

Ancient treasures found in WA; a South African train goes to great lengths; a snake that turns cartwheels; and a spud that's no small potatoes!

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 28 -

In Squiz Kids today Ancient treasures found in WA; a South African train goes to great lengths; a snake that turns cartwheels; and a spud that's no small potatoes!

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

THE LOWDOWN

Sometimes, even after terrible news, there's a little light to be found.

On Monday, Bryce told us about Australians helping others through donations to Save the Children. Today, that light comes from deep in the soil of Western Australia.

In 2020, mining company Rio Tinto destroyed an ancient Aboriginal rock shelter at Juukan Gorge in the Pilbara region. It was a devastating loss for its Traditional Owners, the Puutu Kunti Kurrama and Pinikura peoples. [***The POO-too GOON-tee GOO-ruh-muh and BIN-i-goo-ruh peoples***]

But working together, archaeologists and Traditional Owners are uncovering pieces of the past that survived, revealing stories of life there stretching back more than 50,000 years.

There are traces of about 200 fires, possible bedding made from paperbark, and a remarkable 3,000-year-old tool with a handle made using kangaroo poo and sticky resin from spinifex grass. They've even found bones showing that Tasmanian devils once roamed the area!

Each discovery offers another clue to what people ate, how they made things and how they lived, generation after generation.

Nothing can undo the destruction. But the Traditional Owners are working to reconstruct the shelter and protect their cultural heritage, keeping that connection to their ancestors alive for generations still to come.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-10-25/archaeologists-unearth-incredible-artefacts-at-juukan-gorge/107303486>

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 South Africa, where a VERY long train has rattled its way into the record books, according to its operator, Transnet.

The rail operator says it's claimed the world record for the longest freight train... and taken that title from Australia! The enormous train rolled out with 696 empty wagons and 13 locomotives, stretching 7.6 kilometres. Australia's record, set in Western Australia in 2001, was about 250 metres shorter.

Now, you might imagine all those engines lined up at the front, pulling for dear life. 'I think I can... I think I can...' But they were positioned at intervals along the train, sharing the work. Clever radio technology kept them in sync... working together to pull and brake, even though they were spread kilometres apart.

That coordination helps prevent too much pushing or pulling on the joins between the wagons. A little like carrying something heavy with your friends: everyone needs to move together.

So, hats off to South Africa for some seriously impressive railway teamwork. There's a link to a video in the episode notes so you can see for yourself.

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/vGYfDIPWNzs>

ANIMAL KINGDOM

Some snakes hiss. Some shake their tails. But one little snake's response to danger is more ... gymnastics competition. Meet Southeast Asia's dwarf reed snake, which makes its getaway by... cartwheeling!

So, while a tumbling snake might give YOU a fright, it's actually doing the trick because something has frightened IT.

Usually measuring less than 30 centimetres long, this tiny escape artist can roll away four times faster than it slithers, covering roughly its own body length in a second. Scientists at Japan's Toho University filmed the action with high-speed cameras to understand what was happening. Rather than turning head over tail, the snake swings its body around, touching down first on one side, then the other. Meanwhile, its head stays steady and points forwards. Handy when you need to watch where you're escaping to!

There's a link to incredible slow-motion video in today's episode notes.

Still, if I'm in danger, I'll probably stick with running... I don't think I'd get past the first cartwheel.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krzNaBNLurA>

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

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Imagine digging up what looks like a potato ... only to discover you've struck gold. Literally! An amateur prospector has unearthed a nugget nicknamed the "Tibooburra Spud", worth around \$150,000.

The lucky man from Broken Hill found it while searching at Mount Stuart station, near Tibooburra in north-western New South Wales.

After years of fossicking, that's searching for things like gold and gemstones, he knew a beep from his metal detector didn't necessarily mean treasure. And he almost kept walking. Good thing he didn't!

As he dug deeper, the signal grew stronger. Buried beneath the dirt was a nugget weighing more than 1.2 kilograms, with gold and quartz mixed together. Tests showed it contained about 940 grams of pure gold.

Its finder, who's keeping his identity private, hopes to sell it to a collector, and as it's in one huge nugget, he reckons it might fetch even more than the gold's value.

Talk about striking it rich!

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-10-26/gold-nugget-discovered-in-outback/107306976>

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. How many locomotives or engines did it take to pull the 696 empty wagons in South Africa?
2. How does the dwarf reed snake escape when it's frightened?
3. Which delicious vegetable does the gold nugget dug up in Tibooburra resemble?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Wednesday, October 28 – it's International Animation Day! From talking fish, to flying houses, and an ogre with a donkey for a best mate... animation brings some pretty unlikely characters to life. Your mission? Pick your favourite animated film, settle in with the family and enjoy. No arguments, please!

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today... Luna from Exeter, Emmett from Kurri Kurri, Kayleigh from Gumdale, Charlie from Hawthorne, Sahana from Malabar, Zoë from Cairns and Harry from Toowong.

A belated shoutout goes to ...Harley from Eden Valley.

Classroom shoutouts go to... class 5D with Mrs Lowe at Rainworth State School in Brisbane, class 6JW with Miss Walters at Wilsonton State School, in Toowoomba and classes 5A and 5B with Miss Akeroyd and Mrs Barnes at Trinity College in Blakeview.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. 13
2. It cartwheels away

3. A spud / potato

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.