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Typography is the way language looks, and today is National Punctuation Day. Which made me stop to think: Why would anyone feel the need to celebrate punctuation?

Simple — without punctuation, language would look like a bunch of jumbled, unorganized thoughts running each and every way, and nobody would be able to make much sense of things.

If I ended every sentence of this blog in an exclamation point, I might be called overly enthusiastic! But if I used too many ellipses ... some would think me unable to complete a thought. If I never used any periods and just wrote my thoughts out exactly as they came into my head wouldn't you get sick of reading all the run-on sentences and stop reading ... well, you get the point. Punctuation is important.

As a designer, I tend to look at type a little differently than the rest of the world. I appreciate punctuation because for me, it is one of the most obviously defining characteristics of a typeface. I can't help but notice that some periods are circles, while others are eloquently diamond-shaped. I get a kick out of the inquisitive way Gill's question mark curves around. Just think — somebody spent agonizing amounts of hours getting that comma to look just right. All that work for something most of the world takes for granted on a daily basis.

My favorite thing about punctuation is that helps portray emotion. Without punctuation, we couldn't pause, shout, or question in print. It wouldn't translate. If letters are the body of a typeface, punctuation marks are the personality.

So, artist or mathematician, typographer or casual scribbler, take a moment to imagine a world without punctuation. Life would be chaos — everyone's thoughts would be running everywhere without restraint. And, nobody would be able to smile :).