

# The Bank of America celebrated National Punctuation Day with week-long celebrations and trivia contests in 2005 and 2006

Hi Jeff!

We are excited about celebrating National Punctuation Day soon! Here is the document for our 2006 National Punctuation Day Contest. It is divided into pages — one for each day of National Punctuation Week and one for the following Monday with the final answer. Each day people will e-mail their answers to the day's question to us. From the correct entries we'll draw three names, and those people will be awarded a prize of Bank of America merchandise.



Marie Gayed

Thank you for providing us a light-hearted opportunity to teach punctuation! Happy National Punctuation Day!

Karen Nelson and Marie Gayed  
Tampa (Florida) Legal  
Bank of America

To honor the day, we will wear your T-shirts and enjoy a fun week celebrating and learning good punctuation!



Karen Nelson

## 2006 contest

### Question for Monday, September 25

How many true punctuation marks are on the standard keyboard?

- (a) Fewer than 12 (b) 15 to 22 (c) 25 to 32

### Question for Tuesday, September 26

What was the first widely used Roman punctuation mark?

- (a) Period (b) Interrobang (c) Interpunct

### Question for Wednesday, September 27

Who was known as the Father of Italic Type and was also the first printer to use the semicolon? He was the first to print pocket-sized books so that the classics would be available to the masses.

### Question for Thursday, September 28

Which of the following punctuation marks have no equivalent in speech?

- (a) comma and period (b) colon and semicolon (c) question mark and exclamation mark

### Question for Friday, September 29

What is the name of this symbol: "¶"?

## ANSWERS

**Monday, September 25: (b).** There are between 15 and 22 true punctuation marks on the standard keyboard. The Gregg Reference Manual considers the following to be punctuation marks: Period, question mark, exclamation point, dash, ellipsis marks, comma, semicolon, colon, parentheses, brackets, quotation marks, apostrophe, asterisk, diagonal or slash, and hyphen. The following are symbols or marks and are not punctuation marks: At sign, ampersand, percent sign, number or pound sign, equal sign, plus sign, dollar sign, diacritical marks (tilde and grave) and the proofreading mark (caret).

**Tuesday, September 26: (c).** The interpunct was the first widely used Roman punctuation mark. It is a small middle dot placed between words, which you may have seen on inscriptions on old statues or buildings. The interpunct was the ancient Latin method of separating words. In contrast, Greek words had no spaces and ran together. Spaces were not used between words until 600 to 800 A.D.

**Wednesday, September 27: Aldus Manutius was known as the Father of Italic Type.** Aldus Manutius (about 1449-1515) wanted to preserve the Greek classics, and he believed printing them in Greek would preserve them for posterity. He set up his Aldine Press in Venice and gathered scholars and printers to help him. He printed five volumes of Aristotle. He also printed works of Aristophanes, Thucydides, Sophocles and Herodotus, to name a few.

As a printer, he worked hard to perfect his typography. He created and held a patent for the italic type-face style. We use italics for emphasis, but the narrow and compact letters of the italic style allowed him to print pocket-sized books. This helped him reach his goal of making the Greek classics available to the common man. Aldus Manutius was also the first typographer to use a semicolon.

**Thursday, September 28: (b).** The colon and semicolon have no equivalent in speech. Early writing contained no punctuation at all. Punctuation developed gradually to show readers where to pause (commas), where to come to a complete stop (period), where to raise pitch at the end of an idea (question mark), or where to speak with emphasis or excitement (exclamation point). Early punctuation was not based on sentence structure but on the need to make written materials readable. The colon and semicolon are used in print to show sentence structure. In quoted material they are always placed outside the closing quotation mark because there is no speech equivalent for either the colon or the semicolon.

**Friday, September 29: Pilcrow is the name of the symbol "¶";** however, paragraph sign is also an acceptable answer. The pilcrow (¶) shows where a paragraph ends. Derived from the Greek oratorical term *paragraphos*, it literally meant "to write beside." It was originally a mark in the margin to show a change of speakers. Today we use the pilcrow to begin a new paragraph to show a change in the topic, theme, intention or speaker. In Word, if you turn on the "Show/Hide" button on your toolbar, you will see the pilcrows in your writing.

