

National Reconciliation Week starts; a student tractor take-over; some furry film stars; and an Aussie astronaut's invited to space.

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

I'm Christie Kijurina

It's Wednesday, May 27 -

In Squiz Kids Today ... National Reconciliation Week starts; a student tractor take-over; some furry film stars; and an Aussie astronaut's invited to space.

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

THE LOWDOWN

Yesterday was National Sorry Day, and today marks the start of National Reconciliation Week, which means there's a good chance you'll be hearing about both at school this week.

National Sorry Day remembers the hurt caused to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families when children from the Stolen Generations were taken away from their parents, language, culture and Country under past government policies.

For many Australians, saying sorry today isn't about taking personal blame. It's about recognising that hard things happened, understanding how they still affect people and communities today, and working to build a fairer future together.

That's where reconciliation comes in. It means listening to one another, learning from the past, and finding ways to move forward together. This year's theme says it beautifully: *All In*.

And teachers, a reminder if you're covering this... our Shortcut to Eddie Mabo and Land Rights is waiting for a re-listen in your podcast feed, on YouTube and on our website.

Meanwhile, in Saudi Arabia, one of the biggest annual gatherings on Earth is underway. Millions of Muslims are taking part in the Hajj (spelt H-a-j-j), a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca, that Muslims who are physically and financially able are expected to complete at least once in their lifetime. It's one of the Five Pillars of Islam, which are like guiding foundations for faith and everyday life for Muslims. More than 1.6 million pilgrims from all over the world had already arrived by last week, with close to two million expected overall. A pilgrim is someone who travels to a special or holy place for religious reasons. They pray, reflect, and complete rituals that symbolise faith, patience and unity. We've popped a link to a time-lapse video in the episode notes so you can get an idea of the enormous scale of the event.

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 US state of Michigan... where school kids have swapped buses and backseats for something much, much bumpier.

You know how some Year 12 students celebrate finishing school by pranking teachers or signing uniforms? Well, at one US high school in farming country, students have a different tradition: they drive tractors to school.

Yep. Tractors.

At a school south of Detroit, around 150 senior students arrived on their final day in giant farm machines, golf carts, off-road vehicles and old family tractors for something called Tractor Day, a tradition that stretches all the way back to the 1980s.

Some students drove tractors that their older brothers, sisters and even cousins had driven before them. And, one teen arrived in a tractor once owned by his great-great-grandfather!

The day is a celebration of finishing school, friendship... and the farming history of the community.

And honestly? That sounds *wheelie* fun! [Mum joke buzzer] I haven't heard the Mum joke buzzer in a bit... must try harder!

ANIMAL KINGDOM

As the glitz, glamour and red carpets of the famous Cannes Film Festival in France wrap up, movie stars, celebrities and fancy gowns weren't the only things stealing the spotlight.

Because amongst the movie premieres and camera flashes, there's also a cheeky, unofficial award celebrating the festival's four-legged scene-stealers: the Palm Dog Award

Think of it as a prize for the best dog performance in a movie.

This year's top dog? A rescue dog named Yuri and a rescue puppy named Tormenta, who starred in a Chilean film about a lonely woman who forms a special friendship with an abandoned puppy. Yuri, and the pup who played a young Yuri, were both rescue dogs with zero acting experience before filming.

All the canine guests were treated like true VIPs, with cameras clicking and gourmet treats on offer. At Cannes, apparently, even dogs get the full celebrity treatment... well... bone appétit. [Mum joke buzzer] Yes!

SPACED OUT

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Imagine getting an invitation that says: *Would you like to go to space?*

Well, that's pretty much what's happened to Australia's first qualified astronaut, Australian of the Year, and friend of the podcast, Katherine Bennell-Pegg.

Katherine has been offered a potential spot on a future mission to the International Space Station, a big science lab orbiting about 400 kilometres above Earth

There is one important little detail, though: it's not locked in just yet. The mission still needs money and support from the government and private partners before it can blast off.

If the trip does go ahead, it could be a massive moment for Australian science, helping researchers run experiments in space and inspiring the next generation of scientists, engineers and maybe even future astronauts like yourself...

And if you'd like to hear more from Katherine herself, we chatted in a Spotlight episode last year. You can find the link in today's episode notes.

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. What is the theme of this year's National Reconciliation Week?
2. What is the name of the pilgrimage that millions of Muslims undertake each year?
3. What were the names of the dog and the puppy who won this year's Palm Dog Award?

SHOUTOUTS

It's Wednesday, May 27 ... World Otter Day! Otters are one of the few animals on the planet that use tools... sea otters can crack open shellfish by floating on their backs and smashing them with a rock. And, if you're ever lucky enough to spot an otter family snoozing on the water, you might catch them holding hands so they don't drift apart ... adorable!

So today, we're otterly obsessed [Mum joke buzzer]... *Ok... that's enough*

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today... Aisha from Oran Park, Hudson from Kurri Kurri, Matt from Goornong, Louise from Spence, Harley from Tanunda, Laurence from Cairns and Oliver B listening over in Queenstown, New Zealand.

Belated shoutouts go to... Liam from Ipswich, Jokk from Tanunda and Thorin from North Mackay.

Classroom shoutouts go to... class 6M with Miss Murray at Rainbow Street Public School in Randwick, class 5/6S with Mrs Spruce and Mr Scanlan at Morpeth Public School, ... world's best lolly shop and coldest public toilet seat...class 3/4A with Mr Andrews at Tanilba Bay Public School and class 4/5 at Albury West Public School and a special shoutout to their teacher Mrs McNabb who is celebrating a birthday today!

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. All In
2. The Hajj
3. Yuri and a puppy named Tormenta

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 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.