

Plan for the Day

Upload your PDF submission to One Drive

Print out final work & hand in

Workshop your assigned letter until 2pm

Print your final letter for 3pm

Typeface Design

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Introduction

CIRCUS

Designing a typeface takes great patience and incredible attention to detail. Each letterform is a piece of design in itself, planned, shaped and perfected.

Nursery

Every detail gives the letters character, and the words begin to take on personalities. Its these 'personalities' that we as designers then play on, when we select the right typefaces to work with.

ART DECO

ARMY

Introduction

There are many components to think about when designing a typeface. Each letter is made up of a number of different elements; we can break these down and refer to them collectively as the type's *anatomy*.

Its very important to remember that its the styling of these elements that allows your typeface to work cohesively, through designing common elements, and giving a consistent feel to each letter.

Baseline

We can start by drawing the most obvious line; the baseline.

This is the invisible line that runs across the whole typeface, and ensures a consistent platform for the letters to sit on top of.



The quick

X-Height

The x-height is what gives the main body of the letter its height. Think of it as the height of the lower case vowel.

Adjusting this height can completely alter the style of your typeface.



Helvetica is an example of a typeface with a well balanced x-height - this is to ensure maximum clarity at small sizes.

Garamond is an example of a typeface with a smaller x-height, giving the illusion of taller, thinner letters.

Appearance

Garamond



Helvetica



Both these typefaces are set at 100pt. Point size is measured from the ascender line to the descender line.
But the x-height directly affects its visible size.

Mean Line

The meanline is the invisible line that runs across the top of the x-height.

It ensures uniformity across the main body of the letters.



The quick

The image shows the words "The quick" in a dark grey serif typeface. A horizontal line of small pink dots, representing the meanline, runs across the top of the lowercase letters 'h', 'e', 'q', 'u', 'i', 'c', and 'k'. The dot above the 'i' is positioned slightly above this line. The entire text is framed by two thin horizontal lines, one above and one below.

Acender

The acender is the part of a lowercase letter that extends above the mean line.

These are the tall strokes of letters such as 'b' and 'd'.

brown

Acender Line

The acender line allows designers to line these acending elements up, to ensure consistency.

brown fox

Decender

The decender is the part of a lowercase letter that extends below the base line.

These are the decending strokes of letters such as 'p', 'q' and often 'j'.

fox jumps

Decender Line

The decender line, again, allows designers to line these
decending elements up, to ensure consistency.

fox jumps



Cap Line

The cap line is the invisible line that runs across the top of the capital letters in your typeface.

The height of your capital letters often lines up with the height of your ascenders, but doesn't have to.



Over the

Helvetica is an example of a typeface where these lines do line up, whilst Times is an example of a typeface in which they don't.

These are all the alignments you need to consider when drawing out your own typeface. Its these considerations that ensure, any combination of letters in your typeface will sit well together and read properly.

When you start designing your letters, you will need to dictate how these lines sit apart from eachother. Once you have a few characters in place, draw out these lines to ensure consistency across the rest.

The quick

A large serif font sample, 'The quick', is shown between two solid magenta lines. Two horizontal dotted magenta lines are positioned above and below the main text, defining the x-height and baseline. The letters are dark grey and well-proportioned, demonstrating consistent alignment and spacing.

Serif

We have covered what a serif is previously.

A change in size, or weight, or shape of your serif will directly influence your whole typeface.

They come in many shapes and sizes; a slab serif typeface feels heavier, and has a very different feel to a more traditional 'cursive' style serif.

lazy

R R R

Stem

The stem is the straight vertical or full-length diagonal strokes of a letter.

These can be of varying thickness.

Modern sans-serif typefaces often allow the stem width to influence the whole shape of the letter.

Stylish serif typefaces often use contrasting widths, creating 'thicks and thins' to give the typeface more character.



lazy

Cross Stroke

A cross stroke is the short horizontal stroke that crosses the stem of a letter.

You could style letters such as 't' and 'f' to have cross strokes.

fox jumps

Arm

The arm of a letter pretrudes from the stem in one direction.

