

Moon mission starts its countdown; Falling iguanas in America's big freeze; here comes Groundhog Day; and Katseye crushes the Grammys.

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, February 2 -

In Squiz Kids Today ... Moon mission starts its countdown; Falling iguanas in America's big freeze; here comes Groundhog Day; and Katseye crushes the Grammys.

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

THE LOWDOWN

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If you happened to look up into the night's sky the weekend just gone, you might have noticed a great big, glowing white full moon.

Well there's a handful of astronauts in the United States right now who are also looking at that moon, and later this week, could be looking at it from close up.

And that's because an exciting new space mission is getting ready for launch.

It's called Artemis II - and it will send four astronauts into space to fly around the Moon and back.

Over the weekend, the rocket was rolled into position in Florida and last minute tests will be performed this week ahead of a launch that could come as early as this coming Sunday.

Now there's a bit of history to this mission ... in that it's the first time in over 50 years that astronauts will have been sent so close to the Moon. And it's a bit of a test run for a planned mission in the coming years where astronauts will not only fly around the Moon - but land on it.

Of course: it's not the first time humans have been on the Moon. The first person to set foot on the Moon was an astronaut called Neil Armstrong - way back in 1969.

And as if all of this isn't remarkable enough - this Artemis mission is part of a longer term plan for humans to one day set up a permanent base on the Moon - and live there.

And speaking of 'whoa - that's a total thing' - this mission will set a new record for the furthest distance humans have ever travelled from Earth, as the astronauts travel to the far side of the Moon - and two of the astronauts will become the first Black person and the first woman to travel that far out into space.

History happening before our very eyes, people ..

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 the United States of America, where snow is expected to fall on the beaches of Florida as the country experiences one of the coldest winter snaps it has seen in a long while.

Meteorologists - who are people that study the weather for a living - are calling it a polar push - as a vast block of cold air from the Arctic sweeps across the US - where up to 200 daily cold temperature records are set to be smashed today.

The cold has prompted local authorities in Florida to warn residents to beware of falling iguanas.

Iguanas are cold blooded - like all reptiles - meaning the temperature of their blood changes with the temperature of their surroundings. Now it's normally super warm in Florida - which is why they live there. But when it gets REALLY cold, iguanas go into what's called a 'dormant state' to protect them - meaning their bodies shut down until it warms up again - meaning those that are up in trees will fall out without warning.

I mean -I've heard of it raining cats and dogs - but raining iguanas? That's a whole other thing ..

ANIMAL KINGDOM

One animal that isn't bothered by the cold is the groundhog ... and one groundhog in particular .. a furry fellow by the name of Puxsatawney Phil ...

And he has a big day in the US state of Pennsylvania today as it's Groundhog Day.

Today is the day that a groundhog comes out its burrow - in front of hundreds of humans, TV cameras and YouTubers - and predicts when winter will end.

It's all part of a long-tradition that goes back to the original German settlers in the state.

The deal is this .. if Puxsatawney Phil the famous groundhog comes out of his burrow - and legend has it - if he sees his shadow, he takes it as a sign that there's six more weeks of heavy winter weather to come and goes back into his hole .. but if he doesn't see his shadow, he takes it as a sign that spring is coming and stays above ground.

It should probably be pointed out that Phil's predictions are almost NEVER accurate .. but it's a lot of fun nonetheless.

POP CULTURE CORNER

Hands up if you're a fan of Katseye? The girl group from the same pop factory that brought the world BTS ...

If you've got your hand up - then you're not alone ... as the girls from Katseye will be among a host of pop stars who hit the red carpet this morning for the Grammy Awards.

The Grammys are one of the most prestigious awards ceremonies in the music world. And just to be clear: that's Grammys with an 'm' not Grannys with an 'n' - because no self respecting pop star wants to win an award named after their nanna ... and a shout out to all the nannas out there. We see you and love your work.

Competing with Katseye in the best pop performance category are Olivia Dean and Addison Rae – so, you know - stiff competition.

But it's expected to be rapper Kendrick Lamar's and pop princess Sabrina Carpenter's night with a bunch of nominations - and maybe even an award to everyone's favourite demon hunters with the song 'Golden' from K-Pop Demon Hunters in the running for a trophy.

May the best demon slayer win ...

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. What sort of an animal is Puxsatawny Phil?
2. What's the name of the moon mission that's about to lift off?
3. What reptiles are renowned for falling off their perches when temperatures drop towards freezing?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Monday, February 2 ... today is Crepe Day around the world ... those delicious, super thin French style pancakes ... nutella and banana are the winning combo - trust me.

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today and tomorrow... Hamish from Little Hampton South, Linda from White Rock, Leah from Rose Bay and Hayden from Cherrybrook.

Belated shoutouts go to... Bennett from Forest Lake, Ted from Maitland, Charli from Findon, Oliver from Ipswich and Dan, Carsen, Caleb and Layla from Vermont South.

Classroom shoutouts go to... Class 6M with Mr Madgee at Wilkins Public School in Marrickville, class 3S with Mrs Chapman at Sacred Heart Primary School in Sandgate and class 5S with Mr Shackcloth at Westside Christian College in Goodna.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Groundhog
2. Artemis II
3. Iguanas

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 Shortcut to the Winter Olympics ... the big event kicks off this Friday - so have a listen tomorrow to learn all about the history of this major sporting event - and which events to keep an eye out for. It's a cracker.

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