

Explaining the US Military execution debate; stolen art under the stairs, an orangutan rehoming; and a ridiculously enormous pumpkin.

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, October 14 -

In Squiz Kids today Explaining the US Military execution debate; stolen art under the stairs, an orangutan rehoming; and a ridiculously enormous pumpkin.

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

THE LOWDOWN

Here on Squiz Kids, we love bringing you stories that make you laugh, wonder and say, "Wait ... what?" But sometimes, a serious story comes along that needs a little explaining, and this is one of those stories.

This week, there's been quite a bit of debate about plans to show an execution live online in the United States.

An execution is when authorities end someone's life as punishment for a serious crime. It's called the death penalty. We don't have it in Australia, but some countries, including the United States, still use it in some very serious cases.

In this case, a man who used to be an American Army officer was found guilty of killing 13 people. He was given a death sentence, and his execution is scheduled to happen in December.

Some people in US military want to broadcast it live online. And, President Trump has suggested that showing it could discourage others from committing terrible crimes, but says he's yet to make a final decision.

Many people, including some of those who support the punishment, are against broadcasting it. And, here in Australia, there are calls to keep the footage off our screens.

That's because real-life violence can be deeply upsetting to both children and to adults. Unlike a movie or video game, real people are being hurt, and those images can stay in our minds. Because, you don't need to watch something upsetting to understand the news.

So, we're not sure at the moment whether it will go online or not, but remember, if anyone ever offers to show you something you're not sure about or don't want to see, it's absolutely okay to say, "No thanks," look away, or leave.

And here's the thing about the Internet - sometimes algorithms mean that kids are seeing things online that their brains are not yet ready to process.

It's why there are PG films and M rated TV shows. The Internet doesn't have those sorts of restrictions— and sometimes that means you are accidentally exposed to stuff that for very good reason the adults in your life would prefer you weren't exposed to.

So if it does go ahead - be extra careful about what you click on if you're online. And if you do see anything that makes you feel a bit funny - talk to a trusted adult.

And you don't even need to have seen anything to ask for help. If this story worries you, or you have questions, talk to a parent, teacher or another adult you trust. Sometimes a conversation can make confusing, worrying news feel much easier to understand.

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On a much lighter note... On Monday, Bryce told you about an expedition to a far-flung island aiming to find the missing aeroplane of 1930s adventurer and pilot Amelia Earhart.

Well, the team of intrepid archaeologists have now arrived on the island and spent the past few days unpacking their gear and cutting through jungle to clear a path to the suspected site of the wreck. But each night, they're returning to their boat to avoid the herds of giant coconut crabs that come out at night to hunt small mammals and sea birds...sheesh!

The researchers hope to be able to explore the wreck area by Friday. Keep listening...

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 France, for a detective story involving priceless paintings, a secret hiding place and a clue too small to see.

Regular Squizzers might remember that last month, we told you about an art theft at the Renoir Museum, named after the famous Impressionist painter. Now, French investigators have recovered the two missing paintings, from behind a wall underneath someone's stairs!

The breakthrough came from a protective painting cover abandoned during the getaway. It contained traces of DNA, the genetic information carried in our cells. Police say those traces matched someone they were already investigating.

Four people have been charged by police and investigators suspect they may have foiled another art theft that was being planned.

Somewhere in France, a detective has definitely earned a croissant break.

ANIMAL KINGDOM

On the South-East Asian island of Borneo, north of Australia, eight rescued orangutans are back among the branches and seem to be going absolutely bananas about it!

The great apes have been released into a forest reserve. They were rescued during August and September after wildfires made their forest homes unsafe. Some had been left in small patches of trees with too little food and nowhere safe to go. Now, three mums, their three daughters and two adult males have a fresh start. Rescuers chose their new home because it has food, water and connections to other forests giving them room to roam around

Bornean orangutans are critically endangered, meaning they face an extremely high risk of disappearing from the wild. So helping these eight return safely is precious progress. And judging by the youngsters climbing straight into the trees, they were more than ready to get back into the swing of things!

I've stuck a link to video in the episode notes.

<https://www.facebook.com/ABCNews/videos/indonesia-releases-orangutans-in-new-habitats-after-fires/1098225559688661/>

BIGGEST FURTHEST LONGEST

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There must be something special in the water in Minnesota because one grower in this American state keeps producing pumpkins of ridiculous proportions!

Remember the giant pumpkin competition Bryce mentioned on Monday? We have a winner ... and it's a whopper!

The giant pumpkin competition Bryce told us about on Monday has crowned its winner: Travis Gienger's enormous pumpkin, nicknamed Rocky, weighing **1,084 kilograms**. That's more than a tonne!

Getting Rocky from Minnesota to the competition in California was an adventure in itself. Travis drove almost 3,500 kilometres, carefully transporting his giant gourd over bumpy roads and through mountains.

He described it as a white-knuckle journey, and with a pumpkin that precious on board, who could blame him?

Thankfully, Rocky arrived safely and secured Travis his fifth win at the event. And yep, you can see Travis and Rocky if you click the link in the episode notes.

<https://www.popsci.com/environment/rocky-the-pumpkin-wins-superbowl-of-pumpkin-weigh-offs-at-2289-pounds/>

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. Which animal is causing some headaches for the archaeologists searching for Amelia Earhart's plane?
2. Name the island that is home to the orangutans released back into the wild this week.

3. In which US State was Rocky the Pumpkin grown?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Wednesday, October 14 – Winnie-the-Pooh turns 100 today! He's looking mighty sprightly for an old bear.

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today and... Miranda from Vermont South and Rosie from Belmont

Belated shoutouts go to ... Ollie from Mosman and Louise from Mount Gravatt

Classroom shoutouts go to... Class 5R with Mr Summers at Lakes Grammar School in Warnervale, class 5/6B with Ms B at Faith Lutheran College in Tanunda, years 3&4 with Ms Chelsea at Mount Barker Primary School and lastly a special shoutout to class 5A at Trinity College in Blakeview and congratulations to their teacher Ms Akeroyd on her recent wedding!

And a special shoutout to Squiz Kid Thomas, who's in year 5 at Mercedes College, SA. Thomas has been working on his exhibition project and asked us to help him raise awareness for the endangered eastern quoll. Did you know that the only remaining wild populations are in Tasmania, and there are some fantastic efforts to help return the Eastern Quoll to the mainland? Well done, Thomas! And if you'd like to learn more, I've popped some links for you in the episode notes. And can I tell you, they are absolutely adorable!

<https://www.aussieark.org.au/what-we-do/our-wildlife/eastern-quoll>

<https://wwf.org.au/what-we-do/species/eastern-quoll>

<https://www.utas.edu.au/about/news-and-stories/articles/2025/securing-a-future-for-the-eastern-quoll>

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Giant coconut crabs
2. Borneo
3. Minesotta

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.

And finally: if you love Squiz Kids, we'd love you do us a favour and hit follow on Apple Podcasts or Spotify or wherever you're listening to us. And while you're there, why not share this episode with someone you think would enjoy it too? The only way we can continue to do what we do is by growing and in order to grow, we need your support -

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.