

**Minions and Lego in meme warfare; Venice's arty toilets; UFO files released; and David Attenborough honoured with a wasp.**

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, May 11 -

In Squiz Kids Today ... Minions and Lego in meme warfare; Venice's arty toilets; UFO files released; and David Attenborough honoured with a wasp.

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

***THE LOWDOWN***

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How good is the Lego Movie? And the Lego Batman Movie? And what about Minions? And Despicable Me?

Some of my all time favourite movies right there.

And now they've been drafted to join the war in Iran .. but instead of joining the battle in real life, they're doing it on the internet.

Over the past few weeks social media feeds all over the world have been flooded with Lego and Minion inspired memes - making fun, for the most part, of the US President Donald Trump.

The memes are mini-movies - all AI-generated - some featuring rap music - and they represent a new front in the war in Iran ... something that experts are calling 'meme warfare'.

It's also being called 'slopaganda' ... which is a combination of 'AI slop' - the name given to AI-generated content on the internet - and propaganda - which we've talked about before on the podcast.

Propaganda is biased, misleading and intentionally-one-sided information created to influence the way people think .. and it's something that happens a lot in times of war.

So - why have the people who make this chosen Lego characters and lovable Minions to sell their message? Precisely because they are so widely loved .. so automatically, you're going to listen to what they have to say.

So what do we do when we see one of these videos online? Just put your Newshound hat on ... that's the special, imaginary hat that reminds you to Stop, Think and Check ... think about who made it, why they made it, and what are they trying to make me think or do?

It's called critical thinking, my friends - and it's what all good Newshounds do ..

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And teachers, if this story gets your class talking, we've actually created a digital media literacy task you can use in the classroom right now based on this very story.

You'll find it in Christie's Teacher Newsletter this week. And if you're not subscribed yet... honestly... what are you waiting for? It's packed every week with classroom-ready activities, conversation starters, teaching ideas and links to all the best Squiz Kids content.

Just head to the homepage of the Squiz Kids website where you can find this week's offering and sign up today, so you don't miss a thing.

And, while we're on the topic of digital media literacy, make sure to keep an ear out later in the year too... because Newshounds is getting an update, with brand new lessons on topics just like this one, to help kids become even sharper digital detectives online.

You can thank me later...

## ***SPIN THE GLOBE***

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Each day we give the world globe a spin and find a news story from wherever it stops .. and today we've landed in Venice - in Italy - where the star attraction at a big art festival is a couple of portaloos.

The Venice Biennale is a famous art show that takes place every year - with countries all over the world sending an artist to showcase something truly avant garde - which is a French expression meaning something that is ahead of its time. Some would say completely weird - but hey: art is in the eye of the beholder.

This year's Biennale has crowds queuing to get into the Austrian pavilion - where you can do a wee in a portalo - for your wee to then pass through a bunch of filters and turned into fresh water before dribbling into a large glass tank with a naked woman floating in scuba gear.

See? I told you it was weird. I mean, avant garde.

Australia has a pavilion at the Biennale too .. and we're represented there by Aussie artist Khaled Sabsabi - who has painted eight massive, colourful canvases, onto which he's projecting images – which is all a bit tame compared to the dunnies ...

### ***SPACED OUT***

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For as long as humans have stared up into the skies and marveled at the stars, there's been speculation that aliens live among us .. the idea that somewhere out there in vast expanse of the universe, there are other galaxies with other life forms ... some of which may have even visited us down here on Earth.

It's a theory that got a big boost on Friday when the US government released top secret files on UFOs - or unidentified flying objects.

The files document sightings by jet fighter pilots of unexplained flashing lights in the high atmosphere and reports from astronauts who have visited the moon of unexplained phenomena far out in space.

No actual aliens or recognisable space ships - but still ...

I've seen Guardians of the Galaxy .. I've watched MegaMind, Star Wars and ET ... surely they can't all be wrong ...

### **SQUIZ KIDS SALUTES**

And today we give a great big Squiz Kids Salute to the greatest nature conservationist that ever walked the planet.

I'm talking about David Attenborough - the English documentary maker who turned 100 last week after a lifetime of making the most fascinating documentaries about our marvelous planet and the wonderful flora and fauna that thrives on it ..

The remarkable Mr Attenborough was celebrated over the weekend - with well wishes sent from fans all over the world.

Not to mention receiving the incredibly high honour of having a species of animal named after him ..

Yes - it was announced over the weekend that a brand new species of wasp from Chile would be named in his honour ..

The 'Attenborough-nculus tau' is a 3 millimetre tan and brown wasp that lives in forests of South America ...

I mean, sure it's an honour to have an animal named after you .. but surely they could have found something a bit more impressive than a bug ..

### ***THE S'QUIZ***

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

1. Starting with 'S' What's the name given to AI generated content that flourishes during wars to influence the way people think?
2. What do the letters 'UFO' stand for?
3. What strange object has become the focus of a whole lot of attention at this year's Biennale?

### ***SHOUT OUTS***

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It's Monday, May 11 ... day before the Federal Budget - which is when the government decides how it is going to spend all the money it collects in taxes ...

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today and tomorrow... Cain from Paraburdoo, Lily from Chermside West, Annabel from Northcote, Ted from Gunnedah, Eadie from Exeter, Elvie from West Albury, Eloise from Belmont, Mack from Goornong, Eleanor from Upper Kedron, Lilly from Yarrawonga, Lavi from Chatswood, Leo from Warrnambool, Mavi from Middleton Grange and Antione listening from Christchurch, New Zealand.

Belated shoutouts go to ... Brenton from West Albury, Tyler from Bardonia, Jillian from Kogarah, Violet from Richmond, Andi from Cliffton and Ain listening over in Incheon, South Korea.

And a special shoutout to Mariah from Findon — whose name I mispronounced in last week's episode. Our sincere apologies, Mariah!

Classroom shoutouts go to... Group 3 with Kimberley and Kate at Kinma Primary and Preschool in Terrey Hills, class 5/6B with Ms Bethune at Faith Lutheran College in Tanunda, class 5 Blue with Mrs Evans at Mary Immaculate Catholic School in Eagle Vale and 5/6B with Miss Brain at Griffith Public School.

### **The S'Quiz Answers:**

1. Slopaganda
2. Unidentified Flying Object
3. Portaloo .. also accept toilet or dunny

Don't forget .. if you've got a birthday coming up and you'd like a shoutout, or if you want a classroom shoutout... drop us a line at [squizkids@thesquiz.com.au](mailto: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 special Squiz The World to the remarkable country of Tanzania .. in Africa — as the great migration gets into full swing and the savannahs are transformed by a roiling mass of animals ... one of the great spectacles of the world ..

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