

LITERACY BUDDIES®

IT'S THE WRITE THING TO DO

Letter writing resources



ARDOCH

**REALISING CHILDREN'S POTENTIAL
THROUGH EDUCATION**

Letter writing rules

Please follow these rules when writing letters to ensure child safety and a smooth running program!

1. No identifying information

Please ensure the letters do not include your surname, date of birth, social media handles, email address, home address or phone number.

2. Names

Make sure that your name and your Little Buddy's name are on the letter so we can make sure it goes to the right person!

3. No personal photos

No personal photos. Do not include photos of yourself, friends or family. Photos of pets, famous people, landscapes etc. are encouraged!

4. Child friendly content

Check that any films or music that you write about are child friendly.

5. Neutral language

Please use neutral language to sign off your letter such as "best wishes" rather than "hugs", "with love", "xoxo" etc

6. Child safety

You are the only one able to write as you have done all the compliance processes - please do not allow family members/friends to contribute.

Ardoch Child Safety Commitment

Ardoch is committed to protecting children's rights, safety and wellbeing and has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child abuse

Impactful writing

Here are some guidelines to ensure that your letter exchange is impactful for your Little Buddy!

1. Handwrite letters

Letters should be handwritten if possible! Reading handwriting is a distinct and valuable skill for the Little Buddies and also aids in building a personal connection. If handwritten is not possible due to working from home or other circumstances, typed is fine.

2. A4 letters

Letters should be written and decorated on an A4 page. Colourful decorations, stickers and pictures are encouraged so that your Little Buddy feels valued! Do not include any gifts in your letters.

3. Thoughtful content

Your Little Buddy might be from a different cultural background to you - enjoy this opportunity to learn and respond to what they are saying!

4. Support

If there is ever anything in the letter exchange that you find concerning, please let Ardoch and your coordinator know immediately.



What to write

Prompts and ideas

You will respond to what your Little Buddy writes, but here are some prompts you might like to use in your letters. These themes and questions can be big or small, and feel free to add your own ideas.

Topics you can write about:

- describing your family
- what a typical day at work involves
- what you like to do on the weekend
- what (child friendly) books, TV or films you have read or watched recently
- what hobbies you have
- what your favourite subjects at school were
- what job you wanted to do when you were at school
- a favourite joke or interesting fact

Questions to ask your Little Buddy:

- what's something interesting you have recently learned in school?
- what is your favourite food?
- what books do you like to read?
- what music are you listening to at the moment?
- what are your hobbies?
- who is someone you admire, and why?
- if you could go anywhere in the world on holiday, where would it be and why?
- what jobs might you want to do when you grow up?

Troubleshooting

I didn't receive a letter this time - what do I do?

Sometimes Little Buddies are away or having difficulty in class and so don't manage to write a letter. In this case we ask that you write them a letter regardless so they don't miss out, and hopefully they find it encouraging! If a Little Buddy is away for several rounds, we'll let you know if you need to continue writing based on their teacher's advice.

My Little Buddy wrote a very short letter, how do I respond?

Little Buddies are all at different stages of writing skill and also class engagement. If you receive a very short letter, try your best to respond to what they have written. You can also ask questions and talk about relatable topics (e.g. what is your favourite animal and why?) to encourage their response in the next round.

My Little Buddy has said something strange/concerning, what do I do?

At Ardoch we screen all letters and will let you know if there is an issue. However, if you have any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of your Little Buddy please contact the Ardoch Program Coordinators immediately as child safety is our top priority. We will follow up with the school as necessary and advise you on how to respond.

My Little Buddy's letter doesn't quite make sense, and I'm not sure how to write a good letter back to them!

Students are practicing their letter writing, and sometimes it doesn't quite go completely to plan! The Little Buddies are often quite young so they may not remember what they wrote last time or might not write completely coherent sentences. Just do your best to respond to what they have written, repetition of questions can be helpful (e.g. last time you asked what pets I had, well I have two cats). Having a clear letter structure with a paragraph per theme can also help make it easier for the Little Buddy to read if that is something they find challenging.

Big Buddy letter examples

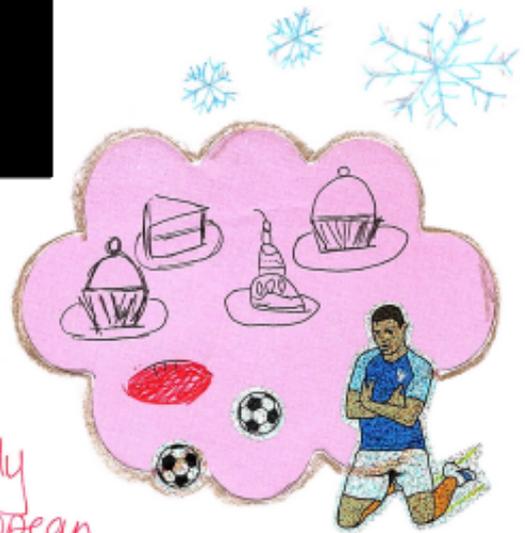
Here are two beautiful letter examples from last year to give you an idea of what Big Buddies have written!

Dear



Thank you for sending me your letter.

I'm glad to hear you like football - do you have a favourite team? My family & I have been watching the European soccer finals. We support England so we're hoping they win. We all support Sydney Swans in AFL, except my son, who supports the Tigers!



