typetogether

SENSEI PROJECT
PRIMARY FONT RATIONALE

01. DATA COLLECTION

The heart of this project is Primarium, a database that collects handwriting models and development notes from primary schools. These materials are relevant from a formal, theoretical, or historical standpoint.

Currently, there are over 600 references and several dozen interviews conducted with teachers, calligraphers, government officials, type designers, and educational material publishers.

02. DATA PROCESSING

We processed the information to understand the most frequently used calligraphic models in each country. Some countries have several significant models that may be preferred regionally or by certain types of schools. Some samples in this page.

Grafito (Chile)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789
The Quick Brown Fox
Jumps Over the Lazy Dog.

Italica (Italy)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

Zaner-Bloser Method (USA)

Zaner-Bloser Manuscript
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopq
rstuvwxyz ?!,.:'"
0123456789
The quick brown fox
jumps over the lazy dog

Zaner-Bloser Cursive
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopq
rstuvwxyz ?!,.:'"
0123456789
The quick brown fox
jumps over the lazy dog

Sassoon-Williams (UK)

Sassoon Primary
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

Sassoon Infant
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789
The quick brow fox
jumps over the lazy dog.

Sassoon Joined (ligatures off)
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

Sassoon Joined (two stylistic sets)
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

South Australian Modern Cursive (Australia)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Victorian Modern Cursive (Australia)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Memimas Pro (Spain)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789
The Quick Brown Fox
Jumps Over the Lazy Dog.
The Quick Brown Fox
Jumps Over the Lazy Dog.

Méthode Dumont (France)

Cursive Dumont Maternelle
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 ?!,.;:'"«»
The Quick Brown Fox Jumps Over the Lazy Dog

Cursive Dumont Elementaire
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 ?!,.;:'"«»
The Quick Brown Fox Jumps Over the Lazy Dog

Quittant le wharf de l'île de Croy, le cœur déçu
mais l'âme en joie, son fez brûlé sur la tête,
la plutôt naïve Laetitia, crapaüta en canoë au delà
des Kerguelen, pour s'exiler où? Près du mälström!

Kindergarten (Brazil)

Kindergarten Regular (letra cursiva vertical)
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789 ?!,.;:'"«»
The Quick Brown Fox Jumps Over the Lazy Dog.
À noite, vovô Kowalsky vê o iamã cair no pé
do pinguim queixoso e vovó põe açúcar
no chá de tâmaras do jabuti feliz.

