

Democracy, debate and Charlie Kirk; signs of life on Mars; Footy finals winners and losers; and Demon Hunters dominate the charts.

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

I'm Bryce Corbett

It's Monday, September 15 -

In Squiz Kids Today ... Democracy, debate and Charlie Kirk; signs of life on Mars; Footy finals winners and losers; and Demon Hunters dominate the charts.

THE LOWDOWN

Today is International Day of Democracy ... which I know is making you all roll your eyes and thinking BOOOOOORING ..

But bear with me ... because there's arguably no more important time for us to stop and think about how lucky we are to live in a democracy. And what the important parts of a democracy are: including the importance of respectful disagreement.

Respectful disagreement means having a different opinion to someone, but not being upset or offended by that different opinion. It's about learning to disagree respectfully and live in harmony with lots of people who have lots of different ideas.

It's an especially important time for us to reflect on that - with all the Charlie Kirk news coming out of the United States. A man some of you may have come across on social media.

Before he was shot and killed last week while speaking to students on a university campus - he was a man that was famous for expressing a series of opinions and ideas that some people agreed with - and some people didn't.

Video of him being shot was shared widely on platforms like TikTok and Instagram - often appearing in kids' feeds without warning.

And when something like that happens, it can give rise to feelings of shock or disbelief or anxiousness .. a not-great feeling in the tummy. And that's ok. The important thing: talk to a trusted adult. Tell them how you're feeling and let them help you feel better. Because conversations can cure just about everything.

You've done nothing wrong .. unfortunately the algorithms that shape what we see on social media means you might accidentally come across content that your brains are just not ready to process.

Take a break from YouTube .. put down your device. Sounds crazy I know - but maybe meet up with your friends and play outside. Give your little brains a break.

And when you're ready to learn a bit more about democracy - what it means, why we have one and why it's important to protect - have a listen to our excellent four part series, the Sensational World of Civics - and/or jump into the Squiz Kids Q+A with our Governor General, Sam Mostyn - available on our website or on the Squiz Kids YouTube channel.

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 gone extra-planetary - as in, we've left the globe behind altogether and landed on the surface of Mars .. and that's because the rover that we sent up there a couple of years ago has just sent back photos showing what scientists think could be signs of ancient life on the red planet.

So - to recap – a couple of years back, we humans sent up a robotic vehicle to the surface of Mars - it's called Perseverance - and its job every single day is to roam about the planet looking for signs of alien life.

And in photos sent back recently, there are markings on red stone which look like they may have been created by micro-biological organisms ... which is a fancy way of describing teeny tiny living things.

And while it's not proof yet that there is - or was - life on Mars. And it's not exactly the sort of Martian we were hoping we might find - in the scientific world it's a cause for quite a bit of excitement. Because - we've all seen Guardians of the Galaxy .. and who doesn't love an alien life form?

SPORT TIME

—

It's footy finals time, folks - and it's crunch time.

In the NRL - the Melbourne Storm were just too good for the Canterbury Bulldogs, the Penrith Panthers set their sights on an historic five-peat beating the Warriors, the Sharks took a chunk out of the Roosters and sent them packing, and in an edge-of-the-seat thriller in Canberra, the Brisbane Broncos staged a heartstopping come-from-behind surge to beat the Raiders in Golden Point.

It means this weekend coming the Broncos and Storm will get a rest, while the Sharks will take on the Raiders and the Bulldogs face off against the Panthers - with the losers dropping out - and the winners forging on.

Meanwhile, in the AFL ..

Two very convincing semi-final wins for Hawthorn and Brisbane at the weekend - with the Hawks too strong for the Adelaide Crows at Adelaide Oval on Friday night, and the Lions just too good for their Queensland rivals, the Gold Coast Suns at the Gabba on Saturday night.

Both teams will now head to the MCG for this weekend's preliminary finals - with the Hawks set to take on Geelong on Friday night while the Lions look to defend the premiership in their match against Collingwood on Saturday night.

POP CULTURE CORNER

—

So – asking for a friend ... but how many times exactly have you lot watched K-Pop Demon Hunters?

I'm only wondering because the ARIA music charts - which are the charts that keep track of how many times songs have been streamed or played or purchased - released its numbers for the week just gone and no fewer than **five** songs from the hit Netflix movie are in the top ten.

What It Sounds Like is in at 10, How's It Done has taken the 9th spot on the charts, two spots ahead at number 7 is the Saja Boys hit, Your Idol, sitting at five, and no great surprise here, is Soda Pop - while Golden occupies the number one spot ... again.

Meanwhile, the choreographer who worked on the movie has said she'd really like to work with BTS next ... K-pop-a-palooza!

(PLANET WARRIORS PROMO - WED or THURS)

Speaking of term 4 ...We've got a brand new Squiz Kids series launching. **Planet Warriors**. Meet Blaze, Gust, Scraps and Flo — renewable energy superheroes on a mission to change the world one electron at a time, from the way our homes are powered to the gadgets we use every day.

And teachers — each episode comes with ready-to-go classroom activity sheets.

Kicking off on Tuesday, October 14... get set to join the Planet Warriors' planet-saving crusade!

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. At which famous sports ground in the Victorian capital will the AFL preliminary finals happen this coming weekend?
2. Starting with the letter P - what's the name of the rover roving around on Mars?
3. How many songs does the K-Pop Demon Hunters movie have in Australia's Top Ten music charts?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Monday September 15 ... as we discussed in the Lowdown, it's International Democracy Day today ... plus the Tokyo Athletics World Championships continue today ... plus it Emmy Awards day - where the best TV shows on American TV get trophies ...busy day.

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today and tomorrow... Samarth from Strathtulloh, Harry from St James, Alistair from Ngunnawal, Dan from Adelaide, Sepi (pron Sep-ee) from Ivanhoe, Mary from Goornong and Jonathon from Bulleen.

And belated shoutouts go to... Ruby from Northmead, Jake from Adelaide, Cambria from Goolwa and Ann from Trafalgar.

Classroom shoutouts go to... class 5/6Blue with Mrs Murphy at St Pius X Primary School in Windale, Room 7/6 at Goolwa Primary School, class 4LR with Miss Ronalds at Mount View Primary School, class 6/7MT at Koo Wee Rup Primary School and Class 4 with Mrs Read at Snowy Valleys School in Tumut.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. MCG
2. Perseverance
3. Five

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 with a Squiz Kids Shortcut on Outlaws and Rebels ... from Ursula the sea witch to Ned Kelly in his tin-can armour, some of the so-called "bad guys" of history and fiction are the very ones we end up cheering for. With *Bad Guys 2* hitting cinemas this week, we're diving into the rebels and rule-breakers who steal, fight, and stir up trouble — but also force us to think differently about fairness, courage, and change.

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