Do you have any animals? I have a cat and two chickens, who live in our backyard. They used to lay an egg every day but they don't in winter because it's a bit cold for them!

In your letter you also asked what Tiramisu is. It's an Italian dessert, a bit like a trifle, but made with coffee & chocolate - yum! I have a sweet tooth & like making cakes, cookies & desserts. Do you have a favourite dessert?

I hope you've been enjoying the school holidays. What did you get up to? I went to the beach with my family & we went swimming & walking & saw lots of wildlife including a koala & some whales.

I can't wait to get your next letter. From your big Buddy



Dear [redacted]

I didn't know that fact about Neptune, that is Awesome!

What did you cook for your masterchef class? I have just had two weeks off and I did plenty of cooking on my holidays. Do you like to cook with your family. I personally love cooking stir fry/noodle dishes, what's your favourite thing to cook with mum & dad?

Your class will have to be on their best behaviour to fill the jar back up. What other activities can you all do when it's filled?

Those names were cool for a fish, although I have decided not to get a fish as they are quite boring. Did you have any animals? I would love a border collie puppy.

I do enjoy lego, they have a huge spaceship built here at the law firm. You will get to see it when your school gets to come visit.

My favourite subject at school was Art and Japanese. I do think im a good drawer, I did the pokemon characters. Art is fun because you can draw/paint anything and it's still art! Japanese is hard but it's also fun to speak another language.

Thanks for your letter [redacted]! look forward to hearing from you soon.