Most commonly used to style letters such as 'r'.
You might also choose to style letters such as 't' and 'f' to have arms instead of cross strokes.

over the

Bar

A horizontal stroke, that is enclosed inside the letter.
A good example would be the horizontal stroke of
the 'e'.

over the

Counter

The area of a letter that is entirely or partially enclosed by a letter form.

Examples of a closed counter would be the centre of the 'o' or the enclosed part of the 'e'.

Examples of an open counter would be the area inside of the 'v' or 'y'.

lazy dog

Terminal

The end of any stroke that doesn't include a serif.
These can be styled in a range of ways, and are a great way of giving your typeface character.

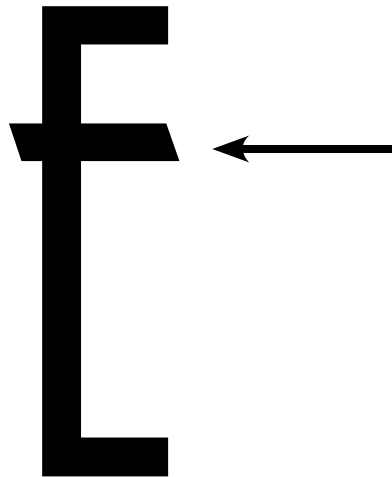
lazy

Character

It's the styling of all of these elements, that give a typeface its look and feel.

It's important to be aware of the common uses of certain stylistic choices, as these are often hard to shake.

In the 'Abstract' Series, Paula Scher talks of how simply by shifting the bar on your 'E', you can completely change the sensibility and spirit of your typeface.



Classification

We have already introduced some basic classifications of typefaces - which are essentially groups of fonts with similar attributes.

