

Punctuation Practice

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Termination Marks

Periods, Question Marks, Exclamation Points

Termination Marks

Every sentence must begin with a capital letter and end with a form of punctuation (i.e., period, question mark, or exclamation point).

There are three types of sentences:

Declarative makes a statement



Interrogative asks a question



Exclamatory shows strong emotion and/or surprise and is also used for a command

Termination Marks

Although the words are the same, notice how the punctuation changes the emotion of the sentence:

Jessica had a baby.

Jessica had a baby?

Jessica had a baby!

a simple statement

a question

a shout of joy or surprise

Periods

Periods

Periods, which are used at the end of declarative sentences, are the most commonly used termination mark. A *declarative sentence* is simply a statement that can illustrate any of the following:

a fact

Jeannette Rankin was the first woman to be elected to Congress.

a condition

Many endangered species could be saved if we stop destroying their habitats.

a possibility

One day, we will find a cure for AIDS.

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It is important to have periods at the end of sentences to tell where one thought ends. Look at the following passage and see if you can tell where the periods belong:

Perioa

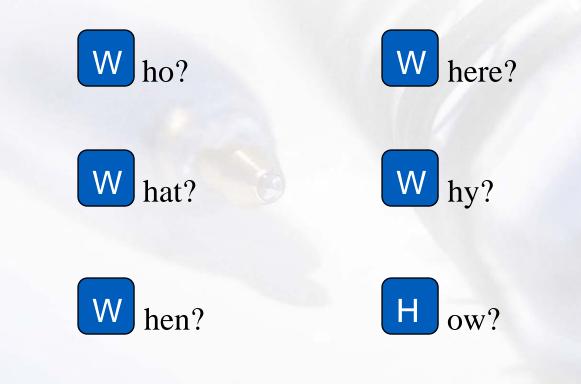
While walking to school yesterday, I noticed an object lying in the street as I walked closer to it, I could see that it was an injured kitten the animal was barely moving and had some blood on its fur it might have been struck by a vehicle since it wasn't wearing a collar, I decided to take it home my mother said she would take it to the vet's office while I was at school.

While walking to school yesterday, I noticed an object lying in the street. as I walked closer to it, I could see that it was an injured kitten. the animal was barely moving and had some blood on its fur. it might have been struck by a vehicle. since it wasn't wearing a collar, I decided to take it home. my mother said she would take it to the vet's office while I was at school.



Question Marks

A *question mark* is used to punctuate an interrogative sentence. An *interrogative sentence* asks a direct question. When journalists write, for example, they often seek to answer the following questions:



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Question Marks

Here are some examples of direct questions:

What time is the party?

How many people live in China?

Where is the restroom?

Who voted for class president?

Do you think we'll get enough volunteers?

Question Marks

Sometimes a statement will have interrogative qualities, or sometimes an indirect question will be asked; in these cases, a period is used.

Pedro asked me whether I had completed the project yet.

(Have you completed the project yet?)

The officer wanted to know why I was speeding.

(Why were you speeding?)

I wasn't sure if he was telling me the truth.

(Are you telling me the truth?)

I don't understand why she keeps trying to feed me peas when she knows I don't like them

(Why does she keep trying to feed me peas when she knows I don't like them?)

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