

Nepal's glacier landslide explained; Roger the working seagull; Media literacy in the spotlight; and Fat Marmot Week crowns a winner.

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, August 31 -

In Squiz Kids today ... Nepal's glacier landslide explained; Roger the working seagull; Media literacy in the spotlight; and Fat Marmot Week crowns a winner.

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

THE LOWDOWN

It's been five days since the catastrophic flooding disaster in Nepal and Tibet – and as more information comes in from the devastated region and more video circulates showing the scale of the disaster, scientists are beginning to develop a clearer idea of how the tragedy unfolded.

The working theory over the weekend is that an enormous sheet of ice, rock and mud – about the size of a mountainside – came away from a Himalayan glacier and tumbled into the valley below.

As it hit the river at the base of the valley, it created a massive, 30 metre wave of muddy water and rock debris – described by scientists as similar to liquid cement – a destructive wave that tore down the valley, wiping out everything in its path.

Yesterday, and throughout the weekend, rescuers worked around the clock to try to locate survivors – but sadly, the number of people killed in the disaster is expected only to continue to climb as the week unfurls. And meanwhile, many thousands of people in Nepal and Tibet have lost their homes and are in urgent need of food, water, shelter and medical assistance.

Of course: a catastrophe of this magnitude is big news. And that means there is video footage of it circulating on the TV news and online. And sometimes, when we come across video like that, it can make us feel uneasy and anxious. Our natural instinct is to feel sorry for the people caught up in it, and scared that something like that could happen to us.

It's really important if you find yourself seeing footage of these sorts of disasters and you feel uneasy about it – that you talk to an adult in your life. Someone who can help you make sense of it, process it properly – and help you understand that the news media is very good at making extraordinary things seem close to home. Even when they're not.

Which is to say: the reason something like this is news – and is being covered so widely on the TV and online – is because it is so completely out-of-the-ordinary. So utterly, devastatingly unusual. If it happened every day, it wouldn't be remarkable.

Which is important to remember when we're watching news of big, tragic events like this one. As terrifying as they are – and as heart wrenchingly sad as they can be – they are extremely rare.

They are also a reminder of the importance of helping out fellow humans in need. And I've stuck a link in today's show notes to a local alliance of aid organisations collecting donations to help with the recovery.

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 Rocky Mountains, in the United States, where the winner of Fat Marmot Week has just been crowned.

Take a bow, Dawn ...

Dawn took out the award after gaining a whole 2 kilograms over the northern summer - a time when these massive rodents who live in the mountains eat as much as they can in preparation for winter hibernation.

Dawn beat a marmot called G - whose weight gain over the summer didn't quite match his chunky rival.

I've stuck a link to photos of all the marmots competing in this year's competition.

Fat Marmot Week comes only weeks before the biggest fat contest in the animal world begins .. I'm talking of course about Fat Bear Week .. where the grizzlies of Katmai National Park in Alaska compete to see who can stuff the most salmon into their snouts before disappearing for hibernation.

Now if only there was a fat dad or fat podcaster competition ... i'd totally be entering that.

NEWSHOUNDS

—

Hang on a minute ... Newshounds? On a Monday? What's going on here? Squiz-E - what are you doing here? We normally catch up with you on Thursday (WOOF)

What's that? A major study is being released today which has made you more important than ever?

Researchers from three Australian universities will today release the findings of their 2026 'News and Young Australians' report ... and it shows that more and more young Australians - that's you - are getting their news from AI than ever before.

The emergence of Generative AI - or artificial intelligence - over the past year has happened so quickly, and it's completely changing the way people get information about what's happening in the world around them.

And the problem with that is that not everything that an AI chat bot tells you is real. A lot of it is unreliable – accidentally untrue at best, or made by people with the express purpose of tricking you.

The report also found that one third of Australian kids aged 10-17 had shared what they thought was a real news story with their friends, families and followers - only to find out later that it was fake.

