

Baseball All-Stars
are announced 1B



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his own 'EZ' trek 3A

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opinion



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The Telegraph Herald's mission is to be the preferred provider of local news,
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Punctuation Day has a message. Period.

This year's observance features a haiku contest.

BY BRIAN COOPER

TH executive editor



Ready for a pop quiz? Which of the following sentences is correct?
Jerome was surprised to see a man-eating shark.

Jerome was surprised to see a man eating shark.
I ask while reminding you that only three shopping days remain until the seventh annual

National Punctuation Day. The observance is Jeff Rubin's light-hearted way to call attention to punctuation — its use, misuse and importance. Punctuation can and does make a difference in clarity, accuracy and comprehension. More on that later.

Rubin, a Californian, created for himself a business out of periods, hyphens, colons and semicolons. He and his wife, Norma, created an educational video for elementary school students, "Punctuation Playtime."

They also sell punctuation-related items, including T-shirts and posters with messages such as, "A semicolon is not a surgical procedure."

For this year's observance, Rubin has announced a haiku contest. Write about punctuation in the form of traditional Japanese verse, and you might win a passel of punctuation prizes.

In case you don't remember this from your days in the classroom, a haiku consists of three unrhymed lines of five, seven and five syllables. From Rubin's website, here is a haiku about punctuation:

*The apostrophe:
Found on both sides of letters.
The right side and wrong.*

The deadline is Sept. 30. Entries should be e-mailed to Jeff@NationalPunctuationDay.com. If you don't mind, copy me on the entry.

While you're at it, you might use that address to send Rubin digital photos of signs or posters featuring incorrect punctuation. He posts them at NationalPunctuationDay.com. (Using 's to indicate the plural form of a word is a common offense.)

And the answer to that pop quiz? It depends.

If Jerome stood on a beach and spotted the dangerous fish, it would be *man-eating shark*.

However, what if Jerome peered through the window of restaurant and looked at a patron's plate? Then *man eating shark* is correct.

The hyphen makes all the difference.