

NEWS KIDS CAN TRUST

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR*



First



2.6M READERS*

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News

NEWS SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT
INTERVIEWS PUZZLES COMPETITIONS

A CRACKING CHRISTMAS PUZZLE!

by Ian Eddy

THE biggest test that many of us get at Christmas is to not eat until we burst, so here's a festive challenge that'll work your brain rather than your belly.

The codebreaking experts at GCHQ, the UK's cyber and intelligence agency, released their annual Christmas Challenge this week, and it's full of the usual fiendish head-scratching trickery.

"This year's Challenge features seven puzzles, plus several hidden elements for those who want an extra test," says GCHQ Director Anne Keast-Butler. "The puzzles are aimed at teenagers and young people, but everyone is encouraged to give them a try – they might surprise you."

The Challenge has been designed for a mix of minds to solve, so is best tackled in groups of classmates, families or friends."

Codebreakers assemble

If you're feeling brave you can still tackle it on your own, but we recommend helping each other out. After all, that's what Christmas is about, right?

GCHQ's mysterious Chief Puzzler, Colin, said: "You do not have to be a genius or top of the class to solve them – you just have to be able to work in a team and embrace the mix of minds and approaches teamwork brings. This is exactly how we work at GCHQ. We also hope to show young people through this Challenge that thinking differently is a gift."



This QR code should be scanned by a responsible adult



Think you're smart enough to crack the puzzles? Give them a go at www.gchq.gov.uk/xmas2024 or scan the QR code

INSIDE!



10

DO ANIMALS GET HANGRY?
WE TALK FOOD WITH DR CHRIS



12

THE BEAR WHO STOLE THE GRINCH WHO STOLE CHRISTMAS!



5

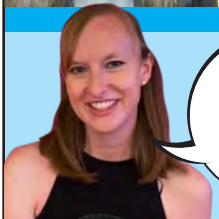
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SYRIA?

* Newspaper Awards 2023, Niche market Newspaper of the Year. First News readership is 2,626,625. Source: Opinion Matters 2020. First News is the widest-read of all children's publications audited in the UK. First News supports children's charities.

MEET THE TEAM



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Nicky Cox



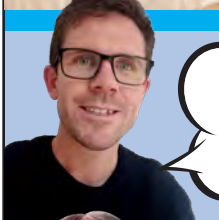
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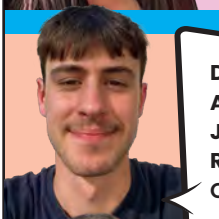
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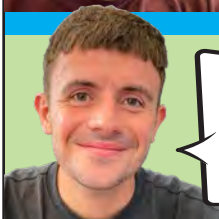
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HAVE YOU HEARD?

Snappy stories to get you talking!



UP TO 300,000 KIDS MISSING EDUCATION

New research from the Education Policy Institute (EPI) says that up to 300,000 children in England could be missing out on an education. The EPI came up with the number by subtracting the total number of 5 to 15-year-old school and home students from the number of kids registered at an NHS GP. However, the EPI admits the 300,000 figure has "limitations" because of the available data, and didn't include kids whose families had moved abroad or to other parts of the UK. The EPI says it wants a national register to track children who are out of school.



MAN'S BEST, AND OLDEST, FRIEND?

Humans and dogs may have formed friendships 12,000 years ago, 2,000 years earlier than previously thought, it is claimed. Researchers from the University of Arizona found that Ice Age-era canine bones dug up in Alaska contained salmon proteins. This means humans must have regularly fed them fish, indicating the dogs were domesticated (under control), says the team. However, they noted that they could have been tamed wolves rather than fully domesticated dogs. The study was published in *Science Advances*.



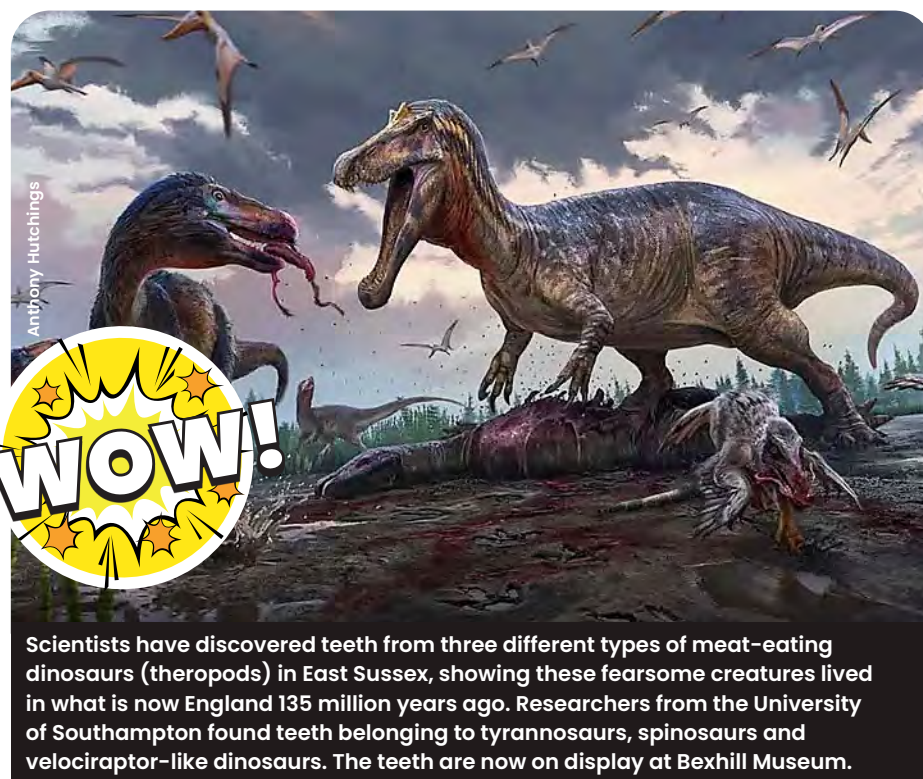
"Thank you from the bottom of my heart. I gave my all in there, gave myself, and it's a lovely feeling to be liked."

– Danny Jones

THEY SAID THAT!

DANNY JONES WINS I'M A CELEB

Singer Danny Jones has been crowned King of the Jungle after winning ITV's 2024 series of *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here!* Jones was the public's favourite, receiving more than half the votes. Coleen Rooney was awarded second place and Reverend Richard Coles came third. Jones is part of the pop-rock band McFly, who formed in the early 2000s.



WOW!

Scientists have discovered teeth from three different types of meat-eating dinosaurs (theropods) in East Sussex, showing these fearsome creatures lived in what is now England 135 million years ago. Researchers from the University of Southampton found teeth belonging to tyrannosaurs, spinosaurs and velociraptor-like dinosaurs. The teeth are now on display at Bexhill Museum.

UK-MADE PESTICIDE HARMS BRAZIL FARMERS



An investigation by environmental group Greenpeace and the *Observer* newspaper says that a dangerous weedkiller banned on British farms is being made in a UK factory and sold to farmers in Brazil. The chemical, called diquat, is produced in Huddersfield by the company Syngenta. Brazilian farmers have been getting sick after using the weedkiller, says the report. Health experts in Brazil say many poisoning cases go unreported. Campaigners say the export of such banned pesticides is wrong and takes advantage of people. Syngenta rejects the allegation, and says it puts “considerable effort” into ensuring the safe use of its products. Siân Berry, Green Party MP for Brighton Pavilion, said: “It’s beyond belief that this is apparently happening lawfully.”



PARENTS WARNED ABOUT AMERICAN CANDY

Thousands of American sweets and snacks that could harm children’s health are on sale in UK shops, says Trading Standards, whose role is to protect consumers. Officials in Staffordshire discovered over 7,000 products that don’t meet UK food safety rules. Many of the brightly-coloured treats, which are promoted on social media, contain banned ingredients that could cause health problems and hyperactivity. Parents are being warned to check labels carefully and avoid buying sweets without proper UK safety information.



DARWIN'S FROGS SAVED

Scientists have flown 53 Darwin’s frogs from Chile to London Zoo to save them from a deadly fungus that is wiping out their species. The tiny frogs, which are smaller than a chocolate button, weighing just 2g and measuring 3cm long, were carefully collected from their forest home in southern Chile. What makes these amphibians extraordinary is that the male frogs carry their babies in their throat pouches – a unique feature in the animal kingdom. At London Zoo they will be part of a breeding programme to help save their species from extinction.



SCIENTISTS TO CREATE ARTIFICIAL ECLIPSE

The European Space Agency (ESA) is set to make its own solar eclipse by synchronising two satellites in space. The ESA-led mission will study the sun’s outer atmosphere – its corona – to better understand the space weather that can affect our lives on Earth. Two Proba-3 satellites will orbit the Earth 144 metres apart with a 1mm level of accuracy. One will carry a special disc to block the sun’s light from reaching the other, just like the moon does during a natural eclipse. The first artificial eclipse is due to take place in March 2025.



SEND PUPILS TO GET CASH HELP

The government is giving £740 million to schools in England to create better spaces for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This money will help schools add things like ramps, lifts and special learning areas to make it easier for SEND students to learn in regular schools. Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson says this will help more students stay in schools near their homes instead of travelling far away to special schools.

HOSPITALS FACE 'QUAD-DEMIC'

UK hospitals are facing a major challenge as four winter illnesses are hitting at the same time. Doctors are seeing huge increases in flu, Covid-19, RSV (a chest infection), and norovirus (stomach bug) cases compared to last year. Flu cases have jumped by 350%, while the number of people with a stomach bug has nearly doubled (up 86%). Health experts are asking everyone who’s eligible to get their vaccines to help stop these illnesses from spreading further. They also recommend using NHS 111 online or by phone for non-emergencies.



CRUMPETS DECLARED 'JUNK FOOD'

Crumpets, types of porridge and some breakfast cereals have been added to a list of “less healthy” foods – based on their sugar, fat and protein content – that cannot be advertised on TV before 9pm. The government says the ban, which is due to come into force in October 2025, aims to reduce childhood obesity. It comes as NHS figures reveal almost one in ten reception-aged kids (9.2%) live with obesity. Healthy versions of products, such as plain porridge with no added sugar and unsweetened yoghurts, will not be included in the ban.



SPORTS PERSONALITY 2024 SHORTLIST

The BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2024 shortlist includes football sensation Jude Bellingham (pictured), Olympic champion runner Keely Hodgkinson, and teenage darts star Luke Littler. They are joined by cricket legend Joe Root, Paralympic cycling hero Sarah Storey and triathlon champion Alex Yee. The winner will be chosen by public vote during a live TV show on 17 December.

● **JANE AUSTEN DAY 16 DECEMBER**
Honours the life and works of the famous English author who was born on this day in 1775.

● **INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT DAY 18 DECEMBER**
Celebrates migrants’ valuable contributions to life in a different country.



Go to the **First News** app for daily news posted throughout the week.



A lynx

WILD SCOTLAND?

Plan to make Scotland a world leader for nature

WILDLIFE groups have presented a plan to make Scotland the world's first "rewilding nation".

The Scottish Rewilding Alliance (SRA) wants nearly a third (30%) of Scotland's land and sea to become rewilding areas (see bottom right). It says that, with meaningful action and funding from politicians, this can be done – without impacting the country's farms.

Among its key ideas, the SRA wants Scotland to:

- Double the total area of its native woodland
- Boost beaver numbers and reintroduce the lynx
- Reduce its dredging (digging up) of seabeds
- Restore peatlands and create protective 'wild zones' around rivers and coastlines

Steve Micklewright, a member of the SRA, said that the plan was a "vision of hope for people, nature and climate". He said: "As a country, we need to be far more ambitious. This is a chance for Scotland to be leading the movement for global change."

The SRA presented its bold idea to Alasdair Allan, Scotland's climate action minister, last week. Mr Allan said he was "extremely grateful" for the SRA's work and added: "We'll fully consider these proposals."

Rewilding involves humans stepping aside and letting a place return to its natural state, so that plants and animals can thrive again.

Charity accuses Israel of genocide

AMNESTY, a leading global human rights charity, has accused Israel of committing genocide against Palestinian people in Gaza.

Genocide is the deliberate mass killing of a particular group of people.

Israel is at war with Hamas, a terrorist organisation that runs Gaza. On 7 October 2023, Hamas launched a shock attack on Israel, killing nearly 1,200 people and kidnapping 251 more. Since then, Israel has been attacking Gaza and fighting to defeat Hamas.

At least 44,700 Palestinians have been killed in the fighting, while many others are suffering without food, clean water and medicine.

Amnesty said that to reach its verdict, it examined the evidence of destruction in Gaza and spoke to Palestinians themselves. One told the charity: "The bombing never stops. You feel like you are subhuman [less than human]."

Israel's foreign ministry said that Amnesty's genocide claims were "entirely false and based on lies".

The local Israeli branch of the charity disagreed, too, but did say: "We are concerned that serious crimes are being committed in Gaza that must be investigated."

Amnesty has called on countries like the UK and the USA to stop supplying weapons to Israel. The UK is a friend of Israel, but has repeatedly called for an end to the fighting.

Many more Muhammads

MUHAMMAD has become the most popular name for boys born in England and Wales.

More than 4,600 newborn boys were given the name in 2023, knocking Noah down to second place. Two other spellings of the name – Mohammed and Mohammad – made the top 100 boys' names as well.

The Office for National Statistics reveals the most popular baby names for boys and girls each year. For girls, Olivia was the most popular name for the eighth year running!

Do you know a Muhammad or an Olivia?

MOST POPULAR BOYS' NAMES

1. Muhammad
2. Noah
3. Oliver
4. George
5. Leo

MOST POPULAR GIRLS' NAMES

1. Olivia
2. Amelia
3. Isla
4. Lily
5. Freya

EDITOR'S COMMENT



Nicky Cox MBE

POLLS have shown that the British public are behind the idea of rewilding (left), and experts are saying that we need to do it to help nature recover.

