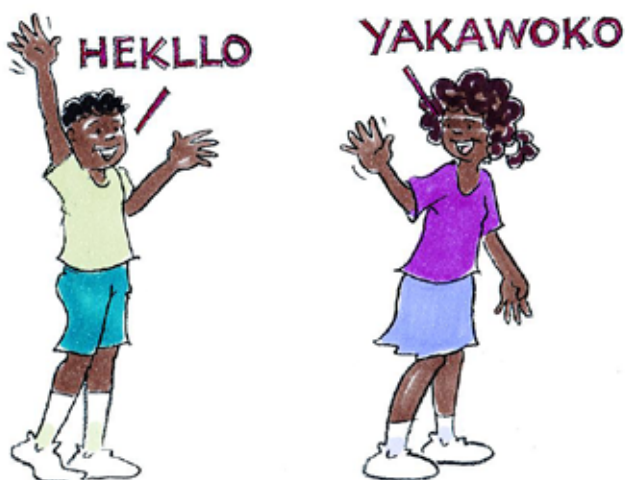




Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

tok

'tok'



SCHOOL
YEARS
4–6

SCHOOL
YEARS
7–9

Background

A 'secret' play-language game was reported on Waiben (Thursday) Island in the early 1970s. It was spoken by girls in Torres Strait Creole and was introduced to Dauan Island, where it was spoken in the local language. The language was spoken fluently in unprepared talk.

Language

In Torres Strait Creole *tok* means 'to speak' or 'say'.

Short description

This is a play-language game in which players insert the syllable 'k' when they are talking.

Game play and basic rules

- The speaker has to insert after each normal syllable an additional one starting with a 'k',

followed by a vowel used in the preceding syllable. Some examples in Torres Strait Creole:

- Yawo (goodbye) becomes *yakawoko*. *Ngalaga* (where) becomes *ngakalakaga*. *Ngai* (I) becomes *ngakai*.

- Conversation example:

Ngalpa ngalagapa ludi?

We — where (do we) go?

Ngagalpaka ngakalakagakapaka lukudukuipaka.

- With some practice the words can be spoken quite fluently in unprepared talk. Small mistakes are overlooked.

Suggestion

Players can prepare a script following the procedure outlined in English or any other language. The other players attempt to repeat what is said.

Variations

- A player says a phrase and another player attempts to repeat it in the 'new' language.
- Invent another language following a different procedure — such as in the game of 'Pig Latin'. For example, in this game you could take off the first letter of the word and say the word — then take the first letter and add 'ay': 'dad' becomes 'ad day' and 'mum' becomes 'um may.' For words starting with the letter 'i' say the word then 'yay': island becomes 'island yay' and it becomes 'it yay'.