



AMERICAN HANDWRITING ANALYSIS FOUNDATION  
**Basic Study Guide**  
**for the Student of Graphology**  
**Preparing for the Certification Examinations**

## INTRODUCTION

### **PART I – Beginning the Study of Graphology**

#### **Definition**

*“Graphology is the study of the psychological structure of the human being through his or her handwriting.”* Renna Nezos

#### **Why study handwriting analysis?**

Most new members of AHAF begin their study of graphology because they are convinced, often by a personal analysis or an inspiring presentation, that there is something fascinating about being able to gain this much insight into people through their handwriting. They soon learn that they can use this skill for helping clients in many areas:

- Personnel screening
- Compatibility analysis for individuals or business
- Aiding financial institutions to determine credit reliability
- Selecting juries
- Character studies
- Behavior/personality modification and legibility using Graphotherapy
- Personal understanding and growth
- Understanding learning disorders, behavior and emotional disorders
- Vision therapy for brain injury and vision defects
- Psychology for character analysis
- Behavior profiling
- Child guidance
- Counseling
- Detection of dishonesty

Many Graphologists discover that handwriting analysis skills are an adjunct to the study of forensic document handwriting examination. *“They do much better at “getting it” than students who have not studied graphology first.”* (Reed Hayes, Forensic Handwriting and Document Examiner, and Question Document Examination Course Instructor). After QDE training, these students may go on to work in these related areas of handwriting analysis:

- Give opinions in questioned document cases
- Serve as an expert witness in court on document examination

- Help law enforcement with anonymous letters
- Help banks detect forgeries and teller thefts
- Authenticate signatures on legal documents

### **AHAF Code of Ethics**

AHAF members are required to adhere to a Code of Ethics just as other professional organizations are required to do. You should have received a copy when you joined, or you can download a copy from [www.ahafhandwriting.org](http://www.ahafhandwriting.org) - Member Section.

### **Certification Procedure**

The AHAF Board of Directors encourages new members to set certification as a goal from the outset of their membership. In following this AHAF Study Guide, a two-year self-study period is expected and usually required. An online Certification Preparation Course, for those who prefer to study with others, will be available soon to facilitate readiness to take the test. Additionally, AHAF offers a Mentor Program for those who would like a personal tutor. Contact the Education Chair, Linda Green ([greenmsngr@gmail.com](mailto:greenmsngr@gmail.com)), for more information on these programs.

Following are some guidelines for setting certification as a goal:

1. Have a thorough understanding of the basics of graphology and psychology as outlined in this study guide.
2. Apply for certification by contacting the Certification Chair and paying the application fee.
3. Follow directions for taking the certification test provided by the Certification Chair. The Examination is open book. Test questions will include short essay, true-false, multiple choice, situational scenarios, and handwriting analyses. The analyses may include comprehensive personality/character and personnel screening.
4. Your test will be evaluated blind by several experienced graphologists.
5. To maintain certification you will be required to earn a specified number of continuing education credits at specified intervals. You can obtain a copy of the Continuing Education program from the Education Chair.
6. Graphology students are encouraged to study several of the recommended sources such as: Roman, Mendel, Amend/Ruiz, Lowe or any other books on the Recommended Reading List. The more a student reads on a given topic, the more comprehensive will be his/her background.

## **PART II – Background Information on Graphology**

A. **Definition** - “Graphology is the study of the psychological structure of the human being through his or her handwriting.” *Graphology*, by Renna Nezos

**Definition:** “The study of handwriting, and the inferring of character or aptitude from it. *The New Lexicon Webster's Dictionary*.”

### **B. Schools of thought – Trait Stroke and Gestalt**

**Definition: Trait stroke** – an atomistic approach, the stroke-by-stroke interpretation of handwriting- “this-means-that” method which builds a picture of personality by evaluating the meaning of the various strokes at the end of the analysis

**Definition: Gestalt** – a physical, biological, psychological, or symbolic pattern of elements so unified that its properties cannot be derived from the sum of its parts. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*.

**Definition: Gestalt** – a pattern of unified elements that cannot be interpreted outside of the whole. The sum is greater than its parts. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Handwriting Analysis*.

### **C. History of graphology**

Key events in the development of graphology as a social science, including such things as the reclassification of graphology by the Library of Congress. Thanks to the efforts of Rose Matousek, in 1980 Library of Congress changed graphology from Occult and placed it in three categories: 155.282 (Diagnostic graphology) 363.2565 (Documentary evidence), 658-3112 (Selection of personnel management). In 1990 Rose got the U.S. Dept. of Labor to change the graphology as “Entertainment” to “Miscellaneous professional” in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles.

Key contributors in graphology’s development:

- Michon
- Crepieux-Jamin
- Pulver
- Pophal
- Klages
- Saudek
- Roman
- Teillard
- Wolff
- de Sainte Colombe

### **D. Guidelines for obtaining an ideal sample of handwriting (See Appendix B)**

## **E. Preparation of Report (See Appendix C)**

### **PART III – Graphology Basics**

#### **A. Handwriting characteristics**

- Movement
- Zones (expansion/contraction, size connectedness/disconnectedness,trend)
- Pressure (normal, directional, displaced, variable, pastosity/sharpness)
- Speed
- Form (simplified/embellished, copybook, persona, printed)
- Stroke – (types of strokes)
- Connective forms (garland, arcade, thread, minor types)
- Capitals, PPI, signatures
- Space
- Margins
- Alignment (baseline, line direction, organization, regularity/irregularity)
- Form Level
- Gestalt
- Guiding Image
- Confirming/Conflicting Indicators
- Order of Dominance
- Extremes

#### **B. Psychology**

- Introduction to Psychology textbook
- Recommended website to research psychology topics: George Boeree  
[webspaceship.edu/cgboer](http://webspaceship.edu/cgboer).