

Is the Moon the eighth continent?; Historic tortoise release on Galapagos Island; Aussie Olympic flag bearers revealed; and Punch, the lonely monkey.

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 23 -

In Squiz Kids Today ... Is the Moon the eighth continent?; Historic tortoise release on Galapagos Island; Aussie Olympic flag bearers revealed; and Punch, the lonely monkey.

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

THE LOWDOWN

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Is it possible that the Moon is the Earth's eight continent?

That's one of the questions that could be answered when astronauts take an historic trip to the far side of the Moon as part of the great race to the lunar surface.

You ready for some outer space concepts that will blow your little minds? Ok - here goes.

Scientists have long worked on the theory that the Moon was formed billions of years ago after a planet, about the size of Mars smashed into Earth and broke up into smaller pieces.

According to this theory, the explosion that took place sent bits of this smaller planet mixed with bits of Earth ricocheting bounced back into space - in molten rock form, which means, sort of liquid rock - which eventually cooled and became the Moon.

Which is why some scientists refer to the Moon as Earth's eight continent.

Its one of the mysteries that scientists hope to unravel when the next human mission to the Moon - called Artemis 2 - eventually lifts off.

Four astronauts are primed and ready to clamber into the rocket to take a 10 day trip into space - spinning out around the far side of the Moon .. a part of the Moon that we don't know all that much about.

Exactly when that mission will have lift off suffered another setback yesterday when engineers found a problem with the helium flow - crucial to a successful launch.

The mission had been earmarked for an early March blast off - but because it's such a complicated scientific process, and there are four humans sitting in the capsule at the top of that massive rocket - safety is the number one concern.

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 Japan – where a baby monkey in a zoo has gone viral online after forming a deep attachment with a stuffed toy orangutan.

The life of Punch the monkey got off to a rough start .. rejected by his parents - yes this can happen in the monkey world - and ignored by other members of the monkey troop, Punch had only his zoo keepers to rely on for company.

They gave him a stuffed toy orangutan - which he dragged with him all over the monkey enclosure.

But happily, the monkey tribe have started to take an interest in young Punch - with video surfacing at the weekend of older members of the monkey troop picking knits and lice from Punch's fur.

I mean: it sounds like an odd way to show affection - I know - but that's how it's done in the monkey world.

And as any mum or dad out there will tell you: there's no greater test of love than combing knits out of your kids' hair ... here's to a knit-free year at school for you all.

SPORT TIME

Two of Australia's shining stars from the Winter Olympics have been selected to wave the flag the closing ceremony which takes place this morning.

Gold medal moguls skier Cooper Woods and silver medal aerial skier Danielle Woods have been chosen to fly the flag for Australia at what has been our most successful Winter Olympics ever.

The closing ceremony kicks off at 6.30am this morning and will take place in an old Roman coliseum - in the ancient city of Verona ... where the Shakespeare play Romeo and Juliet was. So - you know - it's a special venue.

Speaking of special: if you didn't see US figure skater Alysa Liu's gold medal winning performance over the weekend - do yourself a favour and seek it out.

She was hailed as a future champion at the age of 13 - but the pressure of performing was so big, she retired at 16 ... only to decide to come back and compete in these Olympics 'just for the fun of it' ... taking home a gold medal for her troubles.

See? Everyone shines in their own time ...

ANIMAL KINGDOM

And so to the magical Galapagos Islands off the coast of Ecuador we go ... where more than 100 very special giant tortoises have been released to go and revive an ancient bloodline.

Hundreds of years ago, the population of giant tortoises on the island of Floreana was devastated as sailors used to catch them and take them on long voyages to use for food. Tortoise soup anyone?

Problem was: the practice was so widespread - the giant tortoises on Floreana became extinct.

But scientists recently found giant tortoises on a nearby island, whose DNA matched the extinct giant tortoises on Floreana - and through a conservation and breeding program, produced 128 healthy young torti - who this weekend, were released into the wild on Floreana to hopefully flourish and perform the important role they once did maintaining the island's ecosystem.

Go you good things!

Q+A Callout

V3:

Attention all science lovers!

If you've ever wanted to ask Dr Karl a question - now's your chance.

Australia's favourite science explainer has agreed to take the Squiz Kids hotseat to answer any questions you might have him.

Send the questions in as a class ... send them in as yourself — just send them already - any pressing scientific question you might have ... like why is the sky blue, how did the Moon form or why is Bryce such a cool dude?

You never know - that might be scientific.

Just get cracking - because the cut off for questions is next Tuesday.

And while I've got you .. stay tuned later this week for details of a very exciting new Squiz Kid competition ,, which could see you and a parent flying to Canberra for a couple of days ... can't say too much more, but it's exciting ...

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. Some scientists have long worked on the theory that the Moon is in fact the what continent of Earth? Is it the seventh, eighth or ninth? See how I avoid saying 6-7?
2. Starting with G, what's the name of the famous group of islands off the coast of Ecuador where giant tortoises have just been released?
3. What's the name of the baby monkey in Japan that went viral last week with his stuffed toy orangutan?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Monday, February 23... it's National Banana Bread Day

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today and tomorrow... Edward from Pymble, Ana from Lugarno, Landon from Forest Lake, Jack from Melbourne, Robert from Turrumurra, William from Mansfield, Eddie from Yass.

Belated shoutouts go to...Dannica and Taylor from Rose Bay, William from Kogarah and Elijah from Edensor Park.

Classroom shoutouts go to...Grades 4, 5 and 6 with Miss M and Wendy at Goornong Primary School, the students with Miss Clarke, Miss Beard and Mr Simone at Mt Riverview Public School and class 5/6G with Miss Gillespie at Lucas Heights Community School in Barden Ridge.

And a special belated shoutout to Ms Hughes from Minimbah State School in Morayfield who celebrated a significant birthday over the weekend.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Eighth
2. Galapagos Islands
3. Punch

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 Squiz the World goes to Colombia

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