## 2005 contest

### Question for Monday, August 22

What invention led to the development of punctuation?

### Question for Tuesday, August 23

In 1925, what American author compared punctuation to the game of golf?

### Question for Wednesday, August 24

A glyph is a typographical mark. Which of the following glyphs are not true punctuation marks?

- (a) ellipsis (...) (b) bullet (?) (c) dash (--) (d) ampersand (&)  
(e) number or pound sign (#) (f) apostrophe (') (g) (a, b and e) (h) (b, d and e)  
(i) (b, c and d) (j) (b, d and f)

### Question for Thursday, August 25

What are the three most important or basic parts of English punctuation?

- (a) Spaces between words, periods at the end of sentences, and question marks at the end of questions.  
(b) Spaces between words, periods at the end of sentences, and agreement of the subject and verb.  
(c) Capital letters at the beginning of sentences and on proper names and titles, periods at the end of sentences, and no comma splices.  
(d) Spaces between words, capital letters at the beginning of sentences and on proper names and titles, and indentation of the first line of each paragraph.

### Question for Friday, August 26

Which three sentences are punctuated correctly?

- (1) September 8, 2005, is my son's first birthday.  
(2) September 8, 2005 is my son's first birthday.  
(3) Please respond by September, 2005.  
(4) Please respond by September 2005.  
(5) "Good morning", my manager greeted me.  
(6) "Good morning." My manager greeted me.  
(7) "Good morning," my manager greeted me.

## ANSWERS

**Monday, August 22: The printing press led to the development of punctuation.** Aristophanes of Byzantium, a librarian in Alexandria, Egypt, developed a formal system of punctuation for the Greek language around 200 B.C. However, his system did not catch on, and we were left with random or non-existent punctuation until Johann Gutenberg invented the printing press in 1436 or 1437. To make printing easier and more predictable, printers experimented with punctuation. Out of this business necessity, our punctuation system gradually evolved.

**Tuesday, August 23: Ernest Hemingway compared punctuation to golf.** On May 15, 1925, Hemingway wrote in a letter, "My attitude toward punctuation is that it ought to be as conventional as possible. The game of golf would lose a good deal if croquet mallets and billiard cues were allowed on the putting green. You ought to be able to show that you can do it a good deal better than anyone else with the regular tools before you have a license to bring in your own improvements."

**Wednesday, August 24: (h).** The bullet, ampersand and pound or number sign are not punctuation marks. The purpose of punctuation marks is to make sentences easily understood by showing the relationship among words, phrases and clauses. Although they are not punctuation marks, these three are useful symbols. The ampersand represents "and." Bullets are used in lists. The symbol # can be an abbreviation for a pound of weight or for a number, as in #2 pencil.

**Thursday, August 25: (b).** The three most basic parts of English punctuation are: (d) spaces between words, capital letters at the beginning of sentences and on proper names and titles, and indentation of the first line of each paragraph. Early writing had no punctuation, not even spaces between words. The earliest punctuation was developed to aid readers of written materials by imitating speaking patterns. In 781 A.D., Charlemagne asked Alcuin of York, an English scholar and his minister of education, to set up a system for teaching the monks and the general population to read and write. In addition to the palace school system, Alcuin developed writing standards that included the three basic aspects of punctuation and also standardized spelling and punctuation marks. His work laid a foundation for the explosion of learning that began with the Renaissance, as well as for our punctuation system today.

**Friday, August 26: Sentences 1, 4, and 7 are punctuated correctly.** (1) September 8, 2005, is my son's first birthday. (4) Please respond by September 2005. (7) "Good morning," my manager greeted me. The Gregg Reference Manual recommends that two commas be used to set off the year when it follows the month and day, as in sentence 1. When only the month and year are given, as in sentence 4, no commas are used. Periods and semicolons always go inside the closing quotation mark; however, semicolons and colons are always placed outside the closing quotation mark.