Serif

Sans Serif

Slab Serif

Script

Blackletter

Transitional

Display

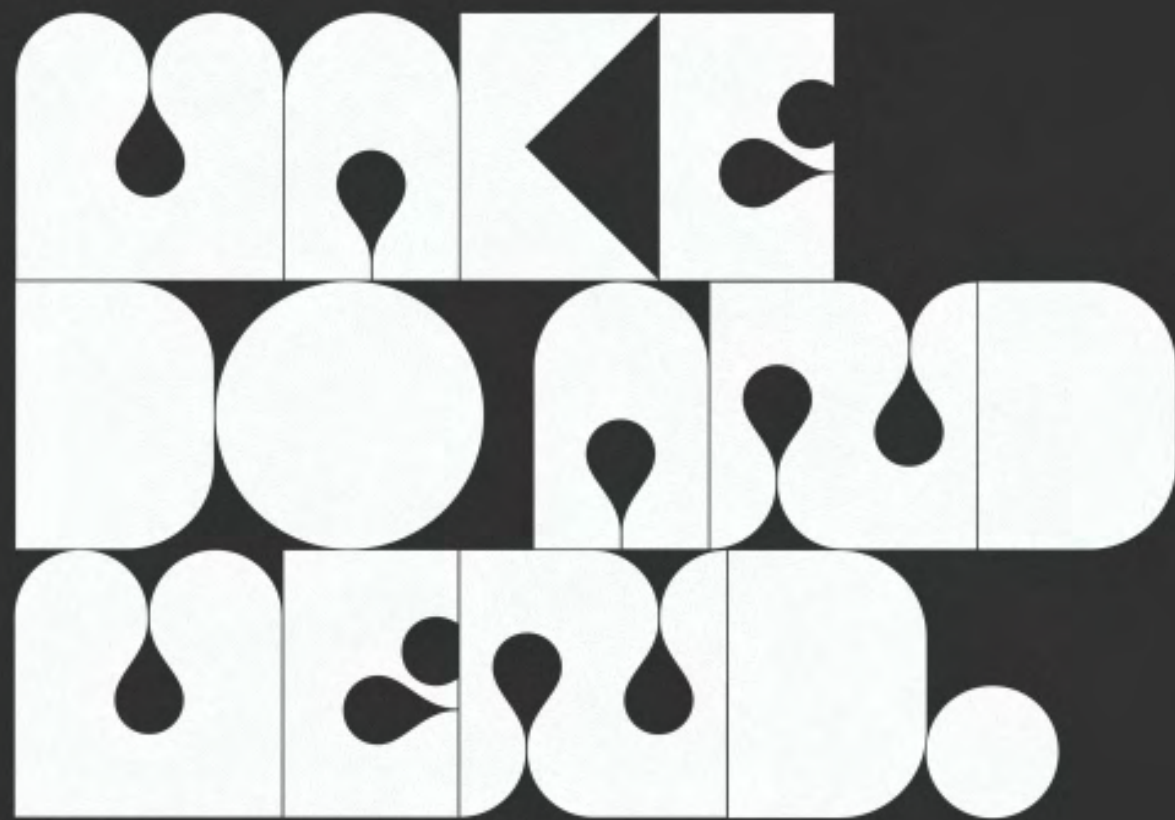
Display Type

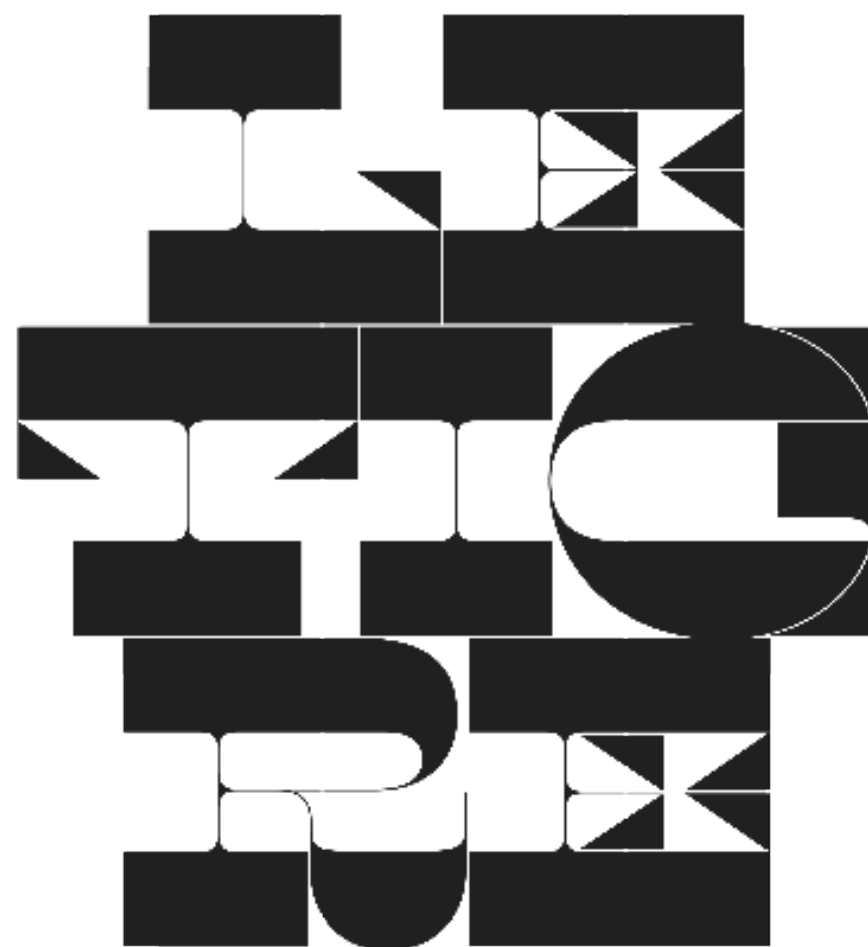


A display typeface is a font that is intended for use at large sizes for headings, rather than for extended passages of body text.

This means they can be much more playful, with exaggerated features - injecting real personality into your design work.

This is what we will all be creating for this final Typography project. Your task is not to look to redesign helvetica, but rather come up with something new, loud, fun and engaging.









