

Re: Shrieks and splashes

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.math/2005-06/msg04511.html>

- *From:* "mensanator@xxxxxxxxxxx" <mensanator@xxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 25 Jun 2005 12:04:46 -0700
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Jeremy Boden wrote:

> In message <1119714192.018782.260550@xx>,
> "mensanator@xxxxxxxxxxx" <mensanator@xxxxxxxx> writes
>>
>>
>> ps218@xxxxxxxx wrote:
>>> I think I'm getting old
>>>
>>> The other day, talking about primitive recursive functions, I
>>> pronounced "n!" (for the factorial of n) as "en shriek", and the boys
>>> and girls looked as if I was being even stranger than usual
>>>
>>> I essayed "en splash" as -- so I thought -- a familiar alternative.
>>> Nope. Still got a "bizarreness reaction".
>>>
>>> So OK, OK, how do you pronounce it, I asked ... but no one (albeit in a
>>>
>>> very small group) had anything to offer.
>>>
>>> Well, once upon a long time ago, "shriek" for "!" was commonplace. But
>>> what DO people say these days???
>>
>>Bang.
>>
>>And "splash" isn't a good choice because it's too close to
>>"splat" (*).
>>
>>But maybe that's just here in the US.
>>
>>>
>>> =====
>>> http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/teaching_staff/Smith/LaTeX/
>>
> Have teachers stopped saying n! as "n factorial"?

But "!" doesn't always mean "factorial". In some contexts, it means "not" such as "!=" meaning "not equal" or

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"like [!a-z]" meaning "match a character not in range a-z".

Saying "shreik" or "bang" or "pling" merely identifies the symbol, its meaning to be supplied by context.

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> ---
> Jeremy Boden

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- *Follow-Ups:*

- ◆ **Re: Shrieks and splashes**
◇ *From:* gerard46

- *References:*

- ◆ **Shrieks and splashes**
◇ *From:* ps218
- ◆ **Re: Shrieks and splashes**
◇ *From:* mensanator@xxxxxxxxxxxxx
- ◆ **Re: Shrieks and splashes**
◇ *From:* Jeremy Boden

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