It's laptops down in South Australia; a beaver-supermoon shines; Thailand's river of lights; and the cat who caught a train

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, November 25

In Squiz Kids Today …. It's laptops down in South Australia; a beaver-supermoon shines; Thailand's river of lights; and the cat who caught a train

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

THE LOWDOWN

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Imagine walking into class and your teacher says, "Books out, pencils ready … and the laptops are staying in bags or in the trolley. All. Day. Long."

[GASP] A whole school day without a laptop or tablet? That's what some South Australian kids are about to try.

From next year, 10 public primary schools will trial one screen-free day a week for kids in Years 3 to 6. The trial will run for six months. And right across the state's public primary schools, kids from Reception that's Kinda to Year 2 will generally go without laptops and tablets in class, with exceptions for kids who need them for extra learning support.

There's one less thing on the back-to-school shopping list for some families, too. South Australia is phasing out bring-your-own-device programs in public primary schools. When kids need a laptop or tablet for class, in future they'll use one issued by the school.

Oh..and, get ready to practise your handwriting Years 3 and 4 … the Premier's Pen Licence is coming! Kids will work on their handwriting to earn the right to swap

pencil for pen. The first order of business when you get a pen licence? Giving your signature a test run, of course.

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And did you catch the Beaver Supermoon last night? What the What???

Let me explain… a supermoon happens when the Moon is full in the same stretch of its orbit that brings it close to Earth, so it can look a little bigger and brighter.

And the beaver bit? That's a North American name for November's full Moon, when beavers are settling into their lodges for winter.

If you did miss it last night, have a look tonight. It'll still look almost full. And there's another supermoon coming on Christmas Eve. It might be easier to spot Santa and his sleigh… just saying…

SPIN THE GLOBE

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Each day we give the world globe a spin and find a news story from wherever it stops … and today we've landed in Thailand, where that same full Moon we were just talking about helped set the date for a festival. It's called Loy Krathong, and it happens on the full Moon of the twelfth month of the Thai lunar calendar. And this year, that meant last night.

Picture a river after dark. One by one, little lights start drifting past. Get close enough, and you'll see each flame is sitting on a float made from banana leaves and decorated with flowers. It's called a krathong, and floating one is part of a Thai festival called Loy Krathong (loy, meaning 'to float').

Last night, families lit those candles and set their krathongs afloat. For many people, it's a moment to thank the water for all it gives them and apologising for the pollution that ends up in it. Some celebrations keep going today, including in the city of Chiang Mai, where the Yi Peng lantern festival is underway. Lanterns light up the streets, candles light the river, and the Moon takes care of the sky. Just beautiful!

SPACED OUT

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How hungry are you right now? Hungry enough for a sandwich? Two sandwiches? How about … an entire star?

Scientists have been watching a star they've nicknamed Big Bao, a giant star in a galaxy called Andromeda. Big Bao shone 18,000 times as brightly as our Sun (and that's b-a-o like the yummy steamed bun, not b-o-w like the thing you do when you meet the king). And Big Bao had a companion, Little Bao, that was almost the size of the Sun itself.

For thousands of years, the pair circled each other. Then Little Bao started passing through the giant star's outer layers of gas. Moving through all that gas slowed it down, and it spiralled further and further in until there was a huge burst of light. And hey presto, Big Bao swallowed Little Bao; the two stars had become one.

That's a super-rare thing to catch. Astronomers had already spotted the pair getting brighter, so they were watching when the eruption happened. The **James Webb Space Telescope** got a look just 47 days after the eruption was at its brightest

The star that's left? It's now just known as Bao. Nice!

ANIMAL KINGDOM

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Pussy-cat, pussy-cat, where have you been?
I've been to London to see the Queen.

Well, there's a king on the throne these days, but I don't think anyone told Zeus, a four-year-old cat who took himself to London. By train.

Yep! Zeus hopped aboard the 8.08 pm from Braintree, a town in Essex. And about 60 kilometres later, he arrived at London's Liverpool Street station, where railway staff spotted him and took him to their office to keep him safe before being escorted home on another train. There's even a photo of him sitting on an office chair next to a walkie-talkie. He looks like he's about to announce a platform change. I've popped a link in the show notes.

The best bit is that this wasn't the first time Zeus has hopped a train. He has already taken himself by train to Stansted Airport from his old neighbourhood. Zeus now

wears 2 trackers and his owner has accepted that he's a wanderer but is very pleased to have him back home... for now.

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. What is the name of the type of full moon that was in the sky last night?
2. Which country celebrates the Loy Krathong festival?
3. Name the two stars that the James Webb Space Telescope captured after their collision?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Wednesday, November 25 – On this day wayyyy back in 1915, Albert Einstein shared the final maths behind his new explanation of gravity, called general relativity. His big idea was that heavy things like the Sun bend space and time around them, a bit like a bowling ball makes a dip if you put it on a trampoline. It's that bend shapes the path Earth takes as it goes around the Sun. Mind Blown!

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today... Alizay from Ashmont, Oskar from Orange, Victoria from Lindfield, Charlotte from Hackham, and Lewis from Tanunda.

Belated shoutouts go to... Cobie from Tanunda and Vivien from NSW

Classroom shoutouts go to... Class 5K with Mrs Kennedy, class 5FX with Mrs Flack and class 6T with Mrs Turnbull - all from Claremont Meadows Public School, Elrington class with Miss Thomas-Nygova at Braidwood Central School, class 4D with Mr Smeaton at Livingstone Primary School in Vermont South and lastly class 4M with Miss Miller at Lake Clarendon State School.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Beaver Supermoon

2. Thailand
3. Big Bao and Little Bao

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.

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