It will help to clean our air and water, reduce flooding and boost the numbers of insects and animals, but some people are still worried that we may lose good-quality farmland, or are against reintroducing animals such as beavers and lynx.

But there are an increasing number of rewilding projects, so there may be one near you. If so, why not see if your class can visit? After all, the best way to learn about rewilding is to see it in action! Or maybe there's an unloved part of your garden or school grounds that could be rewilded?

April Fools' fans



ON 1 APRIL this year, it was joked that this famous musical steam clock in Vancouver, Canada, would be tuned to play Taylor Swift's hit song, *Shake It Off*. This week, though, Taylor's been in town to finish her Eras Tour, so city bosses decided to actually go through with it and make it happen! It's Swift's 35th birthday today (13 December).



It's Swift-o'clock in Canada!



Sewage spoils natural waterways



Thames Water

THAMES Water has failed to reduce its pollution incidents. In fact, in the first half of the year, its sewage was spilled into natural waterways even more times than before. One in four people in the UK rely on the firm for their water supply, but it's in £16 billion of debt and says it will need to raise people's bills next year to survive.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEEKLY QUIZ!

Test yourself on this week's news with our new quiz, included with every subscription. Play with your family, friends or by yourself. Read this week's issue to get all the answers right!



Ask a grown-up/bill-payer for your **WEB ID** to use the app.



SYRIA CELEBRATES FALL OF DICTATOR



A smashed photo of Assad

SYRIANS celebrated in the streets as its president Bashar al-Assad fled from a rebellion against his rule.

Assad was Syria's leader for 24 years, and his family had controlled the country for 53 years. However, since 2011, rebels have fought a war against his forces. Last week, the rebels took control of several of Syria's major cities, forcing Assad to jet out of the country.

He's now hiding out in Russia, a country that supported his government.

Prisoners freed

Assad ran Syria as a dictator (a person with total control over a country).

In 2011, he brutally crushed a peaceful protest against him. This sparked the civil war in which half a million have died, and millions

more have lost their homes.

Assad's troops have been accused of extreme violence, and human rights groups say that his opponents were tortured and killed in detention camps around the country.

Since he fled, a civil defence group called the White Helmets has been freeing people from these prisons.

Citizens have ripped down statues and billboards of Assad and his father, and Prime Minister Mohammed al-Jalali has agreed to hand over power to one Islamist group, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham.

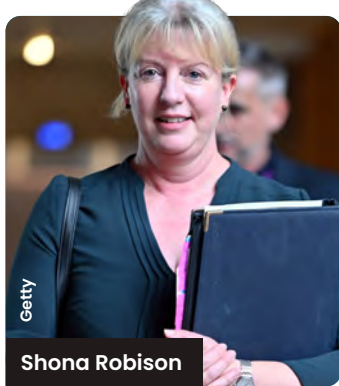
However, the rebel groups have different aims, so it remains to be seen exactly what the future has in store. Many of them have also been accused of human rights abuses.



"The Syrian people have suffered under Assad's barbaric regime for too long and we welcome his departure. Our focus is now on ensuring [that] peace and stability is restored."

– UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer

Scotland to drop child benefits cap



Shona Robison

SCOTLAND plans to drop a policy that prevents large families from receiving financial support for some of their children.

The two-child benefits cap was introduced across the UK by the Conservative Party in 2017. It means that struggling families can only apply to receive benefits (money from the government) to support their first and second children. They don't get any additional benefits if they have three children or more.

It saves the government around £3bn

per year, but can be damaging for large families who've fallen on hard times.

The new Labour government says it's keeping the two-child benefits cap in place. However, Scotland is allowed to set its own spending plans, and finance minister Shona Robison plans to scrap it by April 2026.

She said: "Let me be crystal clear – this government is to end [it], and in doing so will lift over 15,000 Scottish children out of poverty."

Critics have asked how she plans to pay for the change.

Sleeping at school?

A SCHOOL in Japan has set up sleeping pods for students to snooze in during the day!

These aren't big comfy beds, but boxes that, from the outside, look a bit like the fridge in your kitchen.

A report by ANN in Japan called them "stand and sleep boxes". Students step inside, then fold down some pads to lean on and have a quick nap, while being supported in a standing position!

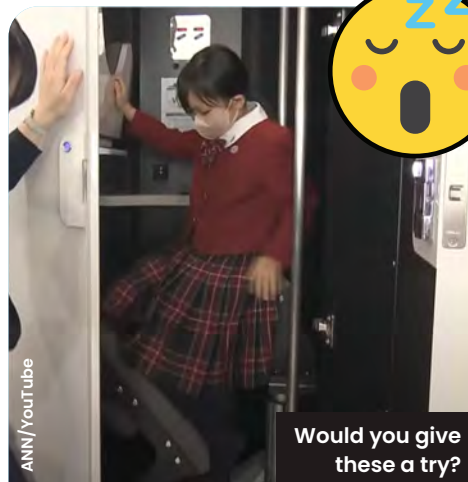
The school installed them as

part of its health curriculum, which is focusing on the importance of getting enough sleep.

However, critics say that they'd prefer sleeping the old-fashioned way, lying down, and that while some animals can sleep standing up, humans probably shouldn't.

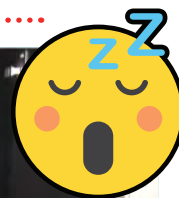
Would you like these in your school?

Vote at first.news/polls



ANN/YouTube

Would you give these a try?



THE EIGHT-YEAR PENGUIN PUZZLE!

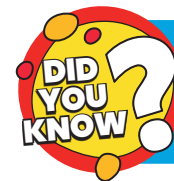
A WILDLIFE park in England has renamed its male king penguin, after spending eight years thinking he was female!

'Maggie' arrived at Birdland Park and Gardens in Gloucestershire from Denmark as a two-year-old.

The keepers there hoped that Maggie would one day lay an egg. She took a particular liking to another penguin named Frank, and the pair spent a lot of time together... but no egg came.

Finally, the park grew suspicious, so it sent one of Maggie's feathers off for a DNA test, which confirmed that the penguin was, in fact, male.

Now aged ten, he's been renamed Magnus – a Scandinavian name to celebrate his Danish past.



TELLING male and female penguins apart is tricky, but scientists say males tend to have slightly thicker beaks.



It's never too late!



A COUPLE with a combined age of 202 have entered the Guinness World Records as the world's oldest newlyweds!

Bernie Littman, aged 100, and Marjorie Fiterman, aged 102, got married at their care home in Philadelphia this year. The care home is also where they met and fell in love, supporting each other throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

Littman's granddaughter, Sarah Sicherman, told Guinness World Records: "They love each other's humour and intellect, they keep each other young."

Littman said the secret to a long life was staying up-to-date on world events – just another reason to keep reading *First News*!



Royal Society Publishing Photography Competition

Peter Hudson/Royal Society Publishing
Photography Competition 2024



THIS action shot is one of the winners of the Royal Society Publishing Photography Competition. The contest celebrates images that tell us more about scientific events that happen around us. *Secretary Bird Gullet* by Peter Hudson is the winner of the **Ecology and Environmental Science** category. It shows the falcon-like secretary bird catching a locust.



See the overall winner in the News In Pictures section of the *First News* app



José Manuel Martínez López/Royal Society
Publishing Photography Competition 2024

Tired Eyes by José Manuel Martínez López is the **Microimaging** category winner. It shows a bark scorpion from Mexico, as it looks under a fluorescent lens.



Abhijeet Bayani/Royal Society Publishing
Photography Competition 2024

The Piscean Mad-Eye Moody! by Abhijeet Bayani is the runner-up in the **Ecology and Environmental Science** category. Bayani and his students unearthed a live flatfish on a trip.



Mohamed Aboushelib/Royal Society
Publishing Photography Competition 2024

The Beauty Of Our Milky Way by Mohamed Aboushelib is the runner-up of the **Astronomy** category. The image of a galactic core of the Milky Way was taken from the Kottamia Astronomical Observatory in Egypt.



Vancouver, Canada



TAYLOR Swift's out-of-this-world Eras Tour has finally come to an end. The record-breaking tour included 152 dates across five continents.

Nantong, China



TREES wait for hugs after being wrapped up in cosy, colourful jumpers to combat the cold.

Yichang, China



PAINTED stones line the street. They include (clockwise from top left) a pair of whales, a fish, a cat and a dog.

All pictures: Getty



LONDONDERRY

School choir rocks out

Pupils from Ardnashee School and College in Derry got to record their version of punk rock classic *Teenage Kicks* – with the band who wrote it! The Undertones first released the song in 1978, and it's since become the unofficial anthem of local football club Derry City. The band had seen the choir performing the song online, so helped out with recording a new version when they all met at Derry City's stadium last week. "The joy and the enthusiasm that they had for it, kind of reminded me of the way we were whenever we were teenagers," Undertones bassist Mickey Bradley said.



Ardnashee School

Tommy and his sister Caitlin at last year's Santa Cruise



LONDONDERRY

Santas everywhere!

Tommy Wright, ten, is heading from Derry to London again to take part in the tenth anniversary Santa Cruise charity bike ride. It was Tommy's heart condition that inspired his dad to set the ride up, after Tommy nearly died when he was just six months old. Tommy, his sister Caitlin, dad Stephane and mum Karen are all taking part this year, alongside around 800 other BMX riders dressed as Santa! So far, the ride has raised over £180,000 for the Evelina Children's Heart Organisation (ECHO). To find out more about the ride or ECHO, see tinyurl.com/tenthsanta.

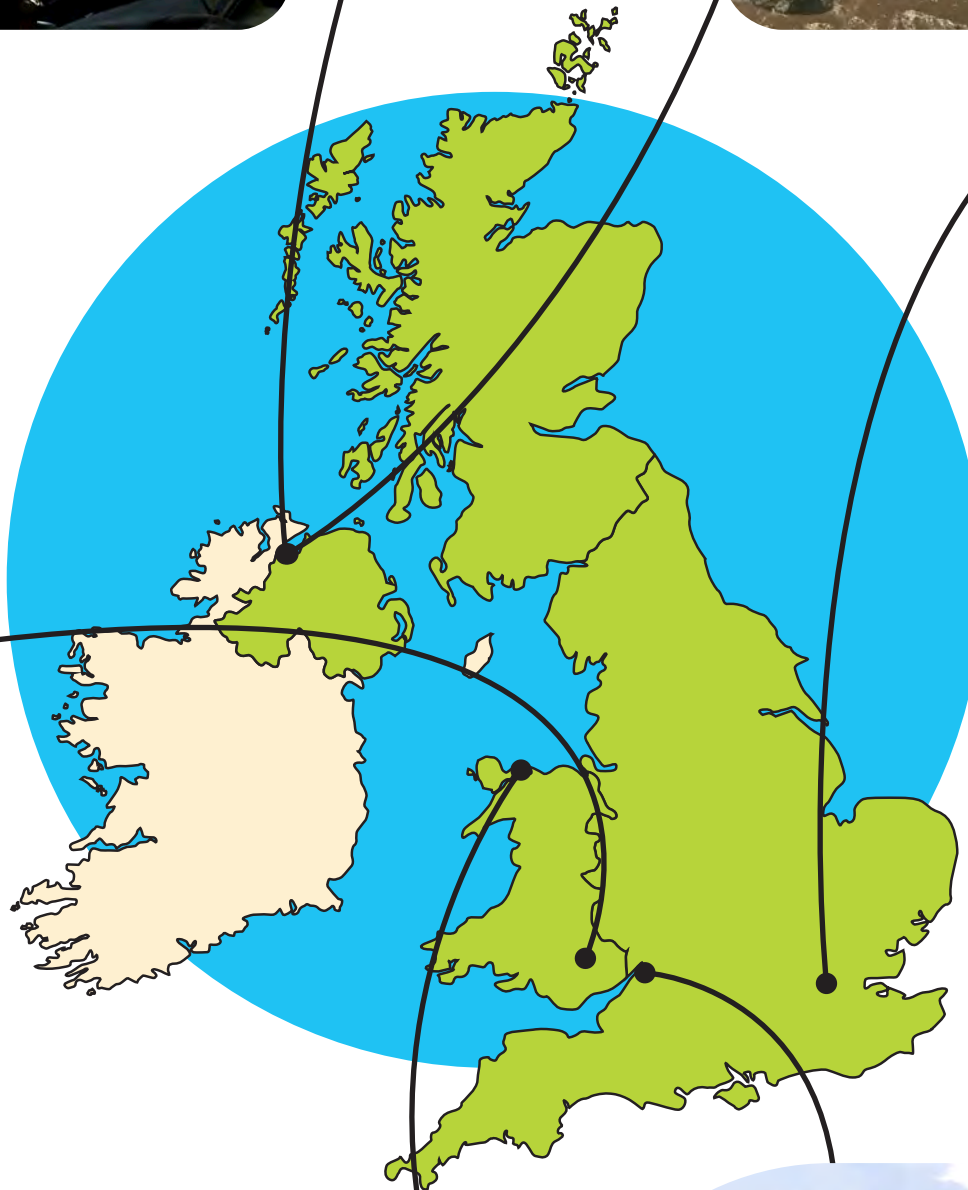


The hole is thought to be up to 12m (39ft) deep

MERTHYR TYDFIL

Sinkhole forces street to be evacuated

A huge sinkhole that opened up in a street in Pant has got bigger, and storms over the weekend meant that it wasn't safe for residents to return to their homes. More than 30 houses were evacuated after further cracks started appearing in walls and gardens across the road. It's thought that the collapse occurred when a landslide nearby caused by Storm Bert washed loads of earth and rocks into the culvert (a channel for water under a road) that runs below the street, damaging a concrete supporting arch.



LONDON

A Christmas poem

Three Year Six pupils from St Vincent's Catholic Primary School in Marylebone got the chance to read a new poem as the Christmas tree lights were switched on in Trafalgar Square. Aiden, Sebastian and Erietta read *A Baby and A Tree*, which was written by poet Valerie Bloom for the occasion. Every year, The Poetry Society asks a poet to come up with a new poem to celebrate the peace and friendship involved in bringing the tree to the UK. Norway sends a new spruce tree every year to thank the UK for its support during World War Two. Primary school teachers can get resources to go with the poem from The Poetry Society.