LUCKY

THE QUICK BROWN FOX
JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG

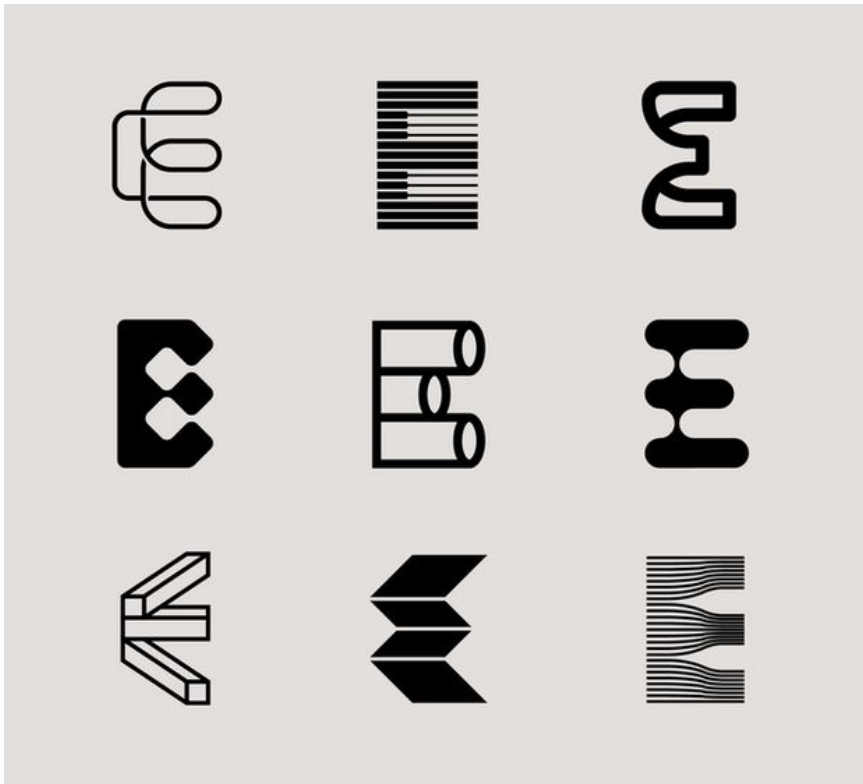
Workshop

Today we will each be investigating a single character. Our designs will come together to inform a collective typeface.

Further information on the printed brief.