From [redacted] ☺

1. Ichi 一

2. Ni 二

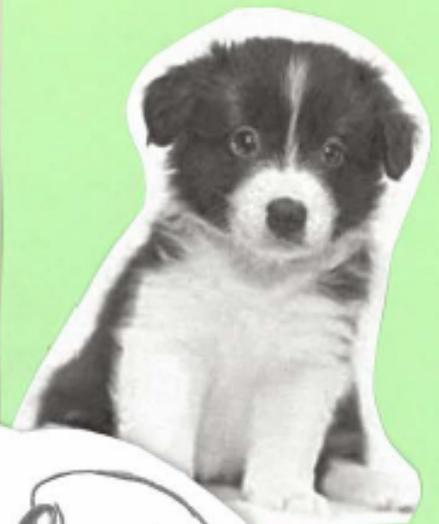
3. San 三

Hello

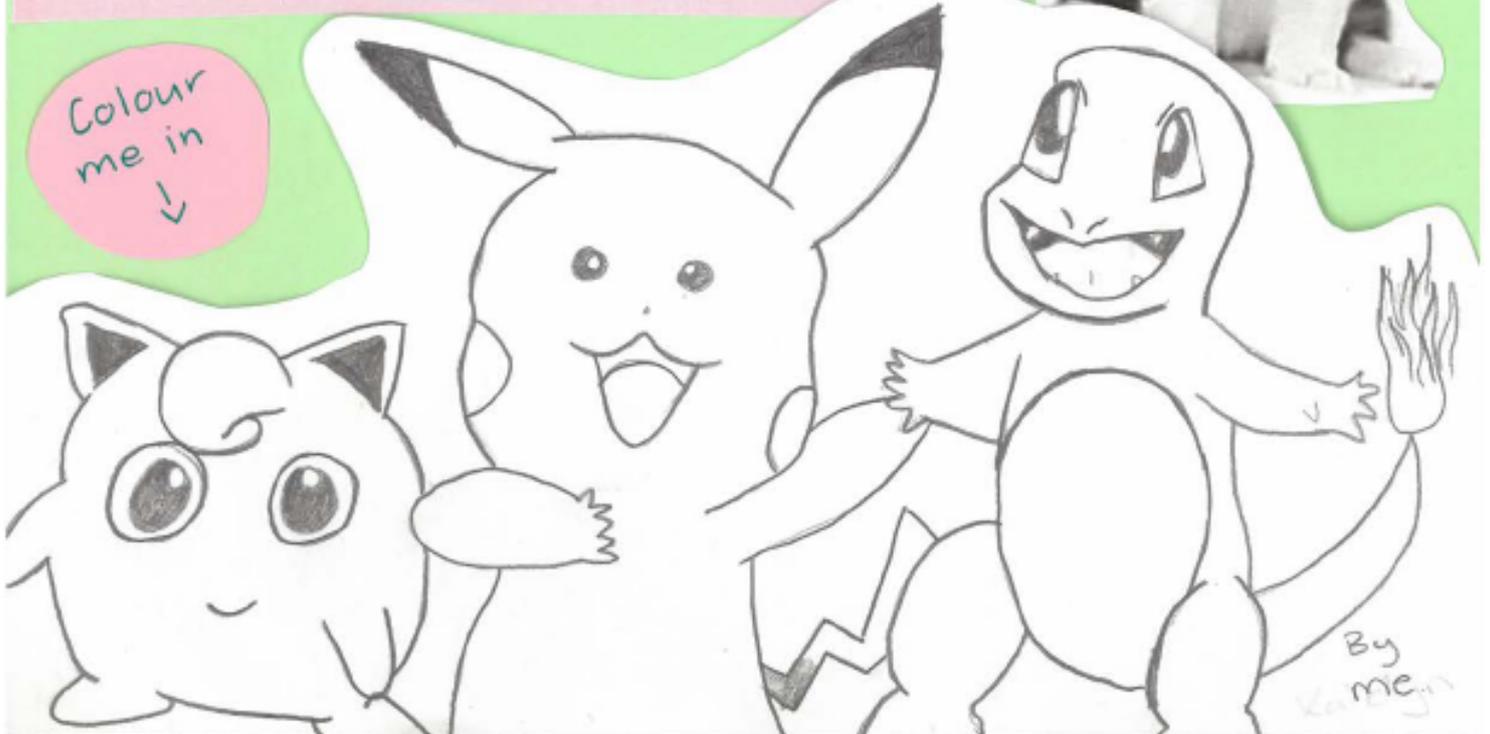
Ko-ni-chi-wa

Goodbye

Sa-you-na-ra



Colour
me in
↓



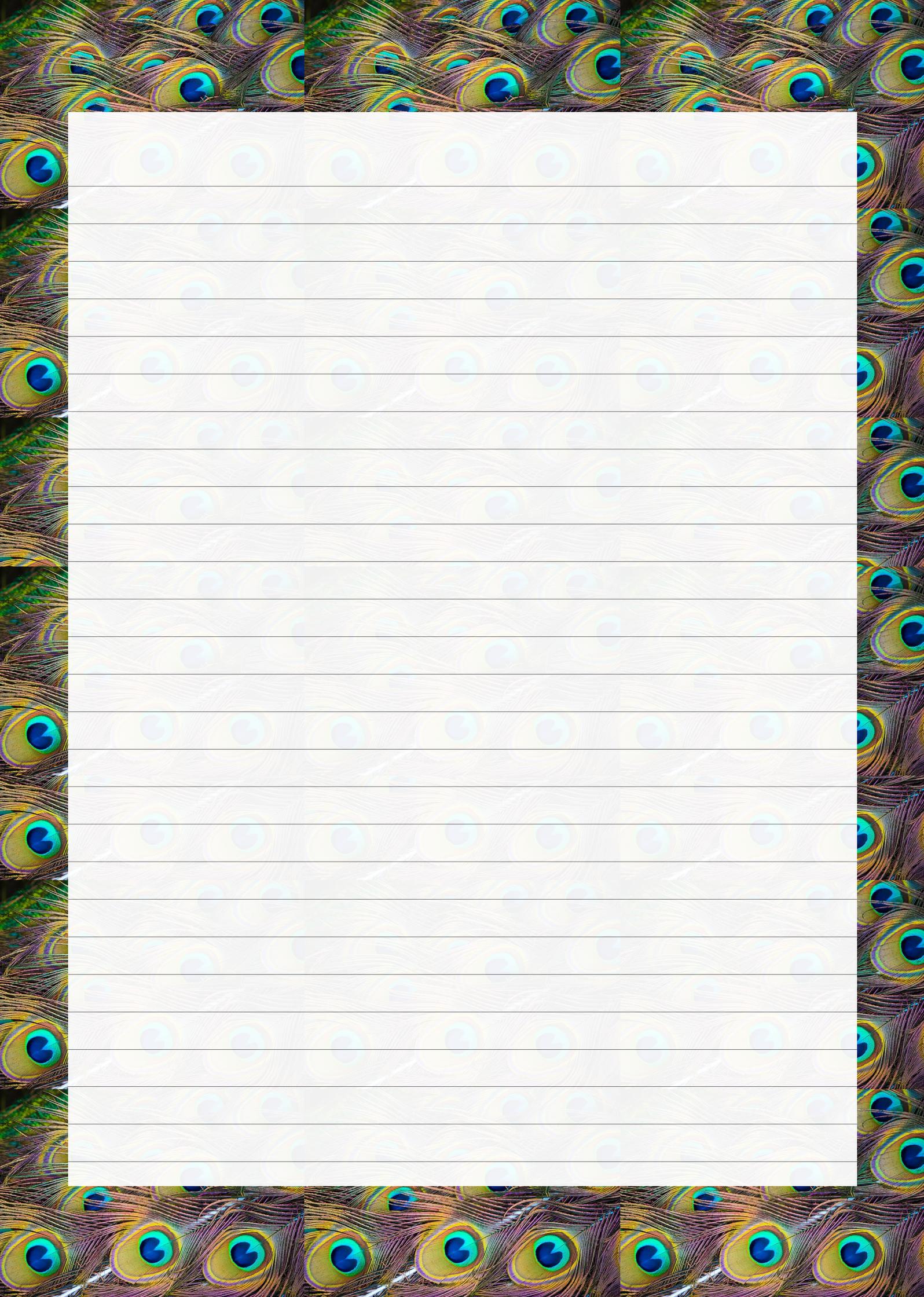
By
Kamryn

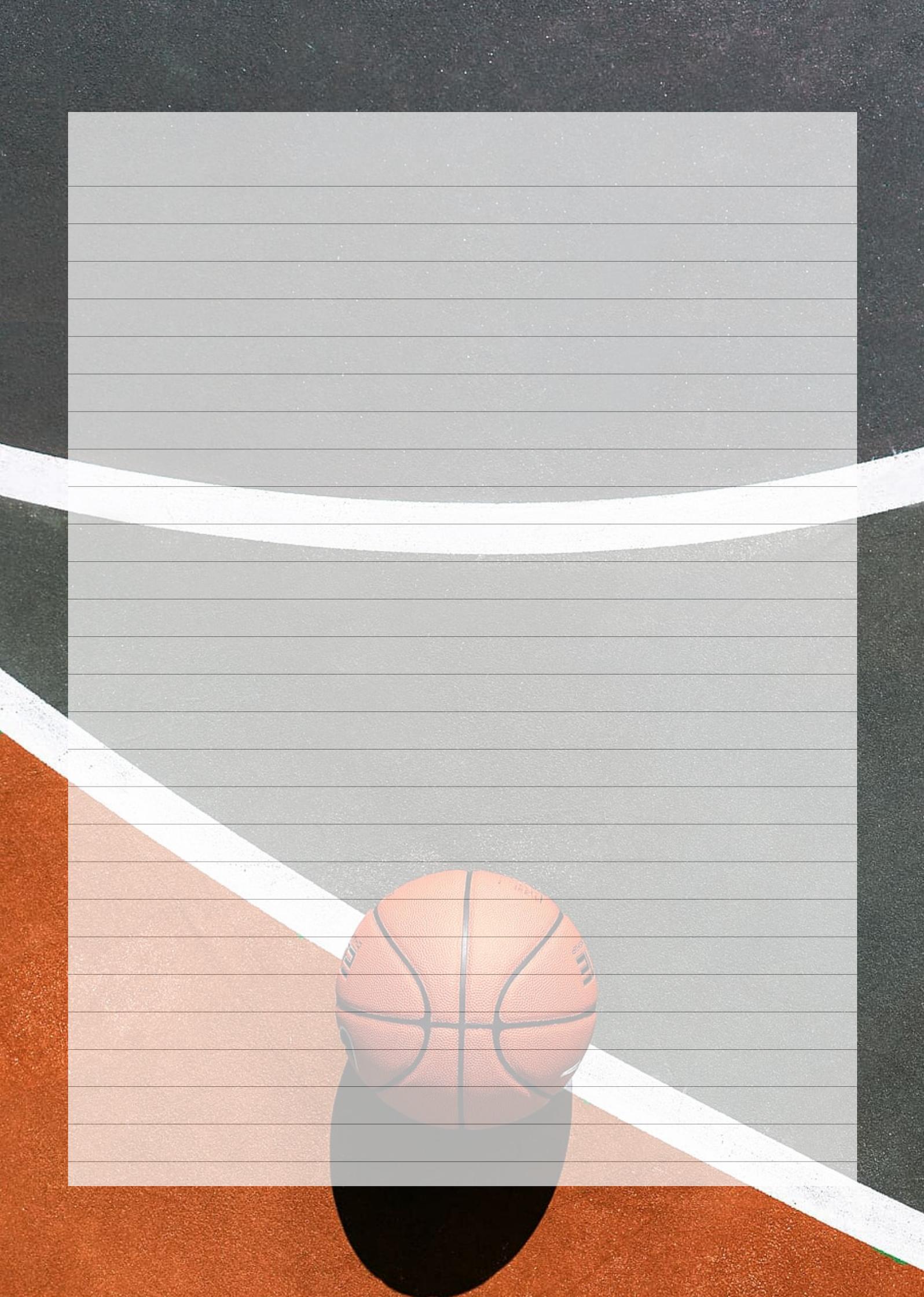