03. STRUCTURE ANALYSIS

We analyzed all the samples and compiled sets of structural letterform variations that were detached from the calligraphic ductus as much as possible. In other words, we tried to answer the question "In how many ways can we draw this letter?" regardless of speed, condensation, weight, slant, or writing tool.
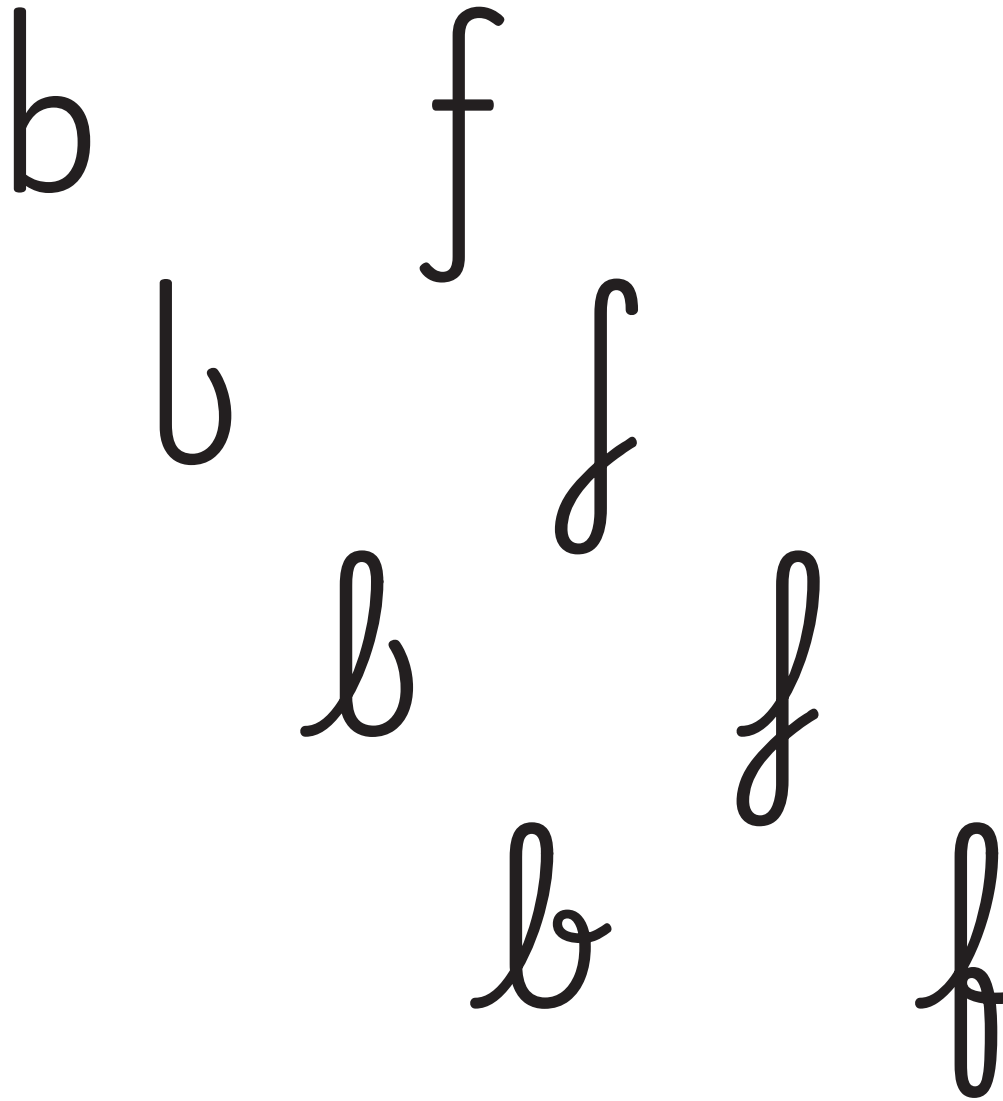
04. SYSTEM RATIONALE

The letter structures were used to build distinct letter groups that share similar construction criteria. Some letters repeated themselves in several groups while other tended to change more often. In total we recognized 7 lower case groups and 3 upper case groups.

lc01. the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

lc02. the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

lc03. the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

lc04. the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

lc05. the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

lc06. the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

lc07. the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

UC01. A B D E H

UC02. A B D E H

UC03. A B D E H

05. VARIATION AXES

We designed 16 masters for each structural variation in their isolated, initial, medial, and final forms, and we made the same with all of the connecting strokes that were used to join letters that shared similar designs.