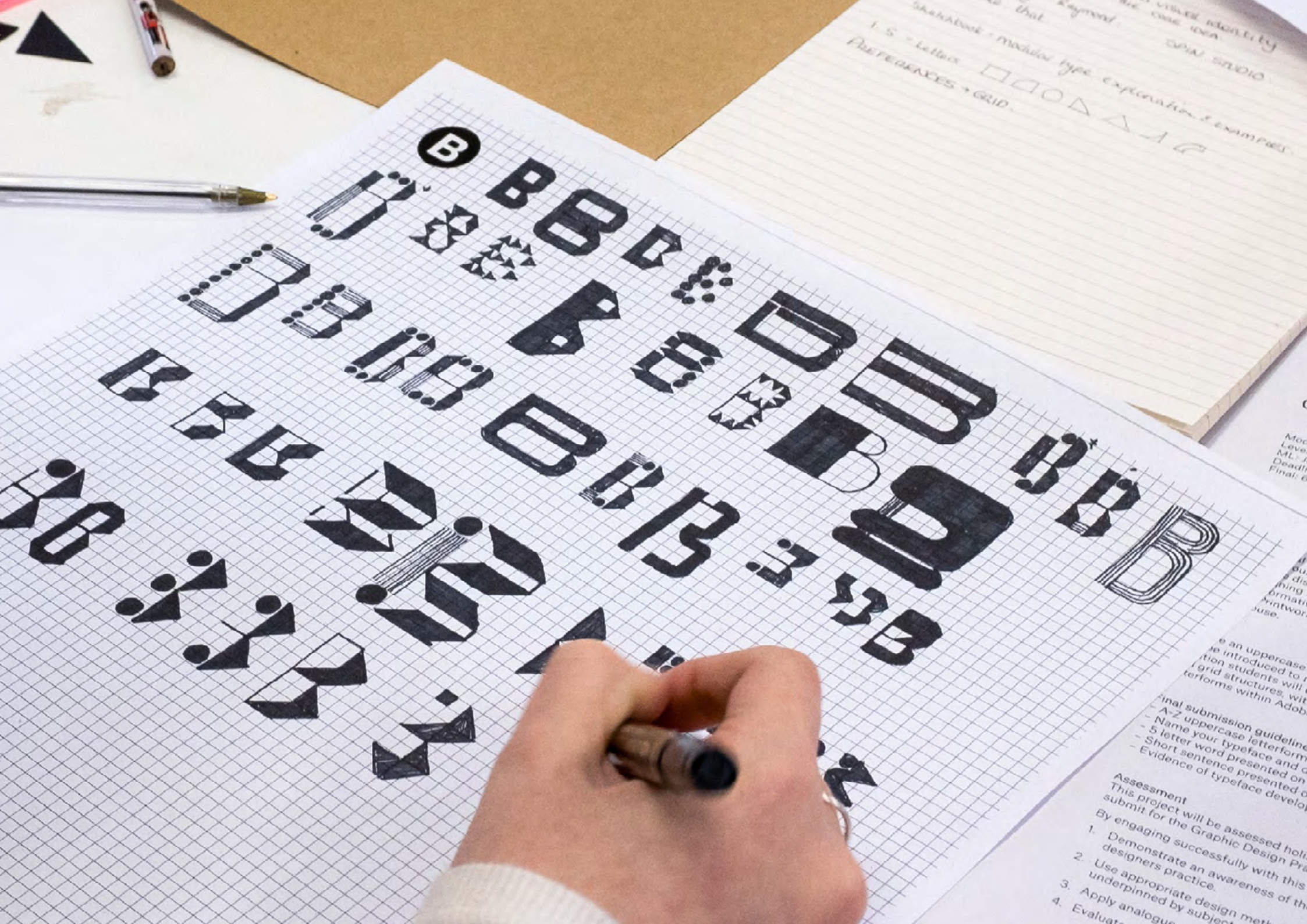
My Character



You have each been assigned a character from the alphabet. Explore ways to emphasise and exaggerate it's attributes, whether that be serif shapes, thicks and thins, stylised arms...

See how far you can push these letter shapes to create something new.

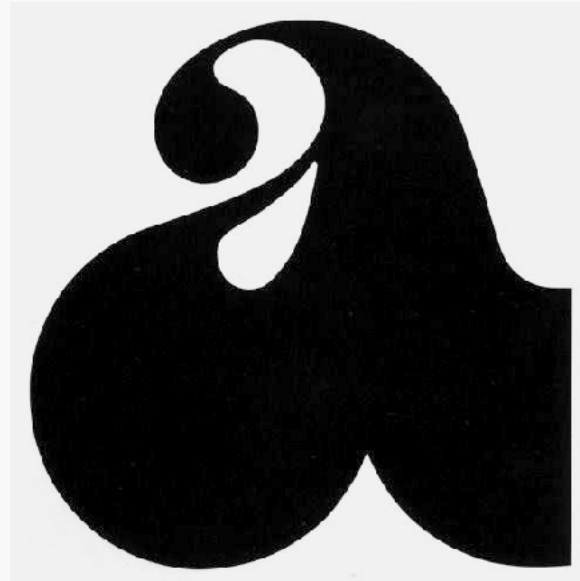
This single character, will need to be fully explored much like the star project - looking to abstract the form, and exaggerate the various parts of its 'anatomy'.



Sketchbook - modular type exploration & examples
1.5 - letters
APPEARANCES - GRID

Final submission guideline
- A-Z uppercase letterform
- Name your typeface and design
- 5 letter word presented on a line
- Short sentence presented on a line
- Evidence of typeface development

Assessment
This project will be assessed holistically and submitted for the Graphic Design Practice award.
By engaging successfully with this project, you will demonstrate an awareness of the design process and its underpinned by subject knowledge.
1. Demonstrate an awareness of the design process and its underpinned by subject knowledge.
2. Use appropriate design methods and techniques to develop a design solution.
3. Apply analogue and digital design techniques to develop a design solution.
4. Evaluate the design solution against the brief and provide a rationale for the design choices.