Macad Mann Photography

L-R: Valerie Bloom, Erietta, Sebastian and Aiden

CONWY

Minecraft goes Welsh

For the first time ever, kids in Wales can now play a Welsh-language version of *Minecraft Education*. Cadw, the organisation that looks after Wales' historic monuments, teamed up with Microsoft to launch the new Cadw Minecraft World. Castell Conwy (Conwy Castle) is the first location to be included, with another one added every month until 20 in total are available. Jack Sargeant, the Minister for Culture and Skills, said the game will "inspire children to explore their own history and culture, hopefully to research and build their own versions of these historical sites."



Cadw/Minecraft

The Cadw lobby in the game. Inset: Castell Conwy

CROMHALL

Fossil find

A former quarry in South Gloucestershire has turned up another surprise for scientists – a previously unknown species of reptile with strange teeth. Experts say the teeth and jaws of *Threoratoth chasmatos* make it stand out from other members of the extinct group known as procolophonids. Its flexible jaws and mammal-like teeth suggest that it had a different diet to its relatives, eating plants or insects that needed a lot of chewing. Dinosaur relatives and gliding reptiles have also been found at Cromhall Quarry in the past.



Mark Witton

How the creature could have looked when it was roaming the Earth 220–210 million years ago



THE SECRET LIVES OF ANIMALS?

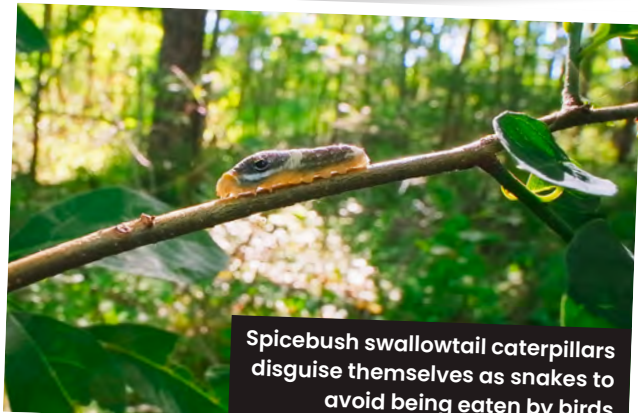
The Secret Lives of Animals is a new TV series that unveils fascinating discoveries from the animal kingdom across the globe.

The project spans 24 countries, features 77 unique species and nearly 3,000 hours of footage was taken.

The series documents several ground-breaking moments, so here are some fun facts about animals featured in the show.



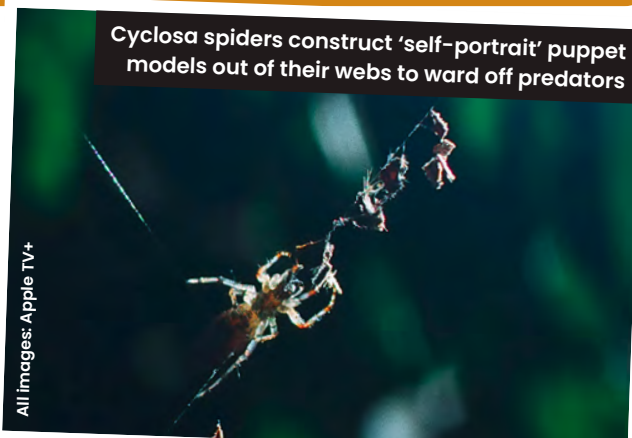
Capuchin monkeys poke each others' noses as a strange test of friendship and loyalty



Spicebush swallowtail caterpillars disguise themselves as snakes to avoid being eaten by birds



Young kangaroos practise fighting with each other to ensure they can protect themselves as adults



Cyclosa spiders construct 'self-portrait' puppet models out of their webs to ward off predators



Sun bears are the world's smallest bear species. They nest in trees over 100 feet (30m) high, away from predators on the ground



Frogs and tarantulas make unlikely friendships, living together in a cosy burrow

To discover more, check out *The Secret Lives Of Animals* on Apple TV+ from 18 December.



ANEESHWAR'S ANIMAL OF THE WEEK

MULTI-WORLD RECORD HOLDER!

ANEESHWAR Kunchala is a nine-year-old wildlife campaigner and officially the world's youngest newspaper columnist! He shot to fame as a finalist on *Britain's Got Talent*. Now, he's presenting the documentary *Save Our Wildlife* from Sky Kids and Sky Zero. You can watch it at first.news/climatecrisis.

Aneeshwar's Animal of the Week is the...

AFRICAN LION



HABITAT:

Grassland and open woodlands of sub-Saharan Africa.

FUN FACTS:

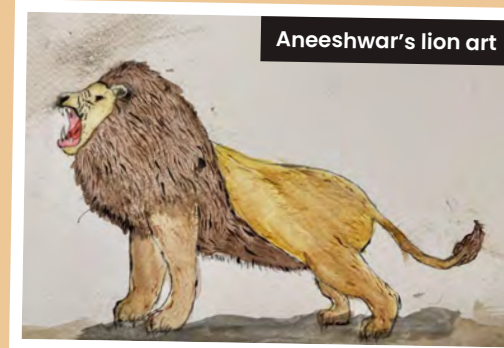
- A lion's roar is so loud that it can be heard from 8km (five miles) away!
- The canine teeth of lions are about 10cm long.

SPECIAL SUPERPOWER:

Lions are the only type of cat that lives in a group, called a pride. The males protect the territory as the females hunt.

CONSERVATION STATUS:

The International Union for Conservation of Nature says African lions are vulnerable.



Aneeshwar's lion art



US Fish and Wildlife Service

Oldest bird lays an egg

WISDOM, the world's oldest living bird, has laid an egg at the estimated age of 74, say scientists in the US.

The bird, a Laysan albatross, was seen by the US Fish and Wildlife Service at the Midway Atoll wildlife refuge in the Pacific Ocean taking care of the egg.

Members of this species typically only live for 12-40 years, but Wisdom was tagged by scientists in 1956, who estimate that she was around five at the time.

Males and females of the species mate for life, but Wisdom has outlived all three of her previous partners. Experts believe she's had more than 30 chicks so far.

We're asking you to send in photos of your own drawings or paintings of wildlife to add to an online gallery. Ask a parent, guardian or teacher to send in your photos by emailing them to yournews@firstnews.co.uk. You can view the gallery by asking a responsible adult to scan this QR code!





Paul Wilkinson Photography

WHY ARE YOU 'HANGRY'?

WHY do we get 'hangry'? How can we eat better to help the planet? And what can our poop tell us about our health?

Chris van Tulleken, an NHS Doctor and star of *Operation Ouch!* on CBBC, will answer all these questions and more when he gives the 2024 Christmas Lectures from the Royal Institution. Ahead of their release, we caught up with Dr Chris to find out the science behind our extraordinary bodies.

● **Hi Chris! In the Christmas Lectures, you'll be talking about being 'hangry' – hungry and angry. Why do we get 'hangry'?**

When you're hungry, you have less ability to deal with all the stresses and worries that we all have to deal with every day, whether it's a test at school or someone in your class annoying you. If you want to be functioning well with your friendships and school work and sport, you need to put together sleep and food in order to deal with all those other problems.

● **And do other animals get 'hangry' too?**

The lectures will involve live animals, some of which will be dangerous. I think it's fair to say there's a big difference between a well-fed dangerous animal, and a hungry dangerous animal!

But to get their food, most predators will have to fight for it. They're going to have to kill something with antlers or teeth or hooves, which is going to put up a fight. So that violent, 'hangry' rage is going to be really important for predators to get their dinner.

● **Ultra-processed foods (UPFs) are things we all eat. But what are they and how do we spot them?**

UPFs are foods that you wouldn't be able to recreate in your own kitchen. Many young people get 60, 70 or even 80% of their calories from UPFs, and that is a harmful diet. Foods containing ingredients you don't recognise from your kitchen are almost all ultra-processed.

Chris highlights a few of the many UPFs:

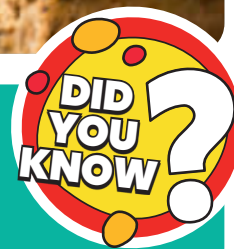
- Most ready meals
- Most breakfast cereals
- Most flavoured yoghurts
- Most ice cream
- All confectionery (chocolates and sweets)
- Crisps
- Fast food



It's all been made in very big factories, and it's not made to nourish you or to feed you. It's made to get your money for the owners of the companies, and that's okay; that's how lots of things in the world work. But we don't have enough warnings on the food, so it's very hard for young people to know what's good and what's bad. That is on the UK government to change things.

For example, anyone can go into the shop and can buy a can of cola, which is a mixture of sugar and phosphoric acid. It's got an addictive drug in it, and it will rot their teeth and will be harmful for their bones. But there's no warning on any can of cola, even saying it will rot your teeth. And guess what? Having rotten teeth extracted is the number one cause of children being admitted to hospital in the UK.

THE Christmas Lectures from the Royal Institution were first broadcast on the BBC in 1936, making them the first science show on UK national television.



● **Should more be taught about food in schools?**

You could teach the whole curriculum just using food! If you open a recipe book, it's just maths. All of your chemistry and your physics could be about food science. Your geography and history could all be food. There's actually a great charity called TasterEd which supports schools to teach a curriculum using food. But food is all human beings do, and our world is driven by it, so we need to be teaching it more.

The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures will be broadcast on BBC Four and iPlayer on 29, 30 and 31 December at 9pm.



First News reporter Charlie (left) met with Dr Chris!



IN next week's issue, Dr Chris tells us all about our wonderful digestive system, and why checking on our poop can save us!



Paul Wilkinson Photography

The lectures take place in front of a live audience



THE PENGUIN POST OFFICE

UKAHT - Jerome Viard



MEET the team living in Antarctica, who do the coolest jobs on Earth! These guys work for the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust (UKAHT) and live in a place called Port Lockroy. The team are in charge of managing the world's southernmost post office, gift shop and museum, as well as monitoring a colony of more than 1,000 gentoo penguins! We were lucky enough to catch up with some of the team to find out more about their amazing roles.

What skills do you need to become the wildlife monitor at Port Lockroy?

Maggie Coll, Wildlife Monitor: "An interest in conservation of animals, patience and being good with numbers." (Maggie has to count all the penguins, nests, eggs and chicks to be able to report on how successful the breeding cycle is!)

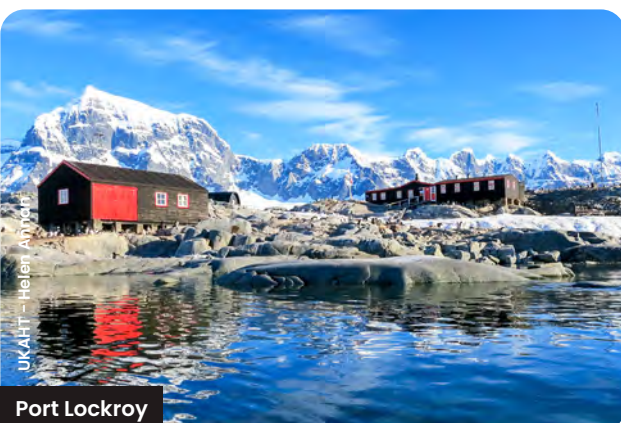


The team

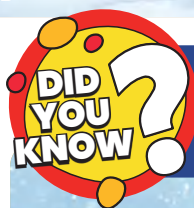


What do the daily jobs involve?

Aoife McKenna, Museum Manager: "Cooking, writing in the base diary, tidying the site, opening the museum and the shop, presenting to visitors on ships... and emptying the toilet!"



Port Lockroy



THERE is no running water where the team live on Goudier Island in Port Lockroy!



Do you name the penguins?

Dale Ellis, Shop Manager: "We don't usually... but we have our favourites! I always say good morning to the ones nesting under the flag here."

Why is it so important to monitor the penguins?

Maggie Coll, Wildlife Monitor: "If we monitor them over a number of years, we are able to see how happy they are in their environment." This also helps scientists to identify what effect things like climate change are having.



- The UKAHT has been surveying the gentoo colony at Port Lockroy since 1996. It has run every year except when the base closed during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020-21.
- Gentoo penguins are found on the Antarctic Peninsula, subantarctic islands, southern continental coasts and islands, and several South Atlantic islands.
- Gentoo penguins are the third largest penguin, after the emperor and king.
- Gentoo penguins are the world's fastest underwater birds. They can reach speeds up to 36km/h (22mph).
- Penguins have a fast metabolism (the body's chemical processes) and poo every 20 minutes. Jets of it can travel as far as 1.2m (3.9ft)!

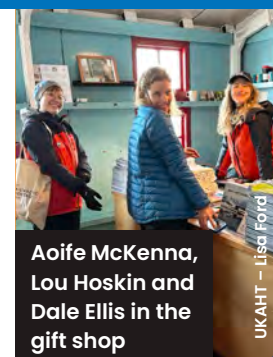
Do you have to wear lots of layers all the time, living in such a cold place?

Aoife McKenna, Museum Manager: "Yes. I wear three pairs of socks every day!"

How many cards does the post office send every year?

George Clarke, Postmaster:

"Many visitors to Port Lockroy send a postcard back home. Last season, around 70,000 postcards were sent from Port Lockroy's post office in Antarctica. We do get sent a few here too from people all over the world and we try to respond when possible."



Aoife McKenna, Lou Hoskin and Dale Ellis in the gift shop

UKAHT - Lisa Ford

Is it as remote as it sounds?

Lou Hoskin, Base Leader: "Actually no, we get to meet lots of new people every day when we welcome guests to the museum or when we go onto a ship to talk about the work of the charity [the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust], so we're never really lonely."

You can find out more about the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust at www.ukaht.org. It's the official charity partner for *Jonty Gentoo: The Adventures Of A Penguin* by Julia Donaldson, which is out now.



