

Jaw-dropping video from Mars; Amazon has a breather; Commonwealth Games kick off; and why chimps love a cuddle.

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 Wednesday, July 23 -

In Squiz Kids Today ... Jaw-dropping video from Mars; Amazon has a breather; Commonwealth Games kick off; and why chimps love a cuddle.

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

THE LOWDOWN

It's a Thursday, and you're all freshly back from school holidays now so I reckon your brains are ready to be blown ... so try this on for size ..

A spaceship that left Earth three years ago, has just flown by Mars and sent back jaw-dropping video of the red planet - and will spend the next three years speeding through space on its way to an asteroid located half-way to Jupiter.

See? I told you it would blow your mind.

The spacecraft is called Psyche - named after the huge asteroid it is headed for - and it blasted off from Earth back in 2023. It's taken it three years to reach Mars – whaaaaa? – and it will now take another three years to reach its destination.

But much like Aussie airline passengers doing a stopover in Singapore on the way to London - the Psyche mission made a pit stop at Mars - spending four weeks in orbit around the red planet - gathering its strength, and using the slingshot effect of Mars' gravity - to flick it on towards Jupiter.

And what did the videos from Mars capture? The spaceship flew close enough to send back video of mountains and craters and even the planet's south polar ice caps. Because, yes, like Earth, Mars has an ice cap at its South Pole.

I've stuck a link to the video in today's episode notes ... you're welcome.

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Meanwhile - down here on Earth - and there was good news for the lungs of our very own planet yesterday with reports that the Amazon jungle has experienced far fewer wildfires in the past year.

The Amazon is sometimes referred to as the lungs of our planet - given how enormous it is, and the important role trees play 'breathing in' carbon dioxide and 'breathing out' oxygen via the process of photosynthesis.

And in the past 12 months, the amount of area impacted by fires has dramatically reduced. Which is good news for all the animals who live there - and for the rest of us who, you know, quite like to breathe.

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 Democratic Republic of Congo .. or DRC as it's also known – where scientists have been studying chimpanzees and discovered they like to cuddle.

Have you ever been part of a sports team that gets into a huddle before a match – just to put your arms around your team mates and send the subtle message, by touch, that you're a team and all striving for the same outcome ...

Well chimps do that in the wild too, it seems. The act of hugging one another, coming in for a cuddle or giving each other a reassuring squeeze is widely practiced in the chimpanzee world, especially in the lead up to events that might be stressful or which requires them to play together as a team.

Chimps love a cuddle ... you heard it hear first.

SPORT TIME

Just when you thought it was safe to go back to bed ... just when the early morning alarm you set for World Cup games was packed safely back in the bedside draw - comes another mega-sporting event which is going to have you back in front of the telly.

I'm talking about the Commonwealth Games - which kick off tomorrow in Scotland - as 3,000 athletes from 74 countries prepare to go for gold in a scaled-back event consisting of only 10 sports.

For Australia: we're sending 256 athletes to compete in everything from swimming to athletics to netball, gymnastics and wheelchair basketball. Our national swim team, the Dolphins make up 60 of those athletes, with 86 Aussies over there competing in track and field.

The host city Glasgow is the venue for the stripped back Games - and the mascot is Finnie the unicorn ... because the unicorn is Scotland's national animal, and features on the country's coat of arms.

And if you missed this week's Squiz Kids Shortcut on the Comm Games - do yourself a favour and go back and have a listen ... it's GOLD! (DAD JOKE ALARM) .. gold, get it? Like the medals? That Dad Joke Alarm is so sensitive ...

NEWSHOUNDS

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 today, he's got his green and gold track suit on - ready for the Commonwealth Games - and ready to bark down any mis- or disinformation he finds ..

Like the Facebook posts claiming that Aussie swim star Kyle Chalmers has pulled out of the Games.

Wait! What? He's one of our main medal hopes.

And yeah- he hasn't pulled out of the Games .. it's not true. He will be there on the blocks for Australia. But that hasn't stopped some disinformation baddies from creating posts saying he's out.

Now - why would people create and spread lies online like this? Because it has a shock value - and when people come across posts like this online and are surprised, they click on the post and are directed to websites with loads of dodgy ad content. So the creators of the fake news make money. And when people don't STOP. THINK and CHECK - as

Squiz-E always tells us to do - and instead share the post - the content spreads and tricks more people.

Keep on sniffing Squiz-E .. keep on sniffing Newshounds ...

Q+A ANDY GRIFFITHS Q&A

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Speaking of kids' books ... don't forget we have a very special guest coming up on the podcast in the coming weeks ...

Aussie kids' author Andy Griffiths has signed up to take the hotseat for our next Squiz Kids Q+A - to talk about his new book, *You & Me And the Gigantic Knucklehead* and answering any questions you might want to ask him.

He's of course the same author of the wildly popular Treehouse series of books -

Where and how does he write? What does he do when not writing? How does he find inspiration? Does it ever get tiring? Who's his favourite footy team? Anything you like.

There are prizes to be won for the best questions .. so get cracking! Send your questions to squizkids@thesquiz.com.au - But hurry along .. you've only got until next Monday to get your questions in ..

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. Name the jungle sometimes referred to as the lungs of planet Earth?
2. What's the name of the spacecraft and NASA mission that just flew by Mars and is on its way to photograph an asteroid near Jupiter?
3. What mythical animal is Finnie, the mascot of the 2026 Comm Games mascot?

SHOUTOUTS

It's Thursday, July 23 – today is Peanut Butter and Chocolate Day ... one of the most inspired culinary combos in the world of food, in my humble opinion ...

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today... Amelia from Castlecrag, Ella from Palmyra, Alana from Doncaster East, Eliza from Goornong and Hugo listening over in Paris, France.

Belated shoutouts go to ... Kevin from Petrie, Remi from Wantirna South and Ella from East Fremantle - and apologies from the Squiz Kids team - we accidentally left you off yesterday's list—our bad! Thanks for being patient. Belated shoutouts also go to Alice from Dulwich Hill, Esther from Westbury, Ava from Botanic Ridge and Dominic, Jake and Elijah from Kurri Kurri.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Amazon
2. Psyche
3. Unicorn

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.