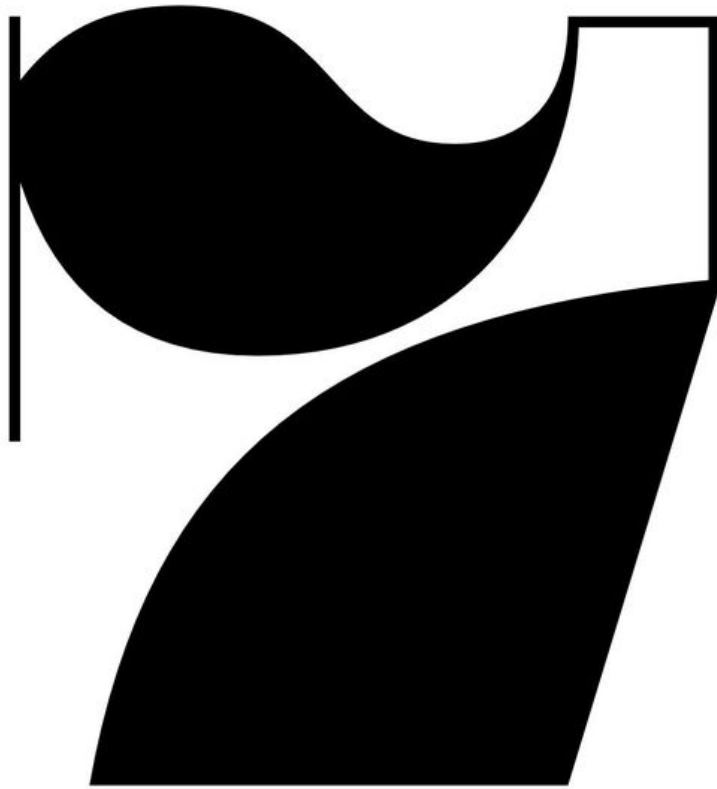
What are the basic recognisable letter shapes?



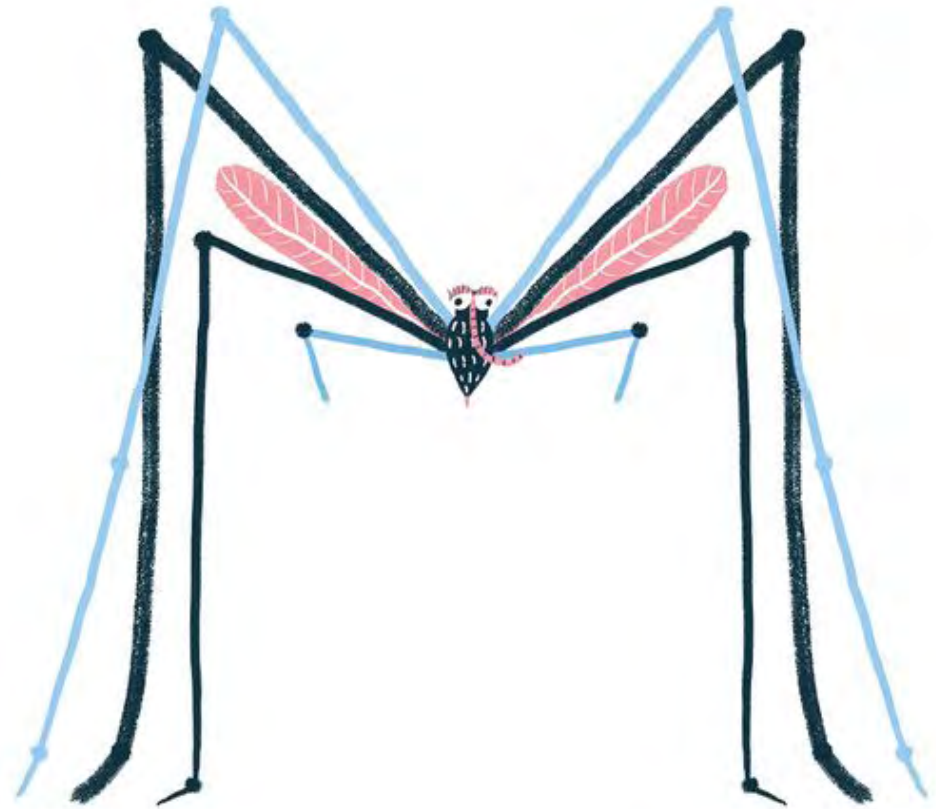
Can I abstract the form?