The report notes that media literacy lessons - taught to kids when they are at primary school - are an effective way of helping them work out what's real and what's not when they're online.

Which is handy .. because that's literally what Squiz-E is here for – teaching kids through the Squiz Kids media literacy program, Newhounds, to STOP. THINK and CHECK before believing everything they see online.

Check it out via the Squiz Kids website: squizkids.com.au.

Thanks Squiz-E - and see you again on Thursday (WOOF)

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

And so to Devon we go - in England - where Roger the seagull has become something of a local celebrity for the excellent job he does keeping other seagulls away.

Roger lives on the roof on top of a fish and chip shop in a small seaside town in Devon. When he was a baby gull, he fell from the roof and was rescued by the shop owners.

Ever since then, Roger has stood guard over the shop and its customers ... keeping other hungry seagulls at bay when they sit down to eat their fish and chips.

And for his troubles, he receives payment of four cooked king prawns every day. Win win ..

And if a seagull chasing seagull isn't amazing enough for you ... there was also news over the weekend of a family of bears who have taken to visiting the backyard of a family in California and frolicking in the pool.

The home owners were scared at first - but now they've welcomed the bears and take great delight in watching them practice their bear stroke - which is sort of like doggy paddle, but for bears.

I've stuck links to video of both Roger and the swimming bears in today's episode notes.

BOOKWEEK ANNOUNCEMENT

—

Wowzers! What a wonderful, creative bunch you are! I've just been scrolling through the photos you sent in of your Book Week costumes - and I'm so impressed.

Well done to everyone who got dressed up last week to celebrate the joy of reading .. and well done to everyone who sent in a photo of them in costume.

I don't envy Christie having to select a winner from that impressive collection ...

But she will - and it will be announced on Wednesday.

Meanwhile: if you want to have a look at how creative your fellow Squiz Kids listeners are - pop on over with an adult to the Squiz Kids account on Instagram ... I've stuck a link to it in today's episode notes ... you're welcome.

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. With a name that is the same as a kind of Aussie luncheon meat, name the county in England where Roger the seagull has an important job to do.
2. A large part of what icy formation on the side of a Himalayan mountain is believed to have crashed down into the valley below and caused last week's devastating flood event in Nepal and Tibet. Hint: starts with 'g'
3. Name the marmot who was announced as winner of Fat Marmot Week over the weekend?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Monday, August 31 – today is the last day of winter in Australia, International Day for People of African Descent AND the start of the 12th International Penguin Conference. I want to go to a penguin conference ... imagine hanging out with all those penguins ... oh wait, what? It's a conference for scientists who study penguins ... ahhhh ... I see.

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today and tomorrow ... Oliver from Leura, Henry from Kelvin Grove, Penelope from Coogee, Luca from Brunswick East, Tarlo from Brisbane, Zoe from Karana Downs, Sophia from Greta in the Hunter Valley, Hunter and Harper both from Tanilba Bay Public School, and Zoey-Lin listening all the way over there in Rowland Heights in California.

Belated birthday shoutouts go to... Zara from Palmyra, Lucie-Rose from Brisbane, Alice from Burnett Heads, Kaizen from Lemon Tree Passage, Ikhlas from the ACT and Remy from Clareville.

Classroom shoutouts go to ... Class 5/6 Bradman and their teacher, Mrs Acuri, at Chester Hill Public School, Class 6 Maroon and their teacher, Mr Bishenden, at Catherine McAuley School in Orange, Class 5A and their teacher, Miss Akeroyd, at Trinity College Blakeview in Adelaide.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Devon
2. Glacier
3. Dawn

Don't forget .. if you've got a birthday coming up and you'd like a shoutout, or if you want a classroom shoutout, or parents, if you'd like to shout out a class or a wonderful teacher... 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 withShortcut to Dads for Fathers' Day... a wonderful celebration of the really dedicated dads in nature, and the really crap ones. As well as a reminder that families come in all different shapes and sizes ..

.

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