BEAR STEALS INFLATABLE GRINCH

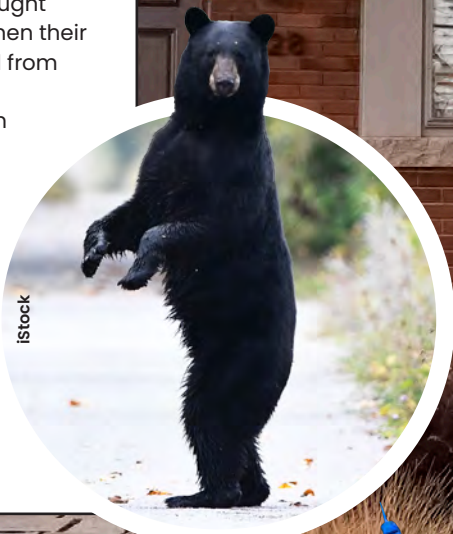
A FAMILY in Florida, USA, were shocked to discover a bear had stolen and destroyed their inflatable Grinch from their garden.

The Suarez family initially thought someone was playing a joke when their festive decoration disappeared from their front garden.

The mystery was solved when their security camera showed the unexpected thief, a bear, dragging the Grinch decoration into the woods.

The inflatable was later found but was too badly damaged to be used again.

Shanick Suarez found the incident amusing, saying she and her husband spent the morning watching the hilarious footage!



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The Bear Who Stole Grinchmas?!

Dorothy's expensive slippers



Getty

A PAIR of ruby red slippers from *The Wizard of Oz* have sold for \$28m (£22m) at an auction in the US.

The shoes were one of four surviving pairs worn by actor Judy Garland, who played Dorothy in the film.

Garland was only 16 years old when she starred in the musical, which was released in 1939.

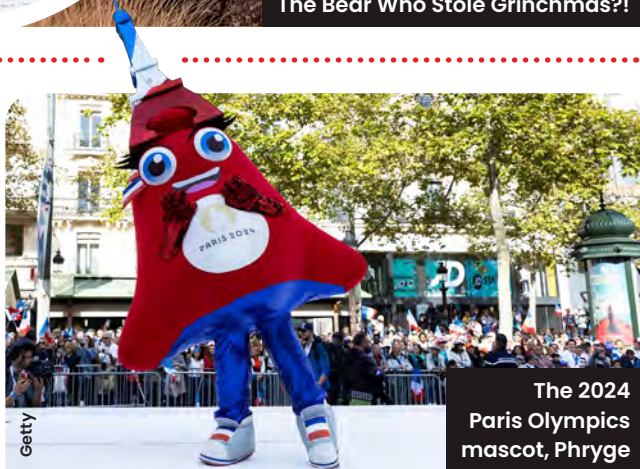
Heritage Auctions, which sold the iconic shoes, called them the "Holy Grail of Hollywood memorabilia" and said their price made them the most expensive movie item ever sold at an auction.

TRICKIEST WORDS OF 2024

LANGUAGE experts have released a list of the most commonly mispronounced words of 2024, helping people avoid embarrassing pronunciation mistakes.

From popular culture to science, many words caught people out this year!

The list includes actor Barry Keoghan's surname



Getty

The 2024 Paris Olympics mascot, Phryge

(pronounced key-OH-jin), pop star Sabrina Carpenter's hit song *Espresso* (pronounced es-PRESS-oh), and the Paris Olympics mascot Phryge (pronounced FREE-je).

The list was put together by language learning company Babbel to help people say tricky words correctly.



Why did the scarecrow get a promotion?
Because he was outstanding in his field!

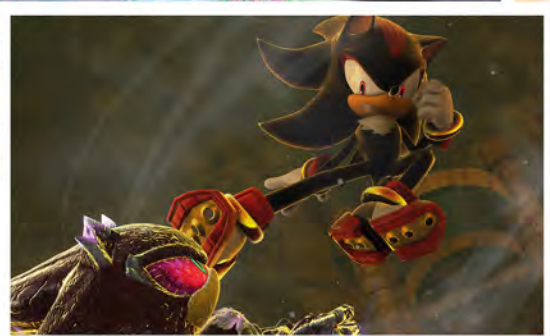
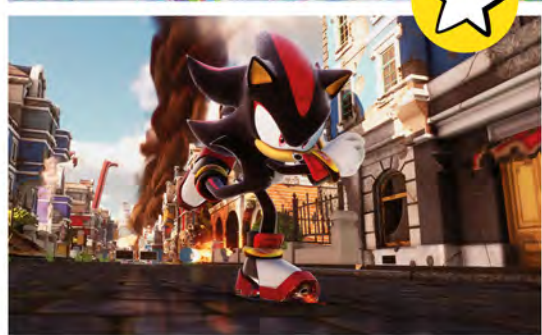


Written and illustrated by Paul Palmer





OUT NOW!



SONIC X SHADOW GENERATIONS introduces a brand-new Shadow story campaign where his old nemesis, **Black Doom**, returns and threatens to take over the world.

Fans can play as Shadow and dive into his dark past to unlock his inner powers, explore his backstory, and confront familiar foes to save the world and prove why he's known as the Ultimate Life Form.

THAT'S NOT ALL!

SONIC X SHADOW GENERATIONS also includes a full remaster of the original *Sonic Generations*, which combined nostalgia from the iconic 2D era of Sonic with the blistering excitement of modern 3D Sonic gameplay.

The story centres around Sonic and friends as their universe is thrown into chaos when a new threat appears, taking them on a journey through time and dimensions. Players can experience this adventure again with upgraded visuals, new challenges and more bonus content!

The SONIC X SHADOW GENERATIONS: Sonic the Hedgehog 3 Movie Pack is included in the game's Digital Deluxe edition.

Since 12 December, all **SONIC X SHADOW GENERATIONS** Digital Deluxe owners can take on a new look as Shadow and play through a unique level inspired by the new movie, *Sonic the Hedgehog 3*, featuring the voice of Keanu Reeves!



This QR code should be scanned by a responsible adult.

Visit sonicxshadowgenerations.com

 **SPAIN**

Pooping Trump statues are a Christmas cracker!

Spanish families are adding a rather rude decoration to their Christmas displays this year – a pooping Donald Trump! The clay figure is called a caganer, which means ‘fertiliser’. Believe it or not, pooping caganers have been a traditional feature of nativity scenes in the Catalunya region since the 18th century. The fun figures are hidden among other shepherd statues and are said to bring good luck and harvests. In 2005, Barcelona’s city council planned to put up a nativity scene without including a caganer, which angered locals. One letter to the local paper said: “A nativity scene without a caganer is not a nativity scene.” Today, you can buy caganers in the form of all sorts of celebs and famous faces.



 **ICELAND**

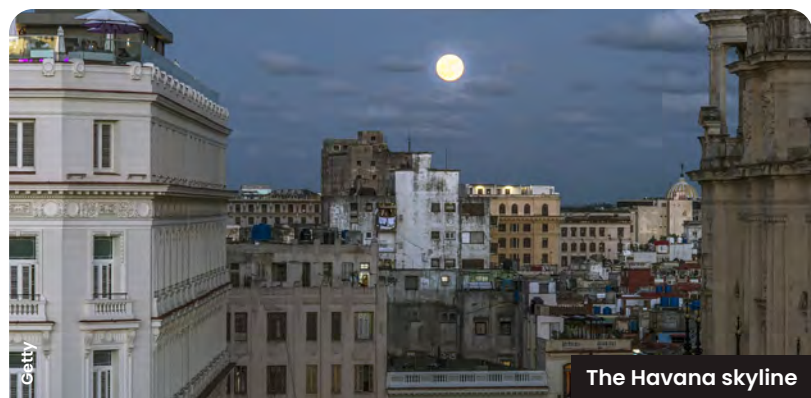


Whale hunting gets go-ahead

Iceland has decided to allow whale hunting for the next five years. The permits allow for the hunting of 209 fin whales and 217 minke whales each year until 2029. Iceland is one of just three countries, alongside Norway and Japan, that still allow whales to be hunted for their meat, blubber and oil. The whaling season runs from June to September, but in 2023, hunting was stopped for two months because the methods used for hunting broke animal welfare rules. The country’s environment association says these new permits go against “the interests of the climate, of nature and of the wellbeing of animals”.

 **CUBA**

Cuba plunged into darkness by blackout



Millions across Cuba woke up to no power last week after the country’s largest power plant failed, causing its electrical system to collapse. Witnesses say the skyline in the capital, Havana, was plunged into almost total darkness, aside from a handful of hotels and government buildings.

Cuba burns oil – a fossil fuel – to generate its energy, but deliveries of oil from countries like Mexico, Venezuela and Russia have dipped recently. The island is home to 11 million people. It also had blackouts in October and November, after being hit by two hurricanes.

 **IVORY COAST**

Trademark food awarded special cultural status

A beloved food from the Ivory Coast has been added to a UNESCO list of things around the world that are a key part of a country’s culture. Attiéké, which is pronounced ‘atchekay’, is nicknamed ‘Ivorian couscous’ and is made from the ground roots of the cassava plant. It’s a staple of many after-school dinners, but it’s also eaten at breakfast and lunchtime. Ivory Coast’s UNESCO delegate, Ramata Bakayoko-Ly, said that attiéké “is a pillar of the identity... of the whole of Ivory Coast”. It’s so special to the country that it’s against certain rules for foreign nations to ground cassava and call it attiéké.



 **NAMIBIA**



First female president elected

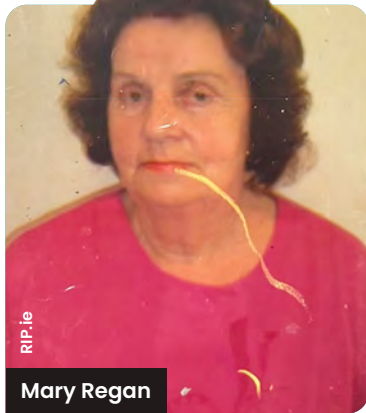
Namibia is set for its first female leader after Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah was announced as the winner of the presidential election. She has held the country’s vice-presidency since February, and is a member of the Swapo party, which has been in power ever since Namibia declared independence from South Africa in 1990. Upon her victory, she said: “The Namibian nation has voted for peace and stability.” Official results say that Nandi-Ndaitwah won 57% of the vote. However, rival parties have complained about the voting period being extended due to a shortage of ballot papers, and say they’ll challenge the result.



 **IRELAND**

Hundreds gather at funeral of woman with no family

Mary Regan, an 89-year-old living in County Carlow, had no living family and hardly ever any visitors to her nursing home, so when she died on 29 November, it was unclear who would come to her funeral. But Rory Healy, her funeral director, didn't want her to be "sent off alone", so he posted an appeal for mourners on Facebook. He was "bowled over" as a huge crowd of 300 kind-hearted strangers showed up to celebrate her life, including a class from the local primary school. Mr Healy called it "a great sense of humanity".



RIP.ie
Mary Regan

 **JAPAN**

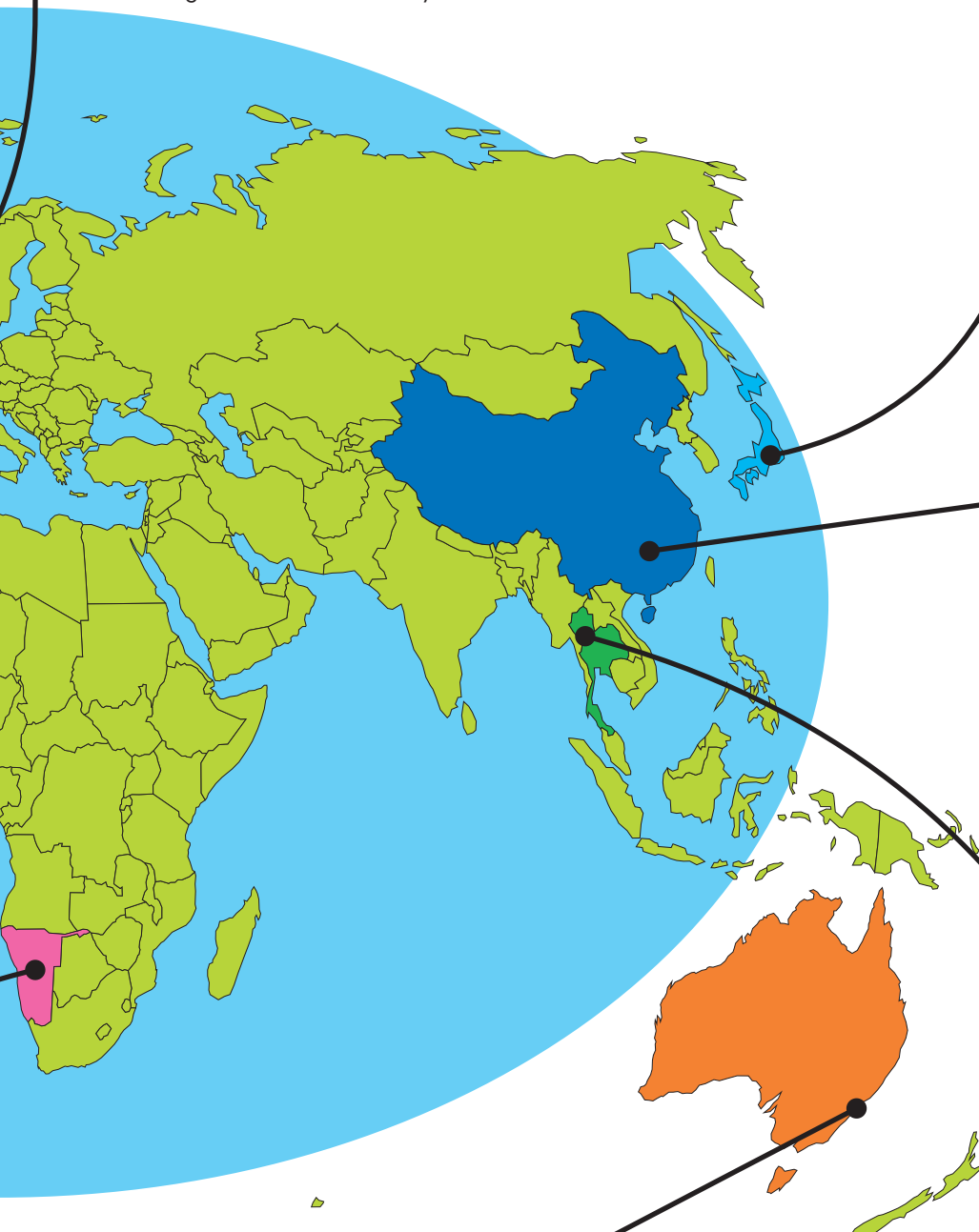


Getty
The sword from the film. Replicas were sold for 30,000 yen, which is about £160

Harry Potter swords break the law

Over 350 replica swords from the Harry Potter books and films have been seized by police, because they're so sharp that they break Japan's weapons laws. The swords, which are mounted on wood and sold to fans at the Warner Bros Studio Tour Tokyo, are full-sized replicas of the sword of Godric Gryffindor. In the stories, the sword presents itself to true

Gryffindors in times of need. Harry first uses it in his battle with the basilisk in *A Chamber of Secrets*, then to destroy Lord Voldemort's horcruxes. Warner Bros Studios is offering owners a refund. It's illegal to carry knives longer than six centimetres in Japan, and offenders can be jailed for two years.



