

Storm of the century smashes Caribbean; Duke crowned top dog; rise of the AI fakes; and Halloween at the zoo.

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 Thursday, October 30-

In Squiz Kids Today ... Storm of the century smashes Caribbean; Duke crowned top dog; rise of the AI fakes; and Halloween at the zoo.

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

THE LOWDOWN

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Spare a thought this morning for the people of Jamaica and Cuba - two countries in the Caribbean Sea - which have been slammed by a hurricane that weather experts have called the 'storm of the century'.

Hurricane Melissa has caused enormous damage in the region, smashing into the heavily populated countries as a Category 5 hurricane - which is basically the biggest category there is.

Hurricanes - or cyclones as we call them down here in the southern hemisphere - are measured from 1 to 5 according to the speed and intensity of the winds they whip up - with a Category 1 being a mild storm and a Category 5 being a whopper.

Yesterday, the island country of Jamaica - home to the world's fastest man, Usain Bolt and almost 3 million others - was mopping up after Melissa cut a destructive swathe across it - leaving towns flooded, buildings destroyed and trees uprooted.

And this morning, Cuba was taking stock of the damage Melissa had caused - after a wild night of winds in excess of 350 kilometres an hour and more rainfall and flash

flooding that United Nations weather experts said they have ever seen in a hurricane before.

With electricity wiped out, airports closed and internet down in both countries, it will be days now before we know the full extent of the damage caused - but already neighbouring countries have offered to help with the clean up.

And if you're keen to learn more about the how and why of hurricanes, be sure to be listening this coming Sunday, when our new Squiz Kids series 'From the Vault' - where we dust off a Shortcut classic, revives our ever-popular Squiz Kids Shortcut on Cyclones, Hurricanes and Typhoons.

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 San Francisco in the United States - where the residents of the local zoo have been celebrating Halloween early.

Called 'Boo At The Zoo' - the event has seen skeletons, gravestones and jack o'lanterns pop up in the enclosures of lemurs, zebras, monkeys and snow leopards - and the animals have been having a spooky old time.

From the inquisitive lemurs sticking their heads inside pumpkins to fish out vegetable goodies hidden inside - to the snow leopard munching on a gourd- which is a vegetable that's kind of like a pumpkin - the animals are loving it.

And speaking of Halloween - it's only one sleep to go! And to make sure you get into the spooky spirit of things, we've produced a very special Squiz Kids Spooky Halloween tale called Squiz-E and the Haunted Headphones.

You can hear it tomorrow on this very podcast channel - just keep listening after tomorrow's Weekly News S'Quiz and it will play automatically - or keep an eye out for it on the squiz kids website or your favourite podcasting app ...

Trick or treat, people!

ANIMAL KINGDOM

We love us a muster dog here at Squiz Kids ... as the proud owner of a border collie, myself - Louis the Wonder Dog - I happen to think they're the smartest, most loyal pups in the world .. and so I was so happy to come across the story of Duke - winner of the 2025 Cobber Challenge for working dogs.

Duke is a border collie who works on a farm in Queensland with his proud owner Beck. She entered him into the Cobber Challenge - which recognises working dogs who put in the hard yards for their owners.

During the challenge, Duke had a GPS tag on his collar - which recorded he ran 556 kilometres during three weeks of working dog life ... what the what??

Second place went to Buck - the kelpie cross - who ran an impressive 316 kilometres over the three weeks of the challenge.

So impressive!

NEWSHOUNDS

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Every Thursday, Squiz-E the Newshound sticks his snout into Squiz Kids HQ to report back on fishy things he's sniffed out on the internet. And this week - being Media Literacy Week here in Australia and around the world - his nose is twitching with the rise of AI misinformation.

So wait ... what's AI misinformation? You know what AI is right? It's artificial intelligence - which is where a computer mimics the human brain .. which is to say: a machine does the thinking that a brain would otherwise do .. think Chat GPT or AI Summaries or LM Notebook. Incredible computing tools that allow us to create or discover or research in seconds ... but the problem is: with the rise of AI has come the rise of AI-generated fake news ... meaning we have to be extra careful when we're on the internet to check that the video we're watching or story we're reading or photo we're looking at is real.

This week's international Media Literacy Week has the theme 'Minds over AI' .. meaning we should always rely on our own in-built computers - also known as our brains - to make sure we separate stuff online that's true from stuff that's not.

And what better way to hone those skills than by joining the more than 5,000 classrooms around the country that have already signed up to do Newshounds - Squiz Kids very own, totally free media literacy program for primary school kids. Join Squiz-E the Newshound in this nine session podcast series as he ventures out into the internet and sniffs out mis and disinformation - teaching us to STOP, THINK and CHECK before believing everything we see online. Check it out at squizkids.com.au .. you're welcome.

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. Name one of the animals included in San Francisco zoo's Halloween fun.
2. What's the name of the two countries in the Caribbean smashed by Hurricane Melissa?
3. What's the name of the cattle dog who won this year's Cobber Challenge?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Thursday, October 30 ... on this day in 1952, a man called Clarence Birdseye sold the first ever frozen pea ... and that invention has been haunting generations of kids ever since ... eat ya veggies!

Today's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today...

Sophie from Fernvale, Owen from Canberra, Henry from Toowong, Amelia from East Melbourne and Fleur from Newcastle.

And a belated shoutout goes to

Classroom shoutouts go to... Class 4W at Glen Iris Primary School, Year 3/4 with Miss Nicholls and Miss Drummond at Ceduna Crossways Lutheran School, class Malala with Miss Thoms and Miss PG at St Luke's Catholic College in Marsden Park and class 5L with Mrs Bye at Thomas Hassall Anglican college in Middleton Grange.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Lemurs, snow leopards, zebras, monkeys
2. Cuba and Jamaica
3. Duke

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.