

Etna's big eruption; Korea's parkour robot; a teen checkmates a chess king; and VR for your vision.

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 June 4 -

In Squiz Kids Today ... Etna's big eruption; Korea's parkour robot; a teen checkmates a Chess king; and VR for your vision.

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

THE LOWDOWN

Heads up—literally! If your eyes have been glued to a device, you might have missed something incredible in the sky this week.

On Monday, Europe's largest and most active volcano, Mount Etna on the island of Sicily in Italy, erupted in a spectacular display.

Some of you clever cookies might remember Italy's other famous volcano, Mount Vesuvius, that destroyed the city of Pompeii in 79 CE. Well, this eruption is nowhere near that scale—local authorities say there's no danger to people living nearby. Still, it's been pretty impressive!

A dramatic plume of ash, gas, and rock exploded from Etna's southeast crater, resulting in what's called a "pyroclastic flow"—a fast-moving mix of lava, rocks, and gas—and a lava fountain that was spotted on surveillance cameras. There were tourists on the volcano at the time, and some videos on social media appear to show them running away. But experts say we can't be sure if those clips are real. As Squiz-E always reminds us: check your sources!

And don't stop looking up! On Sunday night, Sydney's sky lit up as a meteor streaked overhead. It burned bright blue-green, thanks to all the iron and nickel inside it, before disintegrating in the atmosphere. According to one astrophysicist, it was probably the size of a tennis ball or even a basketball. How cool is that?

Just another reminder to keep your eyes on the sky—you never know what you might see!

SPIN THE GLOBE

Each day we give the world globe a spin and find a news story from wherever it stops. Today, we've landed in South Korea, in a robotics and AI laboratory, where a four-legged robot has been doing parkour... no, really!

This four-legged bot has been designed to master parkour... that's the street gymnastics-like sport where you climb walls, jump between buildings, and sprint across tricky terrain. Pretty amazing, right?

Using cutting-edge AI tech, the robot can plan and track its own movements, letting it tackle all sorts of obstacles at speed. After running virtual tests to make sure all its parts worked together, the team put the robot through its paces in real-world lab challenges.

And guess what? It can run vertically on a wall for short distances, leap over gaps up to 1.3 metres, and race across rocky paths. It even navigates ramps, stairs, and steps up and down like a pro.

The videos are seriously jaw-dropping, if a little creepy. There's a link in the episode notes if you're keen to watch!

SPORT TIME

Today, we're heading to the chessboard, where a young star just scored a checkmate against one of the game's all-time greats!

Indian chess prodigy Gukesh Dommaraju, just 19 years old, made history last year as the youngest undisputed World Chess Champion ever. And on Sunday, he pulled off another huge move, defeating 34-year-old Norwegian legend Magnus Carlsen on Carlsen's home turf in Norway.

Playing in the Norway Chess tournament, Gukesh stayed calm under pressure, then pounced when Magnus made a rare mistake. The win was a major milestone for Gukesh, and a reminder that even kings can fall.

But Magnus didn't take it well. Cameras caught him punching the table, shaking hands quickly, and storming out of the room. Not exactly a good look! Gukesh, though, was all class, saying, "What means the most to me is that I didn't lose the game. But yes, beating Magnus in any form is special."

The video is in the episode notes—check it out! And remember: win or lose, sportsmanship matters.

WEIRD SCIENCE

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Have your parents ever told you to stop playing video games because they'll ruin your eyesight? Well, guess what?? This time, a video game might actually help!

Japanese researchers have been testing a special VR game that could improve eyesight instead of making it worse. In their study, 10 people with a kind of short-sightedness called pseudo-myopia, played a simple VR game for six weeks. The game had players aiming and shooting at circular targets that moved further away each time they scored a hit. This forced them to look near and far, like a workout for their eyes!

The researchers found that even playing every three days helped stretch important eye muscles and improve vision.

It's only a small study, so more research is needed, but it's a super exciting idea! Check out the episode notes to take a look.

Q+A CALL OUT

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Hear ye! Hear ye! His Majesty King Charles III hereby proclaims a very special guest has agreed to take the Squiz Kids hotseat and answer questions that you send in ...

Yes folks - to mark her one year anniversary in the job - we're excited to share that none other than Australia's Governor General, Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn has agreed to take part in a Squiz Kids Q+A. (CHEER)

And that's because she's keen to answer any questions **you** might have about her job, about how Australia's system of government works - and how and why kids should get involved in it.

Because you might think what goes on in our parliament is none of your business: but it's your country, you'll one day be in charge of it - and how can you grow up to look after something if you don't understand it or value it?

Here's some ideas for questions you might ask our Governor General? What's a democracy? And why is it important? Why is the King our Head of State? And have you met him? How did you get your job? What's it like inside Government House? Why should kids care about elections if they can't vote until they're 18? And what does media literacy and Squiz-E the Newshound have to do with any of this?

Parents: this is a great chance to get your kids thinking about where they sit in this democracy of ours - and teachers: get the whole class involved! Send in questions from your students and use this Q+A as a chance to dive into the civics part of the curriculum.

Questions need to be submitted by Friday June 13 - and emailed through to squizkids@thequiz.com.au.

So what are you waiting for? Don't just sit there, get busy already!

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 volcano that's been erupting on the Italian island of Sicily?
2. Which sport has a four legged, AI controlled robot been doing?
3. How old is Indian Chess Grand Master, Gukesh Dommaraju?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Wednesday June 4 ... National Cheese Day and Global Running Day, So, I guess that after I've eaten a mountain of cheese today, I should just go for a run. It's a plan.

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today... Estrella from Strathfield, Alex from Coombabah, Emma from Forest Lake, Abigail from Dolans Bay and Avery from North Ainslie.

A belated shoutout goes to... Eliza from Exeter.

Classroom shoutouts go to ... the year 6 class with Mrs Mischke at Tent Hill Lower State School, Stage 3 Dolphins with Ms Edwards at Bald Blair Public School, class 1R with Mrs Ross at Newington College in Stanmore, class 4 Blue with Miss B at St Michael's Primary School in Meadowbank and the year 6 class at Canberra Girls Grammar and a belated birthday wish to their teacher Mrs Kahn for yesterday.

And make sure you're listening tomorrow, when Bryce will announce which classes he'll be making a virtual visit to... if you sent in a classroom shout out request during the month of May - you'll have automatically gone into the draw.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Mt Etna
2. Parkour
3. 19

Otherwise ... don't forget .. if you've got a birthday coming up and you want a shout out - or, if you're after a classroom shout out- drop us a line at 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.