The four variation axes are: slant, weight, extender height and writing speed (a custom axis that plays with the tension of the curves and the joining strokes)
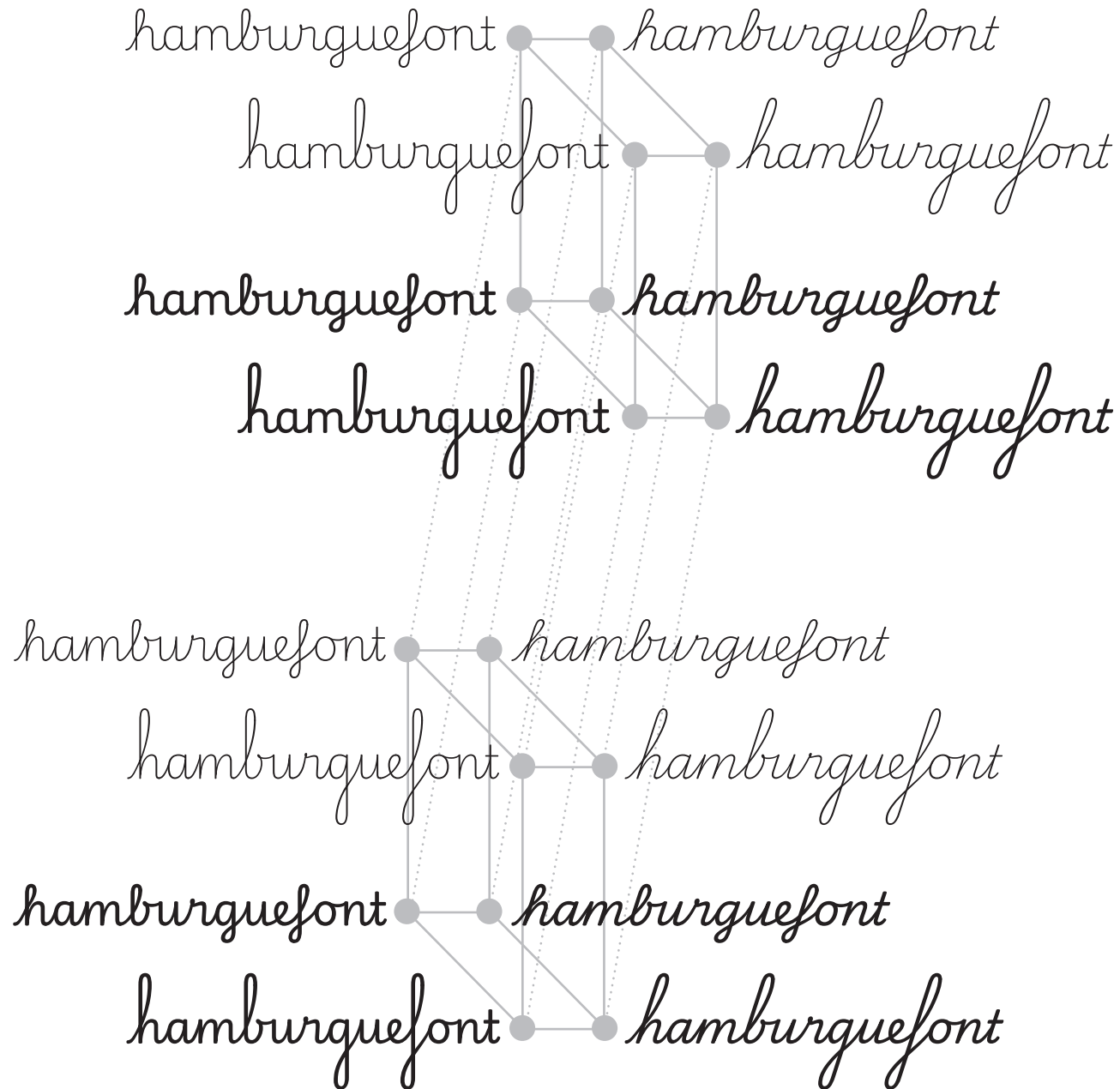
05. HOW DOES IT WORK

In most cases the system allows to obtainregional variation by a simple 2-step process.

a- For each country/region we assign the glyphs that match a local structural preference.

b- We assign a point in the design space that matches the proportions and ductus used locally

Note: in certain cases an additional shape must be designed as well.

a

lc01.	○ ○
lc02.	○ ○
lc03.	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
lc04.	○ ○
lc05.	● ● ● ● ● ○ ● ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ● ● ● ● ○ ● ● ● ● ○ ●
lc06.	○ ○
lc07.	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○
UC01.	○ ○
UC02.	● ● ● ○ ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ● ● ●
UC03.	○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ● ● ● ○ ○ ○

b

SLANT	▭
WEIGHT	▭
EXTENDERS	▭
SPEED	▭