

FANCY A ROMAN DATE?

JANUARY
Named after the Roman god, Janus, who was believed to be two-faced; one face looking back at the year that had just died, as the other face looked forward to the new year with hope.

FEBRUARY
Named after 'februa', the Roman feast of cleansing (that explains the rain!), which was held on the 15th day of the month.

MARCH
Named after 'Mars' (the Roman god of war – not the chocolate bar) and surprisingly, until 1752, in England, this month did not start until March 25th!

APRIL
Named after the ancient Greek word 'Apru', the word for the month of your and beauty, who became known as Venus.

MAY
Named after the Roman month that was dedicated to Maia – the mother of Mercury; the Roman God of merchants and commerce, and messenger of the gods.

JUNE
Thought to have been named after Juno; the principal Roman goddess and wife of Jupiter.

JULY
Named after Julius Caesar – the Roman general, statesman and dictator.

AUGUST
Named after Augustus Caesar – brother of Julius.

SEPTEMBER
Named after the Latin word 'septem' – meaning 'seven'; although we regard September as the ninth month, the Romans regarded this month as their seventh.

OCTOBER
Like the name of the month, the word 'October' means 'the tenth'.

NOVEMBER
Named after the Latin word 'novem' – meaning 'nine'.

DECEMBER
Named after the Latin word, 'decem' – meaning 'ten' ... So, now you know!

As we hurtle precariously close towards the New Year, and the 'customary' James Bond repeats, cake-free diets, and endless holiday adverts, etc ... The Seagull thought that we would share with you the origins of the names of our months – especially why we spell February the way that we do. So the next time you are staring at your glossy new 2009 calendar, you will know a few things about our months that not everybody else will know...

Did you know?
The word 'month' comes from the Old English word, monath, meaning 'moon', and we still subscribe to the Gregorian calendar, from January to December.

Graphology: 'the power of the pen'

We often immediately recognise the handwriting on our incoming mail, but have you ever thought about why we write the way we do? Why do females often write so much neater than the 'scrawling' of the male, or why is a doctors' handwriting harder to read than a three-year-old's? I exaggerate slightly! Allow me to explain the basic rules of graphology – the study of handwriting – and what our handwriting reveals about us!

The word 'graphology' is taken from the Greek words: 'graph' - meaning 'to write', and 'logos' – meaning 'doctrine' or 'theory', and dates as far back as 2000 B.C. It was evident in Southern India, China and Greece and was advocated by the famous philosopher, Aristotle, who wrote: "Just as all men do not have the same speech sounds, neither do they all have the same handwriting."

As the brain controls the hand, graphologists believe that we are actually 'brain writing' and that if we were to lose the use of our hands and began to write with our feet, given sufficient practice, we would still exhibit similar handwriting characteristics. So now the history lesson is out of the way, how does graphology actually work?

As you grow from childhood into adulthood, your handwriting will change; especially when you are under emotional or physical stress. Many graphologists look at size, dimension, form, pressure, speed, direction, layout and continuity of a piece of handwriting when making an assessment; so let's get down to the practical side of our experiment.

Look at your own handwriting and check the direction and elevation that your handwriting slants – is it to the left, upright or to the right? Generally, handwriting that slants to the left (unless you are left-handed) indicates that you are sensitive,

emotionally-mature and caring. If you write upwards and straight, you are an independent, assertive and driven person; whilst those of you that slant to the right, you have a good sense of humour but can be selfish and over-confident. Other things to look out for include whether you underline your signature - this means that you value your own importance, and if you 'dare' to end your signature with a full stop, you are stubborn! Of course there are many other factors that we need to take into account in order to provide a more accurate analysis.

In simple terms, large handwriting often reveals an out-going individual; as opposed to small handwriting that shows us that the writer is shy. Hasty and speedy writers often lack attention to detail and display impulsive, emotional susceptibilities; whilst slow and careful writers can be

indecisive and overly analytical. On the spectrum of graphology, many of us may fall somewhere in the middle.

Another hidden sign of your personality can be determined from the amount of pressure that you place on your pen while you are writing. If the pressure from the pen has indented the reverse side of the piece of paper, this reveals that you have an aggressive and argumentative side to your nature; amongst other emotional indicators. If you write gently on a piece of paper, you reveal the patient, gentler and nurturing side of your personality but also reveal your vulnerable side too.

So the next time you write a letter, or sign a cheque, you may be saying more about yourself than just the words that you have written!

For more information about graphology visit: www.britishgraphology.org