Templates and other resources

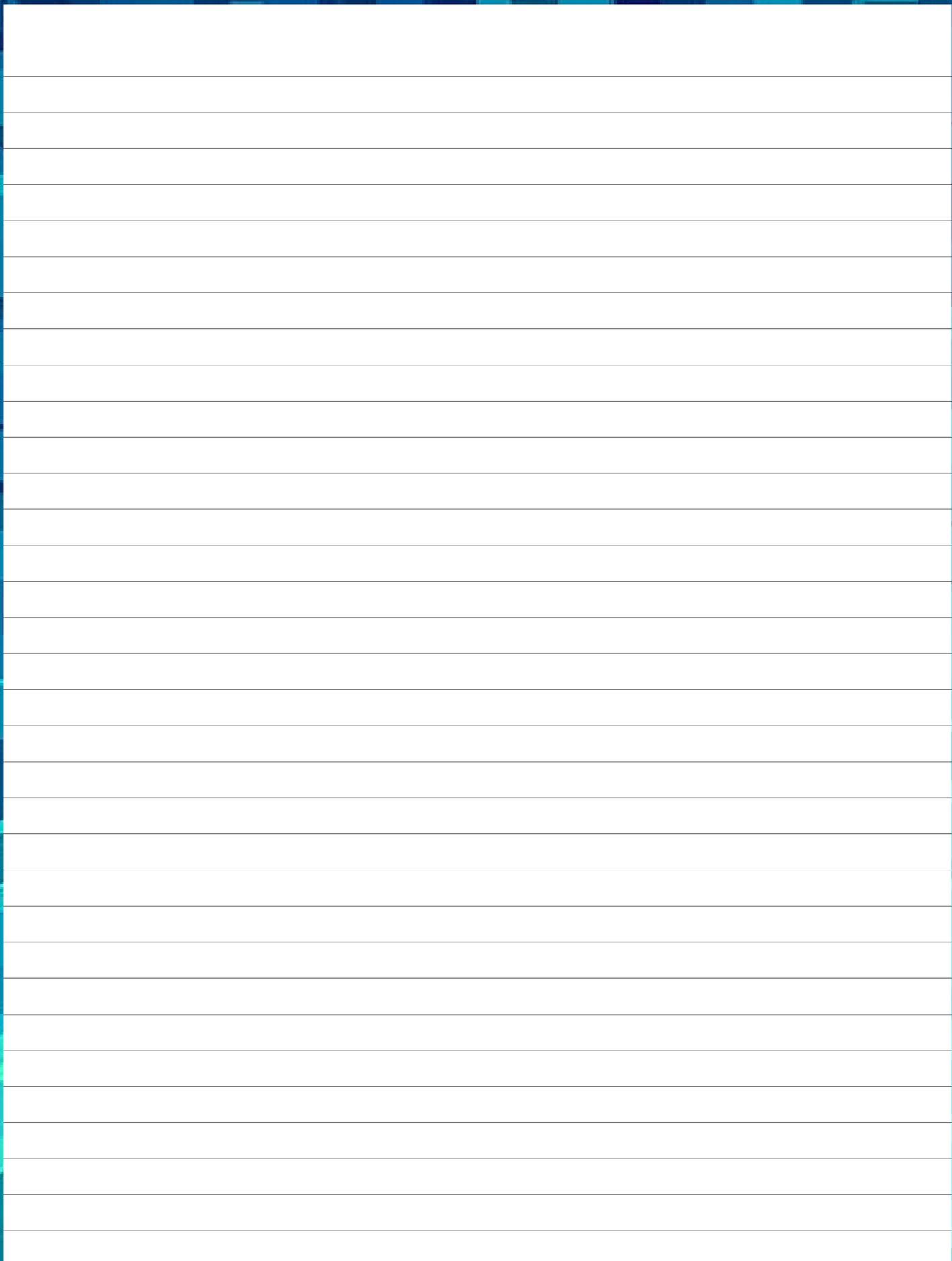
The following pages are lined paper templates with colourful designs that you can print out and use! However please feel free to make up your own A4 designs and decorations if you would prefer.