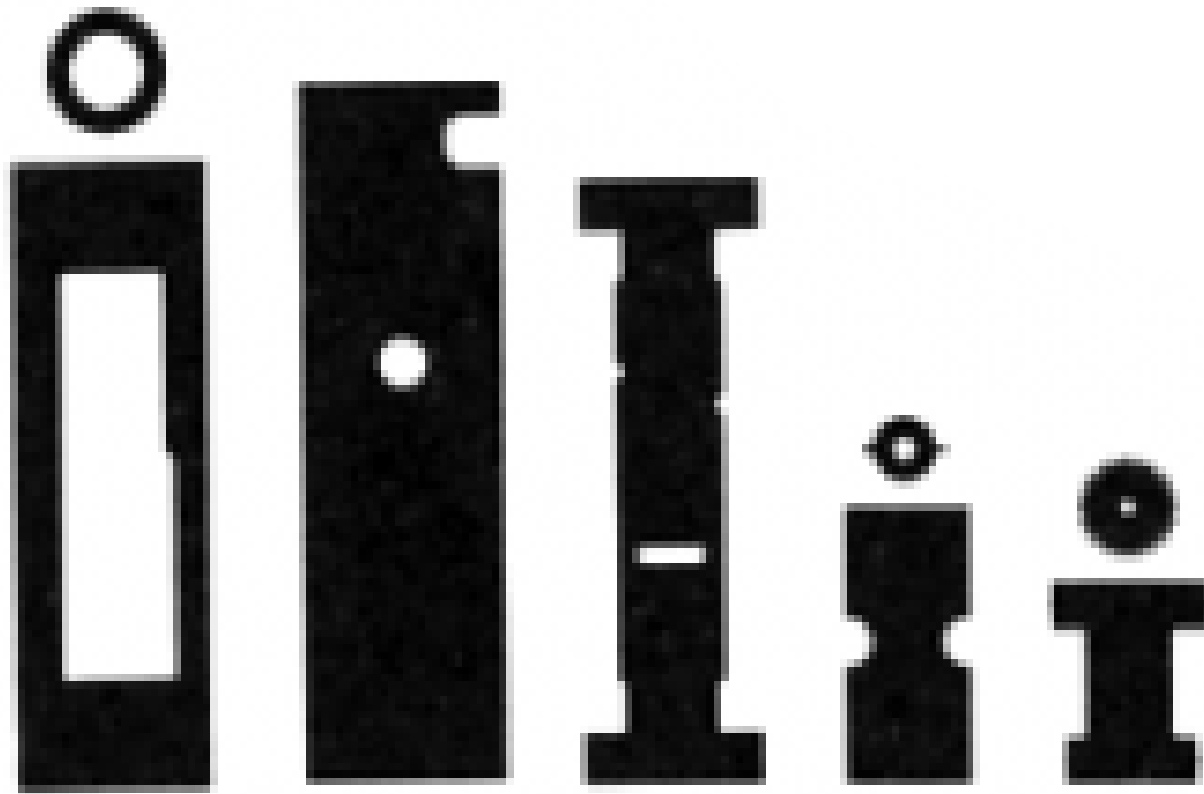
How can I exaggerate the anatomy?



Can I push the thicks and thins to extremes?

