



Handwriting expert  
Ruth Holmes assesses  
 the surprisingly  
legible John Hancocks of this year's  
presidential wanna-bes

# looking for mr. write

Bill Clinton

**Bill Clinton** Smart (angles and original forms), rebellious (bold capital *B*) yet trying to please (garland connections), the President thrives in the spotlight (large writing). He is pulled in many directions (variable slant), becoming a master at rationalizing (left loop on *o*) that which he cannot have. He wants immediate action (speed), does not take sufficient time to ponder ideas (lack of loops) and often finds himself driving with his brakes on (extended terminal stroke on *n* with reverse hook).

Pat Buchanan

**Pat Buchanan** Single-minded, rigid (closed, narrow letters in last name) and impressed with himself (huge capital letters), he was raised in a strict (loop absent in *h*) environment with high expectations (height and narrowness of letters). He is practical (height of *t*-bar crossing) and methodical (connected writing). A converted introvert (large capitals with small letters following), he is prevented by the call of old values and obligations (tight, copybook style) from seeing other points of view (small, squeezed letters in last name).

Phil Gramm

**Phil Gramm** Dignified and conservative (tall, narrow letters), he demands strict adherence to procedures (rigid baseline and connected letters). A man with strong opinions (compressed letters), he defends his principles even if it means personal sacrifice (*r* squeezed beneath *G*). He is more emotional and sensitive than he reveals (heavy, forward-slanted writing) and responsibility gives him a sense of pride and self-importance (height of *P*).

Lamar Alexander

**Lamar Alexander** Direct (printed *L*), no-nonsense (absence of loops) and a problem solver (angles in *m*), this contender does not waste time (blunt endstroke on *r* or energy (heavy pressure) on the frivolous (no elaborations). He wants to be in charge (printing and angles) and has little tolerance for mistakes (rigid baseline). His analytical style (angles in *m* and *r*) can make him demanding and critical (sharp, clear writing) in his evaluation of issues. He has deep feelings and convictions (thick, heavy writing) that he will defend to the end (blunt ending on the *r*).

Richard Lugar

**Richard Lugar** Forceful (heavy pressure) and intelligent (angles and original forms), this is a man for all seasons (variable letter forms). He thrives on challenge (large buckle on top of *R* and has a dry sense of humor (curved entry stroke on *R*). Skilled with words (fluid shape of middle letter), strong-willed (thick line quality and rightward trend) and impatient (speed of writing), he possesses leadership ability (clear, dynamic style) with a sympathetic heart (forward slant).

Robert Dornan

**Robert Dornan** Traditional, conservative and strict (cramped copybook writing), there is little room for flexibility (rigid baseline) in his outlook on life. He is hampered by his unyielding adherence to the rules by which he was raised (overall tightness of writing). He chooses his words carefully (closed letters), values his privacy (narrow spacing) and is proud (tall capital letters) and protective of his family (large *D* over half of name).

Bob Dole

**Bob Dole** Diligent and thoughtful (slow, connected writing), he is patient and hardworking (heavy pressure and drawn forms). His friendly, easygoing style (rounded letters) has allowed him to wear well over the years and belies his more aggressive, unyielding attitude in defending his opinions (abruptly ending, downward final stroke on *e*). Behind his smile (large, round capitals) is a man determined to get his way (strong, thick writing). Conservative by nature (school-form letters), he likes routine (steady baseline). ☐