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COMMUNITY GORP Trivia

We regret to announce that we've discontinued GORP's trivia section. Check out our [Trivia archives](#) for questions and answers about the world's people, places, and things.

For Creole Time's Sake Question by *Ethan Gelber*

The Question:

Some creoles have wider reaches than others. Some are odder linguistic mutts than others. This one, spoken by almost a quarter of a million island people, can trace its origins back to as many as five languages.

What language is this?

The Answer:

First, a quick definition of terms seems to be necessary since there seems to be some disagreement about what the question was really asking. We were careful in our use of the word "creole," which when used as a noncapitalized noun can refer to a "language that has evolved from a pidgin but serves as the native language of a speech community" (Merriam-Webster) or "a pidgin or trade language that has become the mother tongue of a population" (Encyclopedia Britannica). As to "pidgin," Merriam-Webster clearly defines it as "a simplified speech used for communication between people with different languages."

Creole languages and their pidgin antecedents exist all over the world, from the Italian variations spoken in the medieval western Mediterranean, to the 17th-century English varieties spoken in America by its native occupants, and other local tongues spoken throughout the Indian and Pacific

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Oceans. The most famous are those based on English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese and spoken in the Caribbean. Examples of this include the English-based Gullah, spoken on the Sea Islands of South Carolina; the English of the Antilles; Sranan (or Taki-Taki) of Suriname; and the French creoles spoken in Louisiana, Haiti, and the Lesser Antilles.

The answer to the question we asked is **Papiamentu**, a creole language that blends Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, English, and Indian words. It is spoken by almost a quarter of a million people as one of the principal languages of the islands in the Dutch Caribbean (Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire).

The Winners:

This week's first five correct answers came from Brian Palmer, Molly Brunner, Fifeplayer, Tom Anderson, and John Robertson. Robert Anderson also answered correctly.

Other good guesses included: Gullah, Patois, Jamaican, Haitian, Tok Pisin, French, Tagalog, Hawaiian, Creole, and Talkie-talkie.

THANKS for your contributions!

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