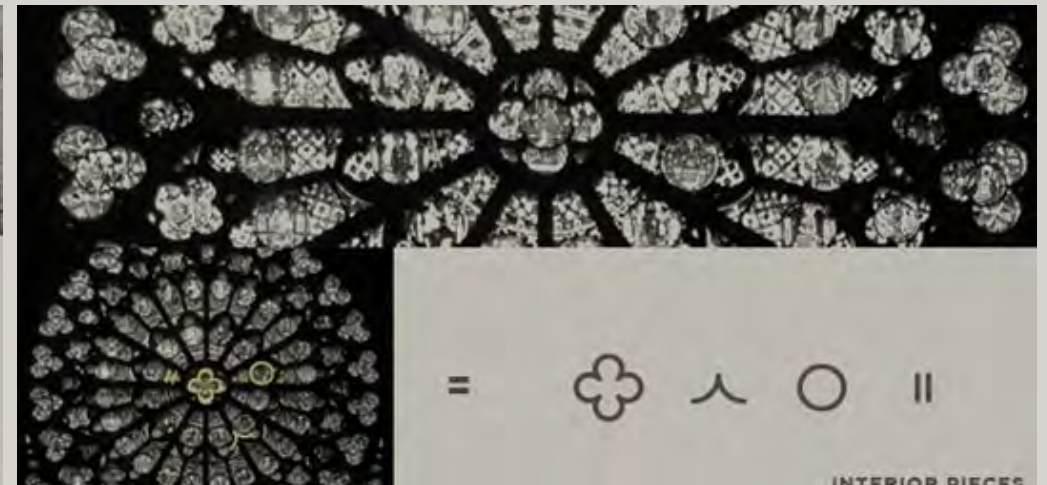
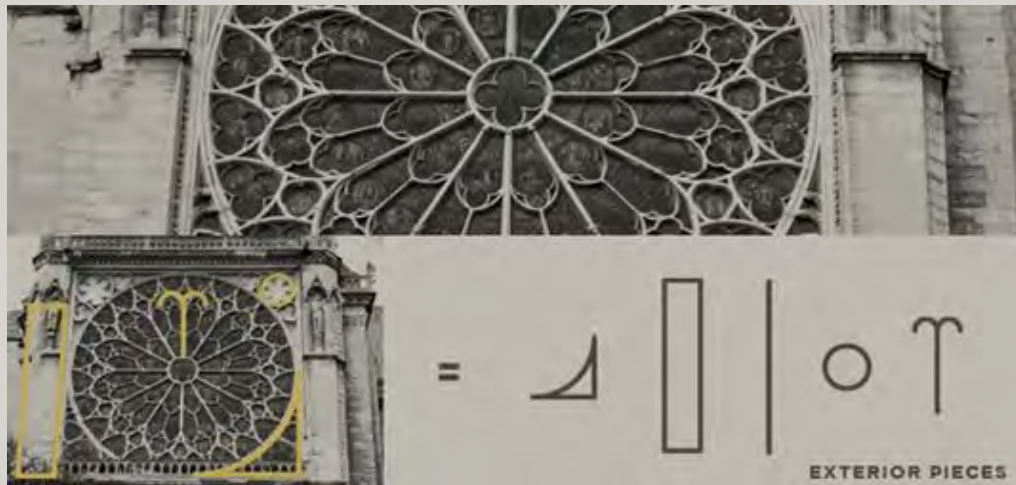


Can my character be pictorial?



Can my letters be informed by an object?

SOUTH



Or informed by an image?



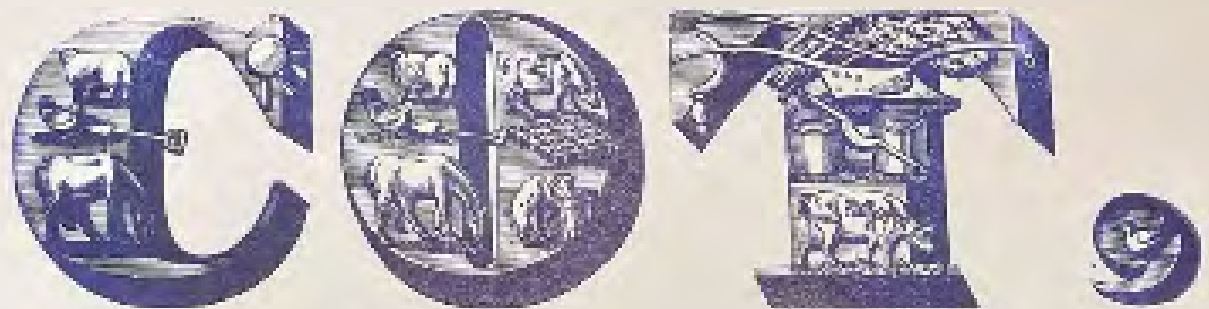
Or even become an image?



Can it take inspiration from history?



Points of Research:
American Woodtype





Design Tools

You have access to the digital machines and a room full of books and magazines. Visual research will be essential in providing you with inspiration.

There is no right or wrong way to work through ideas, the pen and paper hold just as much power as the mac.

You also have a bucket of mad 'bits' which you are welcome to dive in to.



Points of Research:
 36 Days of Type
 Collective Typeface

BA HONS
GRAPHIC
DESIGN
FIRST YEAR
COLLABORATIVE
LETTERING
PROJECT