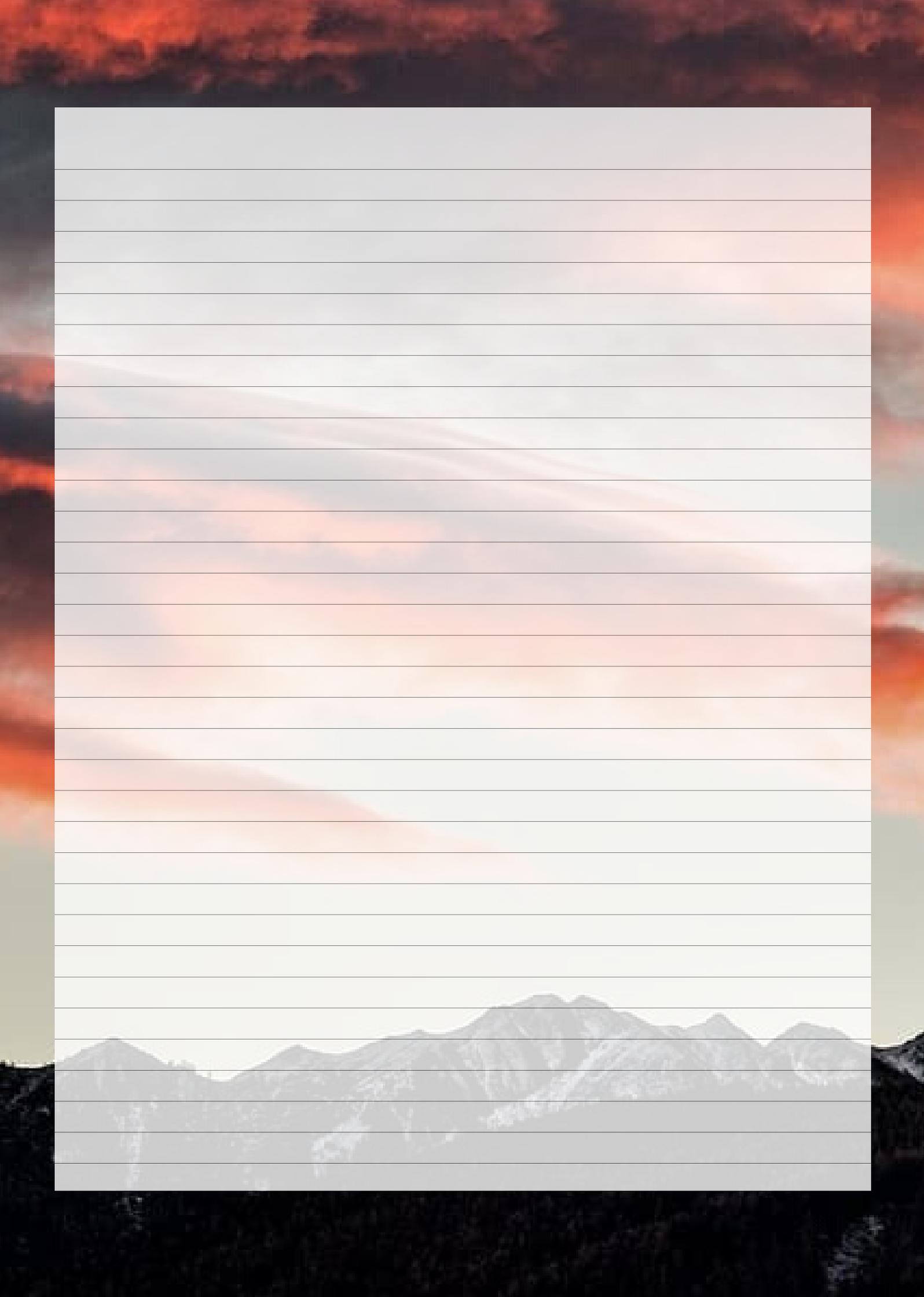
Some free sites you might like to use to help with letter writing or decorating are:

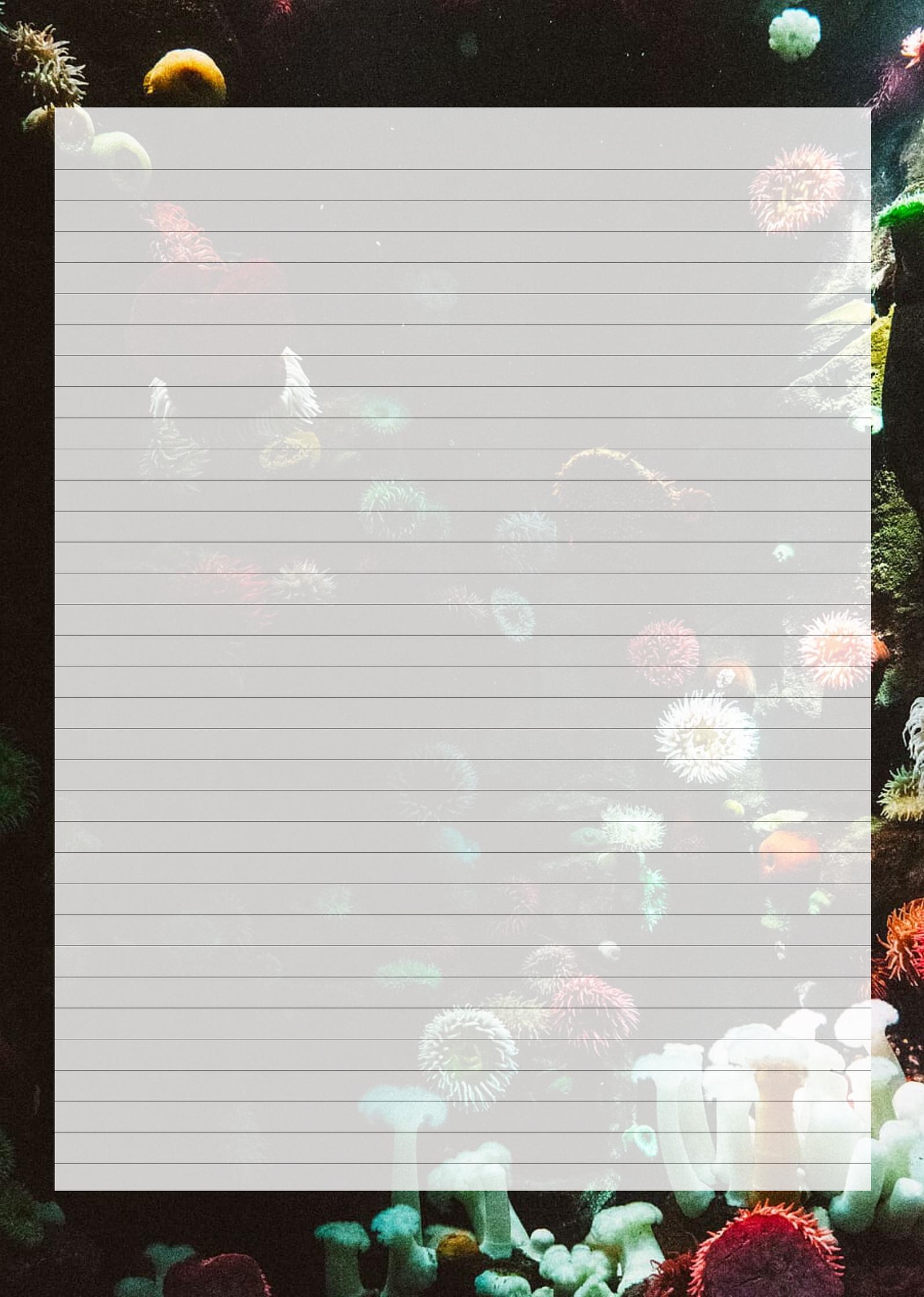
- Canva - a graphic design platform: <https://www.canva.com/>
- pixlr - an image editing website: <https://pixlr.com/>

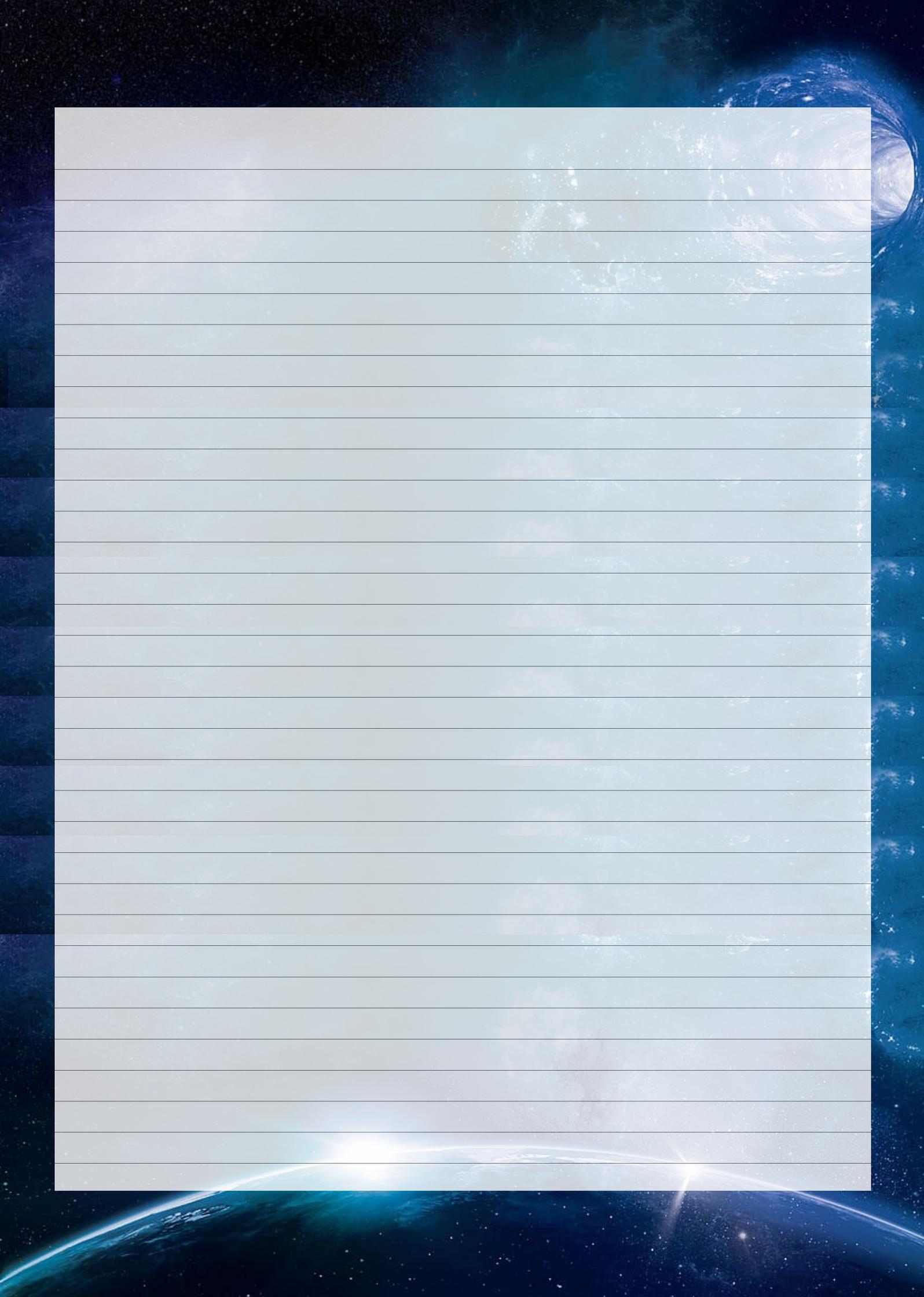




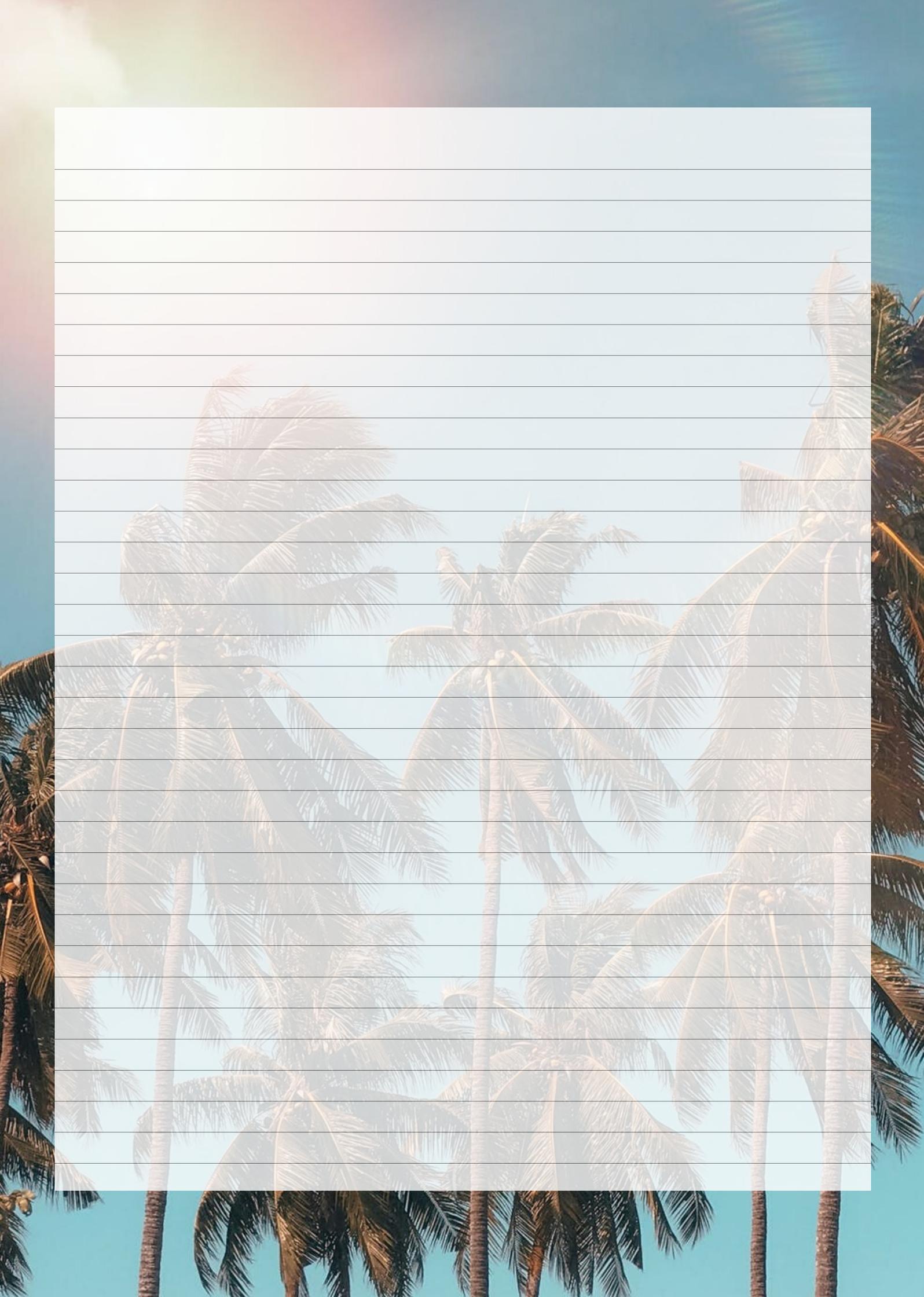


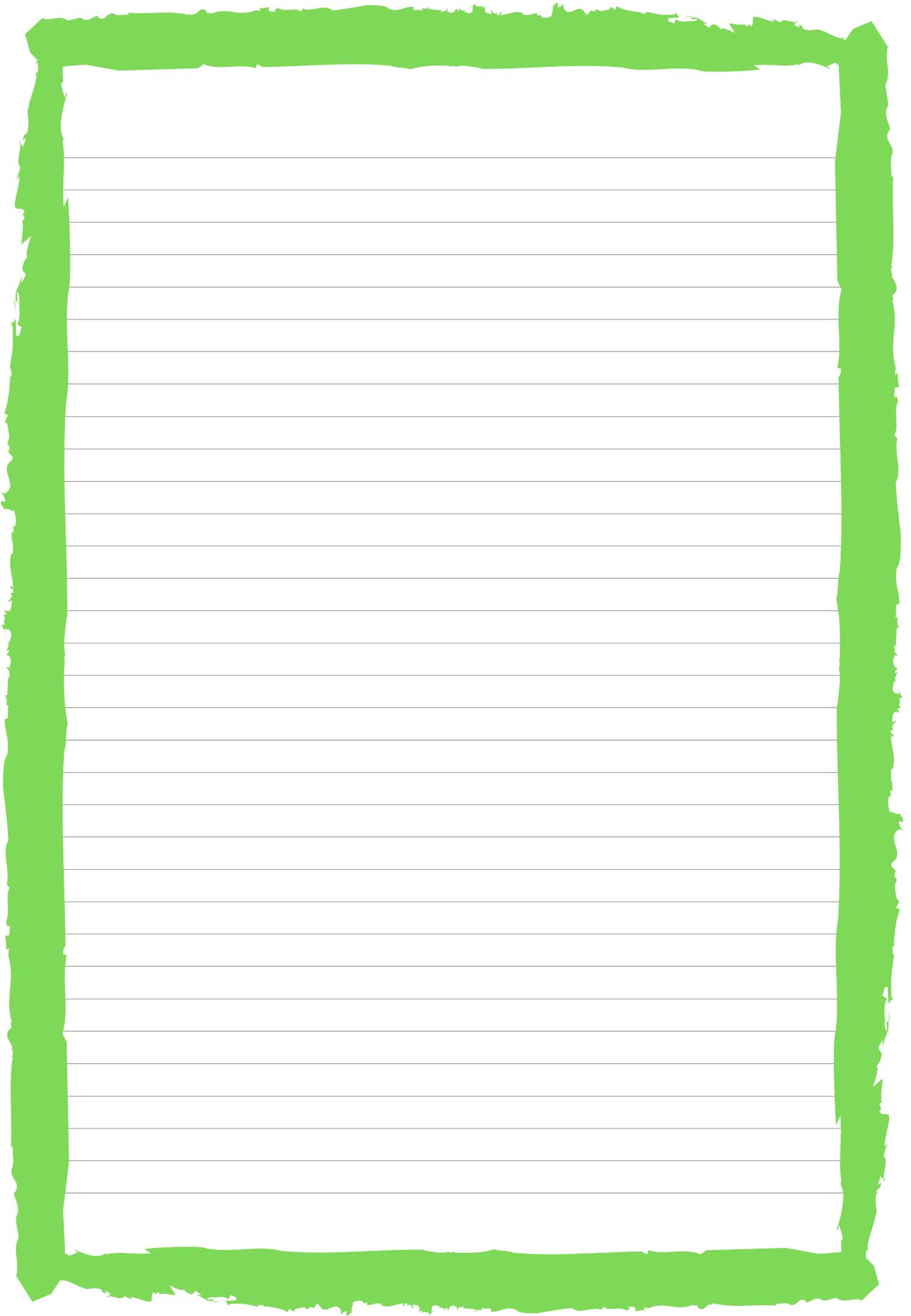


