

Kamala vs Trump showdown; Tonga's big footy win; Alien message from outer space; and monkeys writing Shakespeare.

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, November 4...

In Squiz Kids Today ... Kamala vs Trump showdown; Tonga's big footy win; Alien message from outer space; and monkeys writing Shakespeare.

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

THE LOWDOWN

We talk a lot about elections here on Squiz Kids – and while politics and government might seem like boring grown-up stuff, they're really important to kids' lives too. And when it comes to elections there are arguably none more important than the one that's taking place in the United States tomorrow.

You know your school elections - where you vote for school captains and student council reps - it's like that times a million.

Unless you've been living under a rock, you'd know that the two candidates running to be President of the United States are Kamala Harris - who is the current Vice President of the US - and Donald Trump - who is a former US President - having held the top job for four years from 2017.

The pair have been campaigning - which means trying to convince Americans to vote for them - for the past few months. And according to polls - there's still no favourite to win. Which is to say: the race is tight, the candidates are neck and neck and either one of them could become President this week.

If Kamala Harris wins, it will create a piece of history: she'll become the first woman President of the United States. How cool is that?

Why is an election in a country thousands of kilometres and an entire ocean away important to us? Because the United States is what is called a 'superpower' - one of a handful of countries in the world that are so big and so powerful that what happens there has a ripple effect around the world.

Americans head to the polls tomorrow morning, US time - with results expected to start trickling in Wednesday morning Australia time. Hold on to your hats kids, things are about to get interesting...

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 Auckland, New Zealand - where the celebrations are still going on after Tonga pulled off a huge upset in the Pacific Cup semi-final at the weekend.

We're talking rugby league, people. And we're talking about some household names from Australia's rugby league competition - the NRL - who have been playing for their country in the Pacific Cup.

Players like Jason Tamaulolo, Sione Katoa, Addin Fonua-Blake + Felise Kaufusi .. who on Saturday just managed to hold off the Kiwis to win 25 point to 24.

Tonga is a much smaller country than New Zealand. But on the day, it was the size of the heart and the size of the effort their players put in to see their little country beat the bigger one.

It means Tonga will now face Australia in the final next weekend in Sydney. May the team with the biggest heart win ...

SPACED OUT

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And it's a big ol' Squiz Kids salute to the father and daughter duo who won an international competition to decode an alien message sent from outer space.

Well - not exactly a real alien message. But a fake one - that was created here on Earth and beamed up to a spaceship orbiting Mars - and then sent back to Earth to see who was clever enough to decode it.

The message was a series of lines and dots - arranged in star-shaped patterns. I've stuck a link to an image of it in today's episode notes.

Citizen scientists were given the challenge of decoding the message: and Keli Chaffin and her dad Ken from the USA recognised the images as showing the molecular structure of amino acids - which are one of the building blocks of human life. Clever.

And while this alien message came from down here on Earth and was only a test: did you know there are entire laboratories filled with scientists whose job it is to monitor space for signals from alien life on other planets and other galaxies. Boom. Mind blown.

ANIMAL KINGDOM

There's long been a scientific theory of probability that says if you put a single monkey in a room with a laptop and gave it an infinite amount of time, that monkey will eventually produce the complete works of Shakespeare.

Gosh - we're covering off a lot of big concepts here this morning ... consider it your Monday brain kickstarter.

Shakespeare was a man who wrote plays back in the 1500s - so, about 500 years ago - plays that are still considered classics in the English language - you'll probably have to study one or two of them in high school - and you'll either love it or hate it.

But I digress. Because a couple of Aussie mathematicians reckon they have disproved the theory - doing the sorts of maths calculations that make my head hurt just thinking about.

According to them, there would only be a 5% chance a single monkey would successfully type the word "bananas" in its own lifetime. And the probability of one chimp constructing a random sentence - such as "I chimp, therefore I am" - comes in at one in 10 million billion billion to one. So - not very likely. As you were.

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. Which team did Tonga beat at the weekend to advance to the Pacific Cup final?
2. Name the two candidates running for US President?
3. What sort of acids were part of an alien test message from Mars?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Monday, November 4 ... today is Tonga's National Day ... which makes their rugby league team's success at the weekend even more significant.

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids celebrating a birthday today and tomorrow... Prisha from Vermont South, Alessi from Toorak, Alyssa from Harrington Park, Wiley from Maroubra, Hale from Mount Gravatt East, Hayley from Wellington Point and Annabelle from Wagga Wagga.

Classroom shoutouts go to... Prep A class with Liz at Glen Huntly Primary School and belated happy birthday to Liz for last week, class 6 Saturn with Mrs Cutrupi at Chester Hill Public School, students and teachers from the Emmaus Centre at All Saints College in Maitland and class 8.2 at Champion Bay Senior High School in Geraldton.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. New Zealand
2. Kamala Harris + Donald Trump
3. Amino acids

Don't forget .. if you've got a birthday coming up and you want a shout out - or if you want a classroom shout out - 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 with a special episode of Squiz The World as we pay a virtual visit to South Africa .. a fascinating look on a country that's more than just elephants, cheetahs and rhinos. Though those are all pretty cool, truth be told.

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