterwatch, researchers stumbled upon something creepy and completely new—a fungus that takes over the minds of spiders! Yep, you heard right... a spider controlling zombie fungus. Terrifying!

Deep in a cave on an Irish island, they spotted an orb-weaving cave spider acting strangely. It had left its usual hiding spot and crawled out into the open—where it had died in a very exposed position.

With the help of a local cave expert (a speleologist, if you want a cool new word), more infected spiders were found in caves across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

But here's the freakiest part—the fungus controls the spiders' behaviour, making them leave their safe, shadowy webs and move to open spaces where the fungus can spread its spores. It's a bit like the zombie-ant fungus found in Brazil's rainforests.

So, next time you walk into a cave... who knows what tiny, mind-controlling creatures might be lurking in the dark? Actually, I might just stay out of caves altogether.

### **POP CULTURE CORNER**

The Grammy Awards were done and won on Monday, and this year's show hit all the right notes!

After five nominations, Beyoncé finally took home the Album of the Year trophy for the first time with her country-inspired album *Cowboy Carter*. With three wins on the night, she now has a record-breaking 35 Grammys—more than any artist in history!

Kendrick Lamar dominated the night too, winning Record and Song of the Year for *Not Like Us*, his diss track aimed at fellow rapper, Drake. Meanwhile, Chappell Roan, the newly crowned Best New Artist, used her speech to push for fair pay and healthcare for musicians.

But, this year's Grammys had a serious side too, doubling as a Californian wildfire relief fundraiser, raising \$7 million during the show. In some powerful moments, firefighters presented the Album of the Year award to Beyoncé and received a standing ovation.

From chart-topping hits to standing ovations, this year's Grammys had it all. Which song is going to be stuck in your head this week?

### **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. A tricky one to start us off. Hope you had your listening ears on... What is the name of the zone, 200 metres beneath the ocean's surface that lies just beyond the reach of sunlight
2. In which country was a new species of zombie spider discovered?
3. Name the album that won Beyoncé the album of the year award at the Grammys this year.

## **SHOUT OUTS**

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It's Wednesday, February 5...National Nutella Day! Need I say more... Uh, Yes! I like mine injected into a big fluffy donut. Yum!

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids celebrating a birthday today... Eeshan from Turramurra and Laura from Durak.

And belated shout outs go to... Holiday and Zephan from Vermont South.

And for those States back at school - classroom shoutouts go to ... classes 5R, 5HJ, 5JH with Miss Riseley and Miss Heffernan at Wellers Hill State School, class 6 Zircon with Mrs Biddell at Burpengary Meadows State School and class 6A with Miss Pearson at Echuca Primary School.

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

1. The Twilight Zone
2. Ireland
3. Cowboy Carter

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

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