 **CHINA**

China strikes gold!

China has announced that it's found the world's largest-known deposit of gold at the Wangu goldfield. A deposit of gold is gold that's hidden in the Earth's crust. The Geological Bureau of Hunan says that the deposit lies a mile underground, and could contain as much as 1,000 tonnes of the metal. If that's true, then the discovery would be worth over £63 billion!



DID YOU KNOW? CHINA is the world's largest producer of gold, followed by Russia, Australia, Canada and the USA.

 **AUSTRALIA**

Brit breaks record for coast-to-coast crossing of Australia

A 28-year-old from Berkshire has become the fastest Brit to run the full width of Australia. Jack Pitcher plodded 4,320 kilometres (2,684 miles) from Perth, on the west coast, all the way to Sydney, on the east coast, in 61 days (just under nine weeks). He wanted to do it inside 60 days, but had to take a break because he began hallucinating and became dizzy as he approached Sydney. "I'm over the moon... I'm incredibly proud of what I've done," he told BBC Radio Berkshire. It's a huge achievement, indeed – although in 2022, Australian runner Nedd Brockmann somehow did it in just 46 and a half days!



Getty
Pitcher finished at Sydney's famous Bondi Beach

 **THAILAND**

Man trapped in well mistaken for a ghost

A Chinese man was left trapped at the bottom of a well in a forest for three days, because passing villagers thought his calls for help were the cries of a ghost. They were so spooked that they stopped going out at night, Thai newspaper *Universal Daily News* says. Liu Chuanyi, 22, had fallen in after searching for a way out of the forest. He was finally found when police in Mae Sot went looking for the source of the sounds. He had survived without any food and water, but needed hospital treatment for bumps, bruises and a broken wrist.



Getty
A forest in Mae Sot

CHRISTMAS WITHOUT MY DAD

FOR many of us, one of the best parts of Christmas is getting to spend more time with family. Lots of people have certain traditions that are unique to them. But what happens when someone in your family passes away and you have to spend Christmas without them? That's what Daisy has had to experience. This Christmas will be the third without her dad. *FYI* presenter Maya chats to her all about it.



Daisy

LOSING MY DAD

Maya: So, Daisy, tell me about your Christmases growing up.

Daisy: Christmas has always been a special time of year for me – celebrating with the family, the songs, the movies. It just makes me feel happy.

Maya: But then a couple of years ago, everything changed?

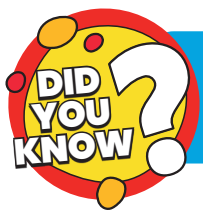
Daisy: Yeah. So my dad died in August 2022 and obviously that left me and my family in shock. It was so hard because he was such a big part of our lives. All I could think about was the last time I saw him. From seeing him every day to not seeing him at all, I just couldn't believe I was never going to see him again, or hear him laugh.



Daisy and her sister with their dad

Maya: Losing your dad aged 12 or even younger is quite a hard thing to deal with. How is it for you?

Daisy: Well, it's definitely a rollercoaster, I'll tell you that. I get random moments when I suddenly think about him and I have a wave of shock again. It feels like I've gone back to the first time when I lost him. And sometimes I don't want to cry, especially at Christmas. I want to feel happiness at Christmas.



ONE in 20 children will lose a parent before the age of 18. That's at least one in every classroom.

CHRISTMAS WITHOUT HIM

Maya: What was your first Christmas without your dad like?

Daisy: It was four months after he died, so it was still quite raw and fresh. I was still processing it and in shock. Christmas is even harder now and I get more emotional because it's another Christmas without him.

Daisy chats to Maya in this week's episode of *FYI*

Maya: And obviously Christmas-time is quite centred around the idea of family – it's in films and on the TV. Does that make it harder for you?

Daisy: Definitely. Watching movies it's really hard, because they are often based on traditional families.

Maya: So how has Christmas changed since your dad passed away?

Daisy: There are different things we started doing to keep his memory alive. One of the things we do is make his roast potatoes, because he made them in a very specific way. Another new thing we do is we light a candle on Christmas Eve and we say a few words over it. We also put up my dad's favourite decoration of a snowman. And I got given a decoration of a turntable [a record player], because my dad liked DJing, so we also put that on the tree every year. I have a bear that I got for the first Christmas without my dad. It's made out of his clothes and it came with the perfume that he used to wear. We spray it on because it smells like him and it feels comforting because every time I go to hug the bear, it's like I'm hugging him.

“ Sometimes I don't want to cry, especially at Christmas. I want to feel happiness at Christmas. ”

– Daisy

HELPING OTHERS

Maya: So, Daisy, you've actually started to help other people in similar situations to you, haven't you?

Daisy: Yeah. So I'm actually a youth ambassador for a charity called Winston's Wish. I've been on podcasts and on social media. It's to get the message across to younger children [who have been through similar situations] and to help them. If they've lost a parent, for example, and they're struggling, maybe they don't have someone to talk to.

Maya: And how does it feel to help other people through their great journeys?

Daisy: It feels amazing. Maybe a little kid behind the screen is watching and thinking: "It's really helped me in my grief journey". It just feels like you've done something good, I guess.

Maya: And what do you think your dad would say about the work that you're doing?

Daisy: I think he'd be really proud at the end of the day. At least I'm making something good out of it. So I definitely think he'd be proud of me.

GET HELP

If you're struggling with the loss of a parent this Christmas, you can get support from Winston's Wish. Just head to tinyurl.com/winstonswish to find out more.



FEATURE ON THE SHOW!

Want to be in an episode of *FYI*? Just ask your teacher to set up a **First News FYI News Club** at your school by heading to first.news/FYInewsclub to find out more.



FYI is a weekly news show from Sky Kids that helps you stay up to date with what's going on in the world. You can watch loads of cool videos from them by heading to first.news/fyi or on the *First News* app.

“DON'T WORRY ABOUT WORLD WAR THREE”

SAYS EXPERT

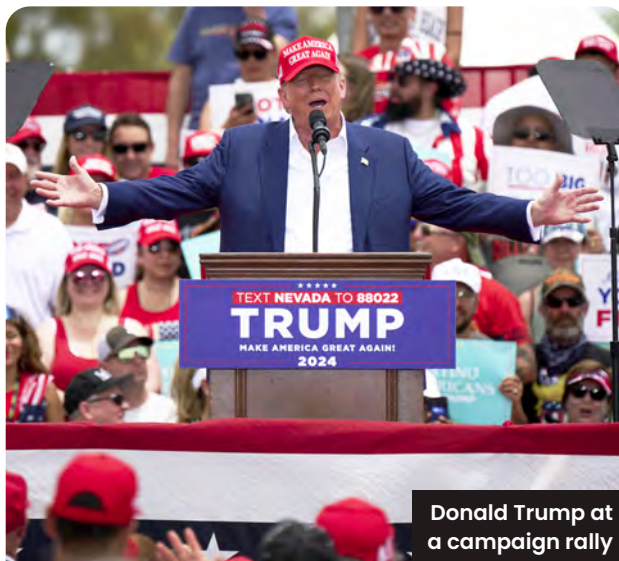


Sky News' Sean Bell

AS we see out the year with the Ukraine–Russia war still ongoing, young people quiz Sky News' military expert, Sean Bell, on whether World War Three really is likely. Here's what he had to say.

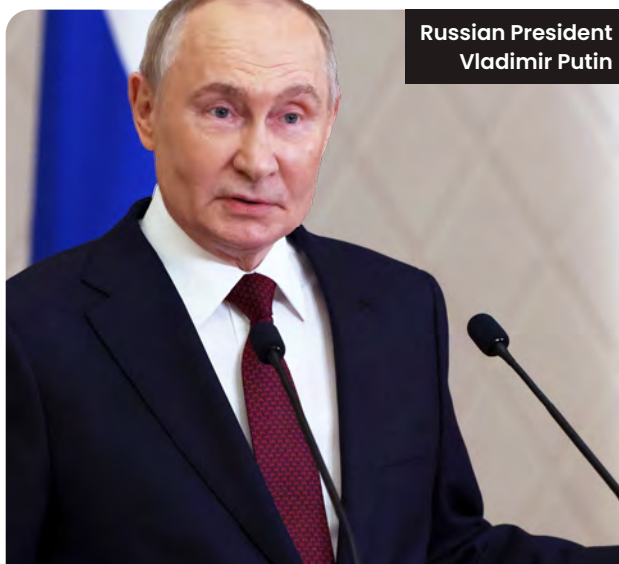
Xavier: The UK and the USA have allowed Ukraine to fire their long-range missiles over the border into Russia, but does that now mean that the UK will have to enter the war?

Sean: There's a lot of confusion on the use of weapons in this conflict. You have to remember that it's Russia that invaded Ukraine. Russia's been attacking Ukraine's energy infrastructure [power stations, etc], its logistics hubs [warehouses, etc], its railway stations, its airfields, using long-range weapons. Now, Ukraine has struggled to defend itself, so the West – the UK and the USA particularly – have been providing a lot of weapons to Ukraine to help them. But, for all sorts of reasons, we were reluctant to let Ukraine use those weapons against Russian territory. That restriction has now been lifted because, if you don't do that, Ukraine is trying to fight Russia with one arm tied behind its back.



Donald Trump at a campaign rally

means negotiating [making a deal], and that almost certainly means that Ukraine would have to give up territory. That's the downside. The positive side is that it will potentially bring the war to an end.



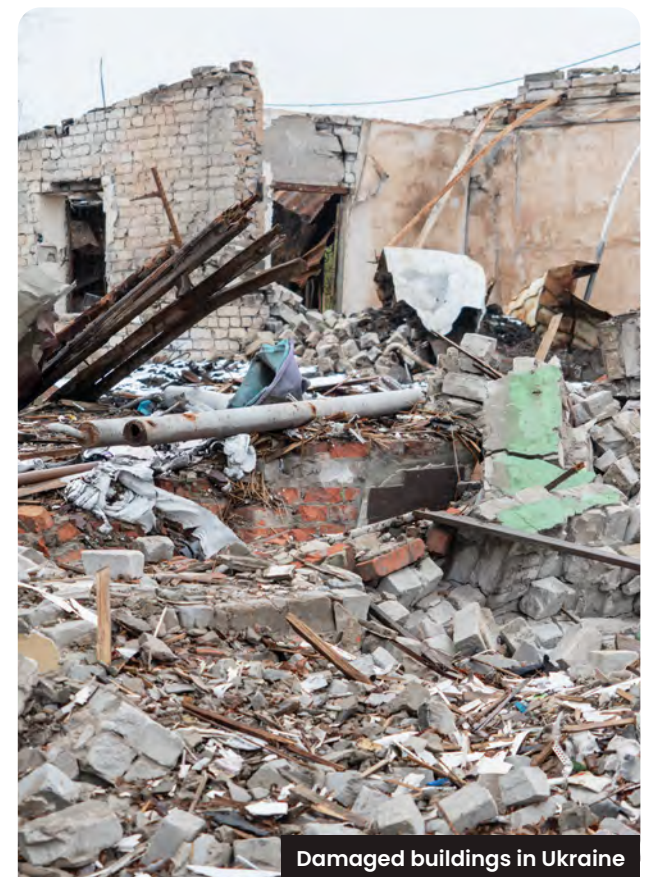
Russian President Vladimir Putin

Rosie: How likely is it that there will be a World War Three?

Sean: This is a question I get asked all the time and the short answer is we're not on the verge of World War Three. I served in the military 35 years ago and we worried about the former Soviet Union – which is now Russia – but actually Russia has struggled against Ukraine. It's lost a load of tanks and fighter jets, and frankly it's had a real mauling [a serious beating] at the hands of Ukraine. Therefore, it's very, very unlikely that Russia will be in any fit state to attack anybody else any time soon.

Leo: President Putin has warned that Russia could use nuclear weapons – do you think this will actually happen?

Sean: This is an incredibly topical question and it worries everybody, not just children. The short answer is we're not about to have a nuclear confrontation. Nuclear weapons are incredibly powerful. They've been around for decades now and they're the ultimate deterrent [something to discourage someone from doing something] to stop anyone attacking you. There is no way Russia ever wants to start a nuclear war because there are no winners. I can reassure you we're not on the brink of nuclear war.



Damaged buildings in Ukraine



British Prime Minister Keir Starmer meets with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky

Max: Is Donald Trump really going to stop the Ukraine–Russia war in 24 hours?

