

A total eclipse over Europe; Colombia's earthquake emergency; Aussie teens make their mark; and Brisbane's underwater light show.

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, August 12 -

In Squiz Kids today ... A total eclipse over Europe; Colombia's earthquake emergency; Aussie teens make their mark; and Brisbane's underwater light show.

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

THE LOWDOWN

Alright Squiz Kids in the Northern Hemisphere... today is a very big day to look up. That's because Wednesday, August 12 is serving up not one, but two spectacular shows in the sky. First up, a total solar eclipse will sweep across parts of northern Russia, Greenland, Iceland, Spain and a tiny corner of Portugal.

A solar eclipse happens when the Moon passes directly between the Earth and the Sun, casting a shadow across our planet. And if you're standing in just the right place, the Moon can completely cover the Sun for a couple of extraordinary minutes, turning daytime, briefly, dark. People across much of Europe, Canada and parts of the United States and northern Africa will also get to see a partial eclipse, where the Moon covers part of the Sun.

And then, once night falls, there's show number two. The Perseid meteor shower reaches its annual August peak tonight, as Earth travels through a stream of tiny bits of dust and rock left behind by a comet called Swift-Tuttle. They slam into our atmosphere at around 60 kilometres a second, burning up and creating those bright streaks we call

shooting stars. Better still, today is a New Moon, meaning nice dark skies for meteor spotting.

As for us Squiz Kids down here in Australia? Sadly, the eclipse is happening on the wrong side of the planet, and the Perseids are much better seen from the Northern Hemisphere. But our eclipse day is coming. In 2028, a total solar eclipse will sweep across Australia from the north-west to the south-east.

And one very important reminder for anyone watching tomorrow's eclipse: never look directly at the Sun without proper eclipse glasses or another safe solar viewer. Ordinary sunglasses are not enough.

Happy sky-gazing, Northern Hemisphere Squiz Kids!

SPIN THE GLOBE

Each day we spin the globe and find a story from wherever it stops... and today we've landed in Colombia, South America, where rescuers are searching rubble after the country's strongest earthquake this century.

The magnitude-7.4 quake struck western Colombia on Monday morning. Despite starting more than 100 kilometres underground, the shaking spread across a huge area, damaging homes, hospitals, roads and airports, and bringing down dozens of buildings.

Now a huge rescue operation is underway. In the city of Cali, volunteers have formed human chains, passing chunks of rubble away from collapsed buildings by hand. Crowds helping rescuers have been raising their fists into the air — not to celebrate, but to signal everyone to go silent, so rescue workers can listen for the tiniest sound of someone trapped below.

In Pereira, 16 people had a scary ride when the earthquake struck. They were in aerial cable cars, used as public transport to connect the city's steep hillside neighbourhoods to the centre. The cars stopped mid-air, leaving passengers stranded for six hours before rescue.

Colombia sits on the Pacific Ring of Fire, a horseshoe-shaped zone where earthquakes and volcanoes are common. Nearby Venezuela had two huge quakes in June, but scientists say this one isn't connected. Sometimes, sadly, big earthquakes just happen close together in time.

SQUIZ KIDS SALUTES

Apparently being a teenager isn't quite busy enough for some people... because these young Aussies have been adding world titles, world records and election campaigns to the diary.

First up, to the World Athletics Under-20 Championships in Oregon in the United States, where 19-year-old Australian race walker Isaac Beacraft has absolutely torn up the track. Just over a week after winning Commonwealth Games gold in Glasgow, Isaac won the 5,000-metre race walk world title... and smashed the under-20 world record while he was at it, finishing in an incredible 18 minutes, 40.37 seconds.

And fellow 19-year-old Izobelle Louison-Roe is coming home with gold too, after clearing 1.92 metres to win the high jump. That's one better than the silver medal she won at the last World Under-20 Championships.

And our final salute goes to another young Aussie having a crack at something completely different.

Hera Sheppard is 18, in Year 11 at Warrnambool College, works part-time at McDonald's... and is now also running as a candidate in Victoria's state election. If she wins a seat in November, she would become the youngest person ever elected to an Australian parliament.

To Isaac, Izobelle and Hera... Squiz Kids salutes you!

WEIRD SCIENCE

From young Aussies making their mark... to some tiny Queenslanders putting on a spectacular show of their own. Over the weekend, people around Brisbane captured videos of water suddenly flashing electric blue when it was splashed or disturbed. And the creatures responsible have possibly the best name in science... Sea sparkles. Ok, so, their actual scientific name is *Noctiluca scintillans*, and they're teeny-tiny, single-celled organisms that can gather together in enormous numbers in the water.

When something disturbs them, whether it's a wave, a paddle or a person, a chemical reaction inside them produces a tiny burst of light, and when thousands light up together, the result can look like someone has switched on blue fairy lights beneath the water.

Scientists call this bioluminescence, and plenty of other ocean creatures can do it too, including some squid, crustaceans and even sharks. Why sea sparkles flash isn't

completely understood, although scientists think it may help frighten or warn off predators.

Whatever the reason...Brisbane's sea sparkles have certainly been living up to their name. I've put a link to some pictures in the episode notes.

BOOKWEEK CALLOUT

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Alright kids, parents and teachers... it's nearly time to raid the craft cupboard.

Book Week is coming up from August 22 to 28, and, as always, we want to see what you're dressing up as!

So get out the cardboard, the feathers, the face paint, the fabric scraps and, if there's a grown-up nearby to supervise, fire up the glue gun... and get creative.

You might dress as your all-time favourite book character, recreate someone from a story you've just discovered, or come up with something completely unexpected.

Then, ask an adult to send us a photo of you in your Book Week costume to squizkids@thesquiz.com.au. We'll post them to our socials so that everyone can appreciate them and there will be prizes for our favourites.

Just make sure you include your name, age, where you're from or the school you go to, and which book or character you're dressed as.

Teachers, we definitely want to see your costumes too... but you can keep your age a closely guarded secret. So start plotting, cutting, sticking and creating.

We cannot wait to see what you come up with!

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. True or false... a solar eclipse happens when the Moon passes directly between the Earth and the Sun...

2. How old is Hera Sheppard who is a candidate in Victoria's upcoming state election?
3. What is the non-scientific name for the bioluminescent organisms lighting up Brisbane's waterways?

SHOUTOUTS

It's Wednesday, August 12 – And, today is a big day for tech gadgets! Wayyy back in 1877, Thomas Edison is said to have finished his phonograph, the world's first machine that could record a voice and play it back. He tested it by reciting "Mary had a little lamb." I'll bet he almost fell off his chair when it talked back!

Fast forward to 1981, and IBM released its very first personal computer, the IBM 5150, kicking off the PC revolution that led to the laptop or computer you might be using right now!

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today Aviana from Forest Lake, Evelyn also from Forest Lake, Charlotte from Orange, Ned from North Narrabeen, Tommy from Miami in QLD, Alexander from Hornsby and Jacob from Kyle Bay.

A belated shoutout goes to ...Daniel and Maya from Canberra, Lyra from Richmond and Henry from Randwick

Classroom shoutouts go to ... A whole school shoutout to St Michael's Primary School in Heyfield, Class 5Y and their teachers Ms LeRay and Mrs Cotterill at Lakes Grammar School in Warnervale, All of Year 5 and Ms G at St Eugene College in Burpengary

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. True
2. 18
3. Sea Sparkles

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

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