Sean: Former President Trump has now been re-elected in America. He'll take charge from 20 January 2025 and he's made lots of fairly wild claims about a lot of things, including ending the war in Ukraine within 24 hours. What's fascinating is the different approach he's seeking to take. Current president Joe Biden's approach has been that he doesn't want Ukraine to lose the war. What that means is supporting Ukraine for as long as the war takes. When President Trump takes over, his approach will be very different. He wants to bring the war to an end, which

ARE YOU WORRIED?

If you have any concerns about events happening in the world, it's important to speak to a trusted adult, such as a parent or teacher. Always look out for reliable news sources too, like *First News*, to avoid reading misinformation or fake news.

Alternatively, help and support is always available at Childline on **0800 11 11** or www.childline.org.uk.



A VERY CURIOUS CHRISTMAS!

TV presenter Maddie Moate is taking to the West End stage throughout the holidays for her new show, *Maddie Moate's Very Curious Christmas*. To celebrate, we quizzed the tech expert and general know-it-all on some very curious questions we had about Christmas.

● **First up Maddie, we've got to know... why do Brussels sprouts make you fart?**

Brussels sprouts are pretty tough to digest because they contain a type of sugar called raffinose. Raffinose can't be broken down by the special digestive juices you find in your stomach and small intestine, so it travels all the way to your large intestine and colon, aka the fart factory! Your large intestine and colon are full of friendly bacteria that are pretty good at breaking down anything that the digestive juices can't. But when they do this, the busy bacteria make a lot of farty gas in the process! Some of these gases don't smell bad at all, but others STINK.

● **On the subject of noisy things, just how do crackers go bang?**

If you carefully open a cracker, you will find a cracker snap inside. It's made of two long, thin strips of card that are attached end to end with a slight overlap. Beneath the overlap are two materials. A tiny patch of explosive chemical called silver fulminate and a piece of rough material that feels like sandpaper. When the cracker is pulled from both ends, the two materials are forced to slide over each other, which generates a force called friction. This friction produces a small amount of heat, enough to make the explosive chemical explode and go BANG!

● **And why are Christmas trees, mistletoe and holly all green?**

Christmas trees, mistletoe and holly stay green all winter because they are evergreen plants. That means they keep their leaves all year long, even when it's cold. Unlike other trees that lose their leaves in the autumn, evergreen plants have leaves that are thick and waxy, which helps them hold on to water and not freeze in the cold weather.

● **Why do Christmas lights always break?**

Often, a string of Christmas lights is made up of lots of light bulbs connected one after the other on a loop of wire we call a circuit. For them to light up, electricity has to flow all the way around the loop to reach every bulb. However, in this kind of circuit, if one bulb breaks, it creates a gap in the loop, which stops the flow of electricity and prevents any of the bulbs from working (even if they're not broken!). The only way to fix the lights is to test every single light to find the broken bulb and replace it. This will close the gap and complete the circuit, and electricity will be able to flow once again.

● **What's the most unusual Yuletide question you've ever been asked?**

I was once asked: "Does Santa's sleigh have a seatbelt?" Turns out, it's a tricky question to answer because he's a tough guy to get hold of. I think he probably does have some kind of belt or a lap bar, though. A bit like a ride at a theme park!

● **What's the most amazing experiment you do in your Christmas show?**

We make instant snow, which involves a small cup of white powder quickly growing to become 100 times bigger!

Maddie Moate's Very Curious Christmas is on at the Apollo Theatre in London from now until Saturday 4 January.



FIVE
MINUTES
WITH...

GERARD
BUTLER

SCOTTISH actor Gerard Butler is the voice of St Nick in the new animated musical *The Night Before Christmas In Wonderland*. Here's what viewers can look forward to.

● **Hi Gerard! What drew you to the role of St Nick?**

Ever since I was a kid, I was so in awe of Santa, and he never let me down. I thought I had to do him a solid one day and play him, to remind people how awesome he is. When I saw the script, there was something about it: the rhyming couplets, this idea of two fairy tales colliding with each other. Also, the music was fantastic, and director Peter Baynton's style of animation is just mesmerising.

● **How does St Nick differ from the typical Santa?**

I think this is updated and slightly funky. Often Santas are a little too perfect. But we go into a lot of colour. Here, we have a Santa who's very aware of who Santa is. He loves to sing and show off and feels like a bit of a rock star. He's also not the most perfect Santa. He gets a lot of things wrong and leaves a trail of destruction wherever he goes. But there's a zest for life, and everything's an adventure to him.

● **Lastly, if St Nick had to decide between fighting a giant white rabbit or a hundred tiny Queens of Hearts, which do you think he'd choose?**

I think he'd rather fight the giant-sized white rabbit, because the white rabbit's a good dude. I don't think the white rabbit would do much damage. But still, a hundred little angry Queens of Hearts, you don't want to mess with them!

The Night Before Christmas In Wonderland is available to watch on Sky Cinema now.



● **Celebs versus Gladiators!**

The BBC is kicking off the new year in style with a one-off celebrity edition of *Gladiators*. The famous stars set to tackle the course are comedian Rob Beckett, *The Masked Singer* host Joel Dommett, comedian and actor Ellie Taylor and presenter Louise Minchin. You can see how the gang get on over on BBC One and iPlayer on Wednesday 1 January at 6pm. Series two of the popular show will also be airing next year.





SONIC'S GREATEST HITS



IT'S the most wonderful time of the year for Sonic fans!

Sonic X Shadow Generations is SEGA's newest addition to the Blue Blur's game series. It acts almost as Sonic's greatest hits, revamping 2011's *Sonic Generations* and incorporating the best bits from other past games. There's also a brand-new story that features Shadow, Sonic's mysterious rival. Let's take a look at both of the stories a little closer...

Sonic Generations

All is well – it's Sonic's birthday and the party is in full flow. That is until the Time Eater appears and scatters all of Sonic's friends across space and time. And we're off!

The story of *Sonic Generations* is split over three sections, with the aim of collecting boss keys to fight the section's boss and unlock the next part of the game. One of the best aspects of *Sonic X Shadow Generations* is that it's divided between both 2D and 3D gameplay, meaning the experience is constantly changing and evolving. Everyone loves classic Sonic, but modern Sonic's 3D play will take your breath away. You can follow Sonic as he fills up his boost gauge and zooms through levels. The boost gauge can be filled by collecting rings and performing special combos, which you're taught on your journey.

Each playable act is accessible through the White Space, the hub world of the game, which allows you to speak to friends to pick up some extra tips and tricks.

Also, hidden in each act are Chao, the cute creatures who were also taken by the Time Eater at the beginning. There are 54 to rescue and they make an adorable addition to your collection room.

Shadow Generations

If that wasn't enough for you, there's a whole other game to get stuck into! It's Shadow's first game since 2005's *Shadow the Hedgehog*, and comes at a fitting time ahead of the *Sonic the Hedgehog 3* movie (out in UK cinemas on 21 December), which Shadow plays a big part in.

Playing as Shadow, we get to learn more about the anti-hero's troubled past as he confronts his nemesis, Black Doom.

Along the journey we discover some of the immense powers that he has. Although he can't spin like Sonic, he has arguably an even cooler skill called Chaos Control – the ability to slow down time for five seconds – which becomes vital in harder acts as the game develops.

Then there are the Doom Powers. Unlockable as you complete challenges, they include Doom Surf, where you can travel over water!

In *Shadow Generations*, Chao are replaced by keys which, if found, can be used to open boxes in a huge hub world similar to Sonic's White Space. A whole host of other puzzles and challenges in this space make the game feel endless, in a good way!

One of our favourite features of both games is that the plot takes place at the same time and

occasionally overlaps, bridging the gaps and making *Sonic X Shadow Generations* feel like one big adventure rather than two separate games.

A quick shout for the incredible design and graphics too, as well as the amazing sound. You can swap your favourite tracks around, making the experience feel more personalised.

Overall, *Sonic X Shadow Generations* is a game for everyone, whether you're a hardcore Sonic fan or have never played the franchise before. We love it!

Sonic X Shadow Generations is available now on Nintendo Switch, PlayStation, Xbox and PC



Zoom through colourful worlds with both classic and modern Sonic!



Shadow confronts painful memories in his dark and dramatic world

WIN! SONIC GOODIES!

TO celebrate the upcoming *Sonic the Hedgehog 3* movie and the release of the new *Sonic X Shadow Generations* videogame, we're giving away a bundle of Sonic-themed goodies!

Sonic X Shadow Generations introduces a brand-new Shadow story campaign where his old nemesis, Black Doom, returns and threatens to take over the world. Fans can play as Shadow and dive into his dark past to unlock his inner powers, explore his backstory and confront familiar foes to save the world and prove why he's known as the Ultimate Life Form!

We're giving away a Shadow & Sonic the Hedgehog plush toy, LEGO® Sonic's Green Hill Zone Loop Challenge and a copy of the game *Sonic X Shadow Generations* for the PlayStation 4/5.

All you have to do to win this fantastic prize is answer this question:

What is the name of Sonic's friend who was once his rival?
a) Kneedles b) Knuckles
c) Knittles

ENTER NOW!
MARK YOUR ENTRY
SONIC

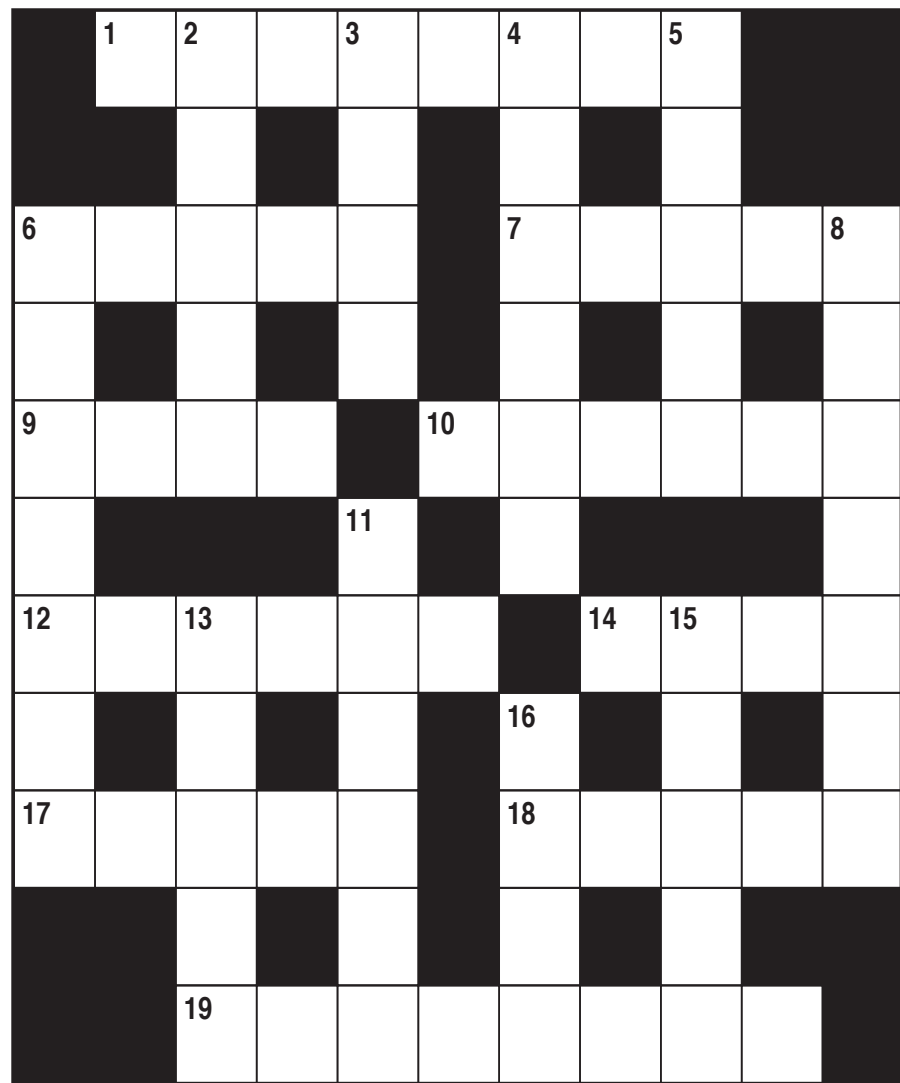
first.news/comps or see page 20.
The closing date is 27 December.





CROSSWORD

CAN you solve our crossword puzzle using the clues below?



ACROSS

- 1 Precise (8)
- 6 A large waterbird (5)
- 7 An object in general (5)
- 9 Traditional English flower (4)
- 10 Warmer (6)
- 12 Response to a question (6)
- 14 Wild mammal of the dog family (4)
- 17 A type of boat (5)
- 18 Group of lines in a poem (5)
- 19 Shock (8)

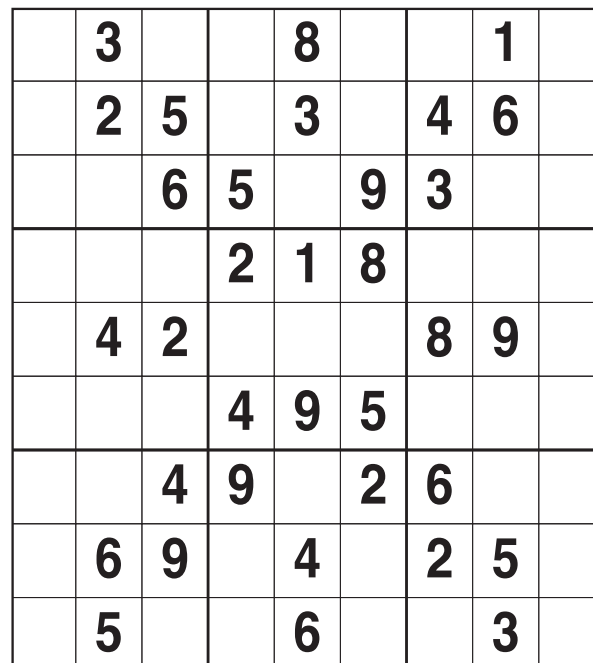
DOWN

- 2 Large black birds (5)
- 3 Second-hand (4)
- 4 Something that you do (6)
- 5 Live; be real (5)
- 6 Berlin is its capital (7)
- 8 Animal with a very long neck (7)
- 11 Note or written document (6)
- 13 You put these on your feet before shoes (5)
- 15 Large mythical creatures like Shrek (5)
- 16 Opposite of under (4)



Sudoku

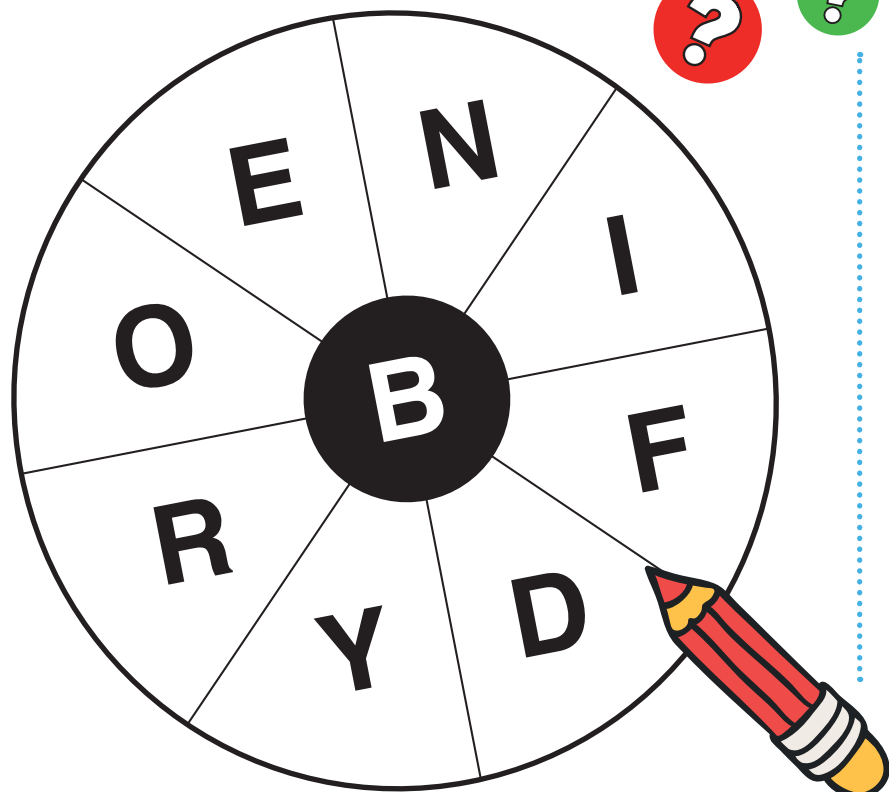
CAN you complete our sudoku puzzle, filling in the numbers one to nine?



COMPETITIONS: To enter, email us at win@firstnews.co.uk putting 'competition name' (e.g. Holiday), in the subject box or visit firstnews.comps. *First News* competitions are only open to those aged 15 and under and residents of the UK & Republic of Ireland, except employees of *First News*, First Group Enterprises Ltd, Reach plc and any associated companies and their families. Winners will be selected at random from all those with the correct answer. No purchase necessary. *First News* will not enter into any correspondence. All winners will be notified accordingly. If you are a winner, your details will be securely passed on to the person who is providing the prize so they can post it out to you. If you are contacted but don't reply within 28 days, we may offer the prize to another entrant. No cash alternative for any prizes will be offered. The winner may be required to partake in media activity relating to the competition. Your personal data will be held for a maximum of 12 months after the competition and then destroyed. It will not be used for any other purpose unless you have given us permission. If you would like your data deleted before this, please do get in touch with us. You have the right to complain to the ICO if you believe there is a problem with the way your data has been handled.

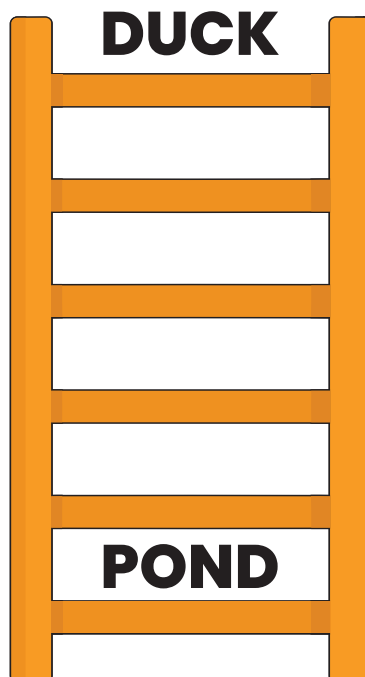
Word wheel

SEE how many words of three or more letters you can make, using the middle letter in each one. And can you find the word that uses all the letters?



Word ladder

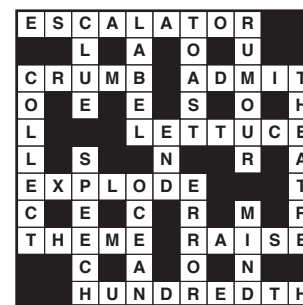
SEE if you can get from the top of the ladder to the bottom by changing one letter at a time to make a new word.



ISSUE 964 ANSWERS:

Word wheel: endurance.

Word ladder: your, sour, soar, sear, tear, team.



8	5	7	3	6	2	1	4	9
6	3	1	4	5	9	8	2	7
9	4	2	8	1	7	5	6	3
2	1	9	6	8	3	4	7	5
7	6	3	5	2	4	9	1	8
5	8	4	9	7	1	6	3	2
3	2	8	1	4	5	7	9	6
4	9	5	7	3	6	2	8	1
1	7	6	2	9	8	3	5	4



Enjoying the puzzles? See the *First News* app for more fun, quizzes and games! This QR code should be scanned by a responsible adult.



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

CAN you spot the ten changes we've made to this festive scene?



FirstNews WEEKLY NEWS QUIZ!

Login with your ID

Register

FirstNews WEEKLY NEWS QUIZ!

Look out for our
**Christmas Quiz on
the app next
week!**

49

1 of 10 UK News

National Trust Images

What will Cragside in Northumberland host this year?

- A. England's biggest Christmas party
- B. The UK's tallest living Christmas tree
- C. Europe's smallest Santa hat
- D. The world's biggest bauble



Can you spot Dodge the Dog?



Host Stephen Mangan

FIRST NEWS AT THE LOLLIES!



First News in the house!

IT'S a very joyful time of year, so what better time to spread the love... and the laughs!

Children have cast their votes for the funniest children's books of the year in Scholastic's annual Lollies Awards, and *First News* went along to the big awards ceremony in London.

Lollie well-deserved!

Among the winners (see right) was Jamie Smart, who took home not one, but two awards.

He won the Illustrator of the Year award and the award for the funniest book for kids aged 6-8, with *Bunny vs Monkey: Machine Mayhem!* "I'm so excited I could pool!" he said.

Meanwhile, Larry Hayes, who wrote *How to Survive Time Travel*, was so pleased to win the award for the funniest book for 9 to 12 year-olds alongside illustrator Katie Abey, that he did a cartwheel on stage!

Stars on show

The awards were hosted by Stephen Mangan, the author of *The Great Reindeer Rescue*, and lots of other legends were there too, like Michael Rosen, *Horrible Histories'* Martin Brown, and Axel Scheffler – the illustrator of books like *The Gruffalo* and *Tiddler*.

Tom Gates creator Liz Pichon got up on stage and created a very strange Christmas monster with the help of school pupils in the audience (below), while CBeebies stars George Webster and Dodge the Dog treated us all to a bit of festive panto.

Congratulations to all the winners!



THE WINNERS ARE...

BEST LOL PICTURE BOOK

I DID See a Mammoth!
Alex Willmore

BEST LOL BOOK (AGE 6-8)

Bunny vs Monkey: Machine Mayhem!
Jamie Smart

BEST LOL BOOK (AGE 9-12)

How to Survive Time Travel
Larry Hayes and Katie Abey

BEST LOL BOOK FOR TEENS

You're Not The Boss Of Me!
Catherine Wilkins

BEST LOL BOOK (NON-FICTION)

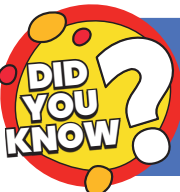
Cats: Understanding Your Whiskered Friend
Dr John Bradshaw and Clare Elsom

BEST LOL BOOK (POETRY)

The Gecko and the Echo
Rachel Bright and Jim Field

LOL ILLUSTRATOR OF THE YEAR

Jamie Smart



THE Lollies Awards began in 2015. It was created by children's book publishers Scholastic, and it's one of the few awards decided by kids' votes alone!



Fans queued for hours for a copy!

The ERRORS tour!

NOW that Taylor Swift's Eras Tour has come to an end, fans have been celebrating it by buying the tour's official book.

Unfortunately, they quickly found that it's littered with mistakes! They've spotted bad spelling, blurry photos and even pages printed upside down.

The biggest crime of all in the eyes of some Swifties is that

some of her song titles are written incorrectly. One fan online jokingly called it "The Errors Book".

However, other fans are more forgiving. One pointed out that the poorly-printed copies may be even more valuable in the future.

On its release, it became the biggest book launch of the year, with over 800,000 copies sold on its first weekend. It costs \$40 (£31).

WHETHER it's fiction, non-fiction, a comic book or an audiobook, we'd love to hear about it! Simply send a review of 100-120 words, along with your name, age and, if you like, your photo (with your parents' permission) to bookreviews@firstnews.co.uk for the chance to appear on these pages!

★ WRITE US A BOOK REVIEW! ★

Recommended reads

in partnership with Peters



Winter workshop

YOU can be as busy as Santa's elves over the festive season with one of these jolly creative craft books. There's something for inventive kids of all kinds, from artists to chefs to starry-eyed scientists!



Countdown to Christmas by James Maclaine

An advent craft calendar! Get in the festive mood with a yummy snack or exciting activity for every day until Christmas.

Winter Crafts from Different Cultures by Megan Borgert-Spaniol

Celebrate this snowy season with 12 festive crafts inspired by seasonal holidays and festivals around the world.



STEAM Through the Seasons: Winter by Anna Claybourne

Conjure your own frost and snow, make fireworks in a jar and chart the night sky with these science and art activities.

Kids Winter Crafts by Emily Kington

A walnut-skiing reindeer? A bear guarding your popcorn? Get imaginative and create these cool projects.



My First Christmas Cook Book by David Atherton and Katie Cottle

Learn to make delicious festive foods with the help of easy-to-follow illustrations in this jam-packed recipe book. Treats make fine gifts for family and friends... just saying!

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE!

DON'T MISS IT!

CRACKING GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS!

GET IT?!

SONIC 3 AND MUFASA

FESTIVE TV HIGHLIGHTS



Next stop, Christmas

London Transport Museum | From 23 Nov

KIDS GO FREE

MAYOR OF LONDON



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

ltmuseum.co.uk
Registered charity number 1123122



HELLO! I'm Milly, the leader of the *First News FYI News Club*.

It's nearly the end of the year, and for next week's Your News, I'll be putting together special pages including your highlights of 2024 and the things you're looking forward to in 2025. Make sure to write in to us if you want to be included! Find out how to do that on the bottom right of these pages.

THIS WEEK'S POLL!

We asked 3,765 of you:

Would you be happy to get second-hand gifts this Christmas?

70% of you said YES



30% of you said NO



MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

Cast your vote in our polls at first.news/polls



INTERVIEWING THE VOICE OF MOANA

JUNIOR JOURNALISTS

GIRLGUIDING teamed up with ODEON cinemas to send two girlguides, Luna and Amy, to interview the voice of *Moana*, Auli'i Cravalho, for the release of the film!

● **Luna: Moana is strong and brave. Why do you think it's important for girls like us to have role models like Moana in films?**

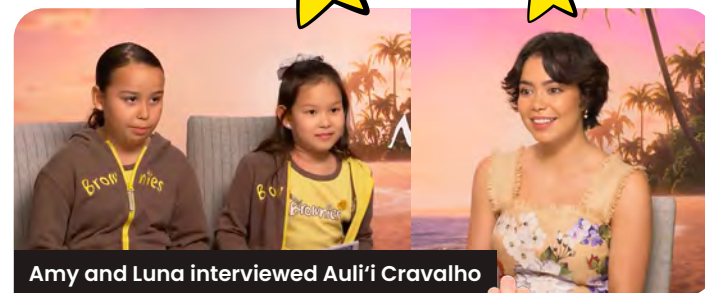
She's also a role model for me! I started playing this character when I was 14, and I turned 24 just a couple of days ago, so I feel like I've grown up right alongside her. You're right – she is bold and brave, and kind, too, and has so much love for her family and her community and her culture. I like that she is shifting the conversation around princesses. I feel like the words 'princess' and 'hero' are now interchangeable [mean similar things] because of her.

● **Amy: As a wayfinder, what advice would you give to girls?**

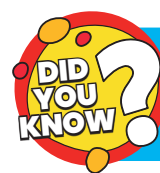
Anyone can become a wayfinder. My people, the people of the Pacific, have been wayfinding and navigating with the stars for generations. When Moana holds her hand up, she's not high-fiving the sky, she's measuring from the horizon line to the nearest star to see how many degrees it is and how far she's travelled. If you want to become a master navigator, you can do this too!

● **Luna: When you're away from home making a movie, what's the one thing you always take with you?**

Food – I love it! First of all, I need a rice cooker. I eat rice with almost every meal. I also am a big fan of spam and corned beef.



Amy and Luna interviewed Auli'i Cravalho



THIS is the hand position Moana uses to help her navigate.



am a big foodie person and sometimes my tummy hurts when I eat foods that I'm not used to, so I always make sure that I pack my own.

● **What's your favourite song from the movie?**

Beyond. I think it's such a power ballad, and it also kind of finishes the question that is posed in the first film – of how far Moana will go. She'll go beyond. I also love that it really challenged me as a singer! I asked for a challenge, and our songwriters, Barlow and Bear, absolutely knocked it out of the park!

Moana 2 is in UK cinemas now.

Jumping brings me joy

SHOWJUMPING is an equestrian sport (involving a horse) where the rider has to get over a set of obstacles in a certain time limit without knocking any down. Daisy competes in the sport and wrote in to tell you all about it!

by Daisy, aged 14

Showjumping is incredible. It's really hard work and I have to give up spending time with my friends to commit to it, but when I do well at shows and my ponies are happy, it's so rewarding!

I started showjumping when I was really young and have been around ponies for as long as I can remember. Things started to get more competitive when I was ten years old and I began to win at local shows and qualified for bigger events.

This last two years of showjumping have been my favourite. I qualified for the Horse of the Year Show (HOYS) with my favourite pony, Another Milton. On my pony Shannon's Joy, I also qualified for the Leading Showjumper class, which is the biggest class (meaning the highest jumps for my age category). And I made it to the STX-UK Pony Foxhunter final on my other pony, Warriors Girl. I went clear in Foxhunter, meaning I had no faults (poles knocked off or the horse refusing to jump). I made it to the jump-off, which was the best feeling in the world! HOYS is amazing! The facilities



JUNIOR JOURNALIST

are great and it's really exciting because there are huge crowds of people in the arena clapping and encouraging you.

I also competed for Team GB in Hagen in Germany this year. I was on a team of five picked from the best riders across the UK. We competed in the Nations Cup and won the silver medal. It was a great experience. I enjoyed travelling to another country and the challenge of competing at a high level.

I love showjumping so much. It is different to a sport like football or tennis, because it involves a live animal. So the biggest challenge is to control your own emotions and remember your training, as well as managing and looking after the ponies, who all react differently depending on the situation and environment. You create a bond with your pony – they are not just part of your sport, they are part of your family and a best friend.

NEWS CLUB SHOUT-OUT!

THIS WEEK WE'RE GIVING SHOUT-OUTS TO... Spa School Camberwell, The Blue School, The Oratory Prep School, Redden Court School and British School Jakarta!



Watch out, Mr Einstein!



Krish has become a member of Mensa



AT the age of just ten, Krish has been invited to join Mensa, an exclusive society for people with incredibly high IQs (intelligence quotient). His IQ was measured at 162 – that's two points more than the famous physicist Albert Einstein, which puts him in the top 1% of the population.

by Krish Arora

My name is Krish Arora. As a new Mensan, I am excited to give a brief insight into Mensa through this article.

Mensa was founded in England in 1946 and the only qualification for membership was, as it is today, a score within the top 2%

of the general population in an approved intelligence test. Mensa counts 140,000 people around the world as members, including 18,000 in the UK and the Ireland. The name Mensa was chosen because it means 'table' in Latin and represents the idea that all members of the society sit as equals around a table, regardless of their race, religion, income, social class or job.

Candidates should be willing to take a two hour 15 minute test at an approved on-site Mensa test centre.

I feel privileged to be invited to join Mensa and I'm flabbergasted to note that my IQ is higher than that of Einstein!

Will AI take over our jobs?

by Aryan, aged 12



Aryan

Hi, I'm Aryan, and I am the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the Children's Parliament. I joined the Children's Parliament to make sure children's voices are heard. In my role, I work on ideas to tackle important issues for UK children. AI (artificial intelligence) is one that really seems to spark our curiosity.

With the rise of AI technology across the world, a big question that many people have is: "Will AI take over our jobs?" This question has prompted a lot of debate.

AI taking over jobs in one way or another is almost certain. Sam Altman, the CEO of leading AI company OpenAI, said: "Jobs are definitely going to go away, full stop". However, what is more unclear is the sort of jobs that will be taken over, and what the future of work will look like for us as we become adults.

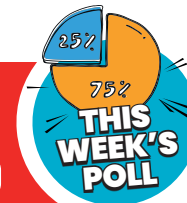
While jobs that involve simple repetitive actions may begin to be replaced by AI, it is important to remember that it is tricky for AI to replicate higher-skilled jobs that need a 'human touch'. As famous Austrian doctor and philosopher Alfred Adler said all the way back in 1928: "Empathy [understanding how other people are feeling] is seeing with the eyes of another, listening with the ears of another and feeling with the heart of another". This human quality of empathy is something that AI will never fully be able to replicate. So, as much as companies may try to replace some things with AI, human-facing jobs will always be performed best by humans. Also, true creativity cannot be replicated by AI, because it needs some form of human-created input. Therefore, many jobs of the future will be impacted, and often assisted by, AI but will never truly be entirely replaced. The human spirit we all have, which is very important to most jobs, cannot be imitated by machines.

With AI development, the world of work will probably be different by the time we enter the workforce, perhaps even unrecognisable. However, there will always be jobs for humans centred on those core 'human' capabilities that AI cannot replace.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

Are you worried about AI taking human jobs?

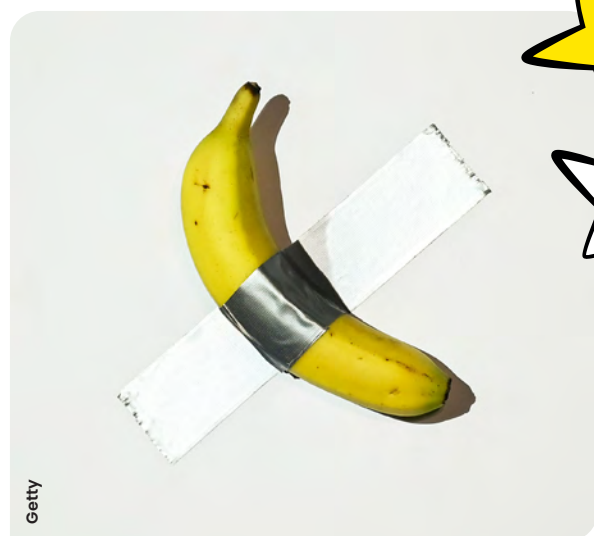
Vote at first.news/polls



You've gone bananas!

YOU might remember this piece of artwork that featured in *First News* a couple of weeks ago.

It's a banana taped to a wall and it sold for \$6.2 million (£4.9 million) at an art auction in New York, USA. Well, reader, Molly wrote in to us to show us her recreation. Yours looks just as good, Molly – good luck making your millions!



LET US KNOW YOUR BEST BITS OF 2024!

This year is rapidly coming to an end, and I want to reflect with you on how you've found it. Let me know what your best bits of 2024 have been and what you're looking forward to in 2025. Write in to let us know and you might feature in a special page we're putting together!



Write to us!

Ask a responsible adult to email us at yournews@firstnews.co.uk

FirstNews Quiz

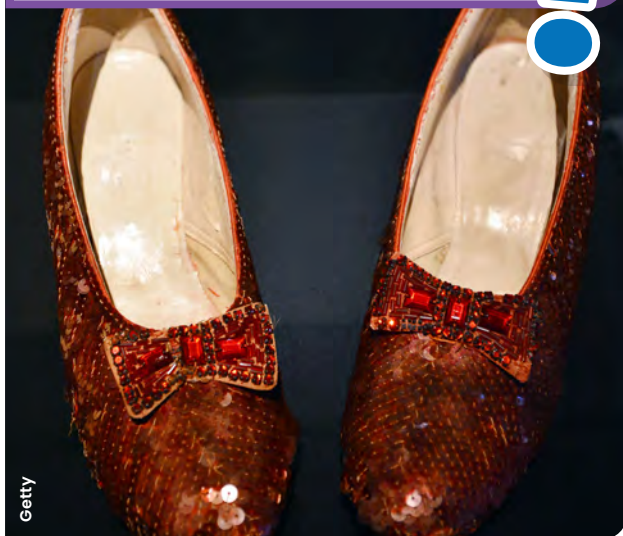
THE answers to all these questions can be found in the pages of this issue. Why not set yourself, or your friends and family, a time challenge to see who can get the highest score in the quickest time? See how well you did by checking the answers at the bottom.

1 Which Canadian city hosted the last show of Taylor Swift's Eras Tour?

2 Who can be seen pooping here as a traditional Spanish decoration?



3 Which film were these expensive slippers worn in?



4 Which sport is introducing a "two-goal Super Shot"?

5 Which TV presenter is taking to the West End stage for her *Very Curious Christmas* show?

6 What is the combined age of Bernie Littman and Marjorie Fiterman?



7 Which country is the new Cadw Minecraft World set in?

8 Which CBBC science show does Dr Chris van Tulleken star in?



9 Jack Pitcher has become the fastest Brit to run the full width of which country?

10 What is the name of this frog species?



11 Which football sensation is on the shortlist for BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2024?

12 How old is speedy Australian sprinter Gout Gout?

13 Singer Danny Jones has been crowned King of the Jungle on which ITV show?



14 What new videogame do Sonic and his rival Shadow star in?

15 'Maggie' the penguin at Birdland Park and Gardens has been found to actually be a male. What has he been renamed as?

Do you love our quiz? Check out our Quiz that you can play online as an individual or with your family! You can find it at [firstnews.co.uk/quiz](https://www.firstnews.co.uk/quiz) and on the *First News* app!

FirstNews WEEKLY NEWS QUIZ!
Check out our new online Quiz!

Answers:
1 Vancouver 2 Donald Trump 3 The Wizard of Oz 4 Netball 5 Maddie Moate 6 202 years 7 Wales 8 Operation Ouch! 9 Australia 10 Darwin's frog 11 Jude Bellingham 12 16 years old 13 I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here! 14 Sonic X Shadow Generations 15 Magnus

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THE BIG PICTURE



VISITORS watch as workers put the finishing touches to Mr Snowman, one of the many amazing exhibits at the 37th Harbin Sun Island International Snow Sculpture Art Expo.

The annual event is full of spectacular sights and is incredibly popular, and only closes at the end of winter when the weather gets warmer.



LIGHTS OUT ON F1 FOR 2024

IT was a weekend of farewells in the final race of the Formula One season, as Lando Norris' win sealed the constructor's championship for McLaren!

Norris, who qualified for the race in pole position, crossed the line ahead of the two Ferraris to see McLaren bag the championship for the first time since 1998 – ending their 26-year wait for the team title.

Carlos Sainz came second in his final drive for Ferrari before he switches teams with Lewis Hamilton. Sainz's team-mate Charles Leclerc completed the podium.

Hamilton had a race to remember after suffering a

really unfortunate qualifying to forget the day before.

The British hero began in 16th but in his final drive for Mercedes, the team he's been racing for since 2013, he climbed all the way up to a fourth-place finish – and was visibly emotional as he crossed the line.

Next year, Hamilton will partner Leclerc at Ferrari, hoping that the Italian giants can give him a car that's capable of clinching his eighth drivers' title, and his first since 2020.

With world champion Max Verstappen and Norris for competition, we could be in for an all-timer of a season!

Main: Hamilton bids farewell to Mercedes Above: Norris (right) wins McLaren the constructor's title



British figure skaters Lilah Fear and Lewis Gibson continued their great run of form by winning their first ever medal at an ISU Grand Prix Final. The pair won ice dance bronze at the event in Grenoble, France, which sees the world's top six in each category come together at the end of the season. The Grand Prix series has been going since 1995, and this is the first time that British athletes have ever won a medal in the final!



Remember the name, you'll be hearing it again!

Although he doesn't turn 17 until the end of this month, sprinter Gout Gout has just beaten the longest-standing record in Australian athletics, setting a time of 20.04sec in the 200m at the Australian All Schools Championships in Brisbane. Peter Norman's record of 20.06sec had stood since 1968. Gout's time also beat the best ever time by a 16-year-old, 20.13sec, which was set by Jamaican legend Usain Bolt in 2003.



Scheffler gets a selfie with his rather unusual trophy

American golfer Scottie Scheffler ended his phenomenal year by winning the Hero World Challenge by an impressive six shots after finishing on 25 under par. His ninth win of the season saw him equal the record for most tournament wins in a year, which included victories at the Masters and the Olympics.



When the Netball Super League starts again in March, teams will be able to score a "two-goal Super Shot" if they score from a section on the outer edge of the shooting circle in the last five minutes of each quarter. The league says it will bring "additional excitement and jeopardy to the game".

THE 2026 Youth Olympic Games in Dakar, Senegal, will be the first to include a Refugee Olympic Team. The International Olympic Committee says it wants to highlight the fact that more than 47 million of the world's 120 million displaced people (those who've been forced to leave their homes) are in Africa.



Braydon's on the ball



THE FYI presenter takes us through his pick of the week's top footie action.

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The Merseyside derby was postponed on Saturday, and that gave an opportunity for the chasing pack to close the gap on Liverpool. Neither Man City or Arsenal managed to take that chance, with both teams earning a draw on their travels. City's point came in a 2-2 draw at Crystal Palace, and Arsenal shared a 1-1 draw with Fulham at Craven Cottage on Sunday.

It was then left to Chelsea to see what they could do, and they didn't disappoint in a thrilling 4-3 win at Tottenham, despite being two down after 11 minutes. Spurs started strongly but a goal from Jadon Sancho gave Chelsea a lifeline and they completely turned it around with three second-half goals to move into second place. Cole Palmer was again at the heart of everything for Chelsea, and he must be an early contender for player of the season. Chelsea are flying and are definitely in the title race now.



Cole Palmer has got 11 goals and six assists in the league so far

Nottingham Forest earned their first win at Old Trafford in almost 30 years with a 3-2 win against Man United, giving Ruben Amorim plenty to think about after two defeats in a week. It's clear that he has much to do with a United squad that look average at best.

Taking **Centre Stage** this week are the great entertainers, as Brentford maintained the best home record in the league with a 4-2 win against Newcastle. A league-high 40 goals have now been scored at Brentford's ground in just eight league matches this season, and free-scoring Brentford have been great to watch. If only they could do the same away from home!

Looking ahead, it's the Manchester derby on Sunday, and I can't wait for that!

Braydon's Team of The Week: Nottingham Forest, winning at Old Trafford for the first time since 1994.

Braydon's Player of The Week: Chris Wood, who became Forest's all-time Premier League scorer with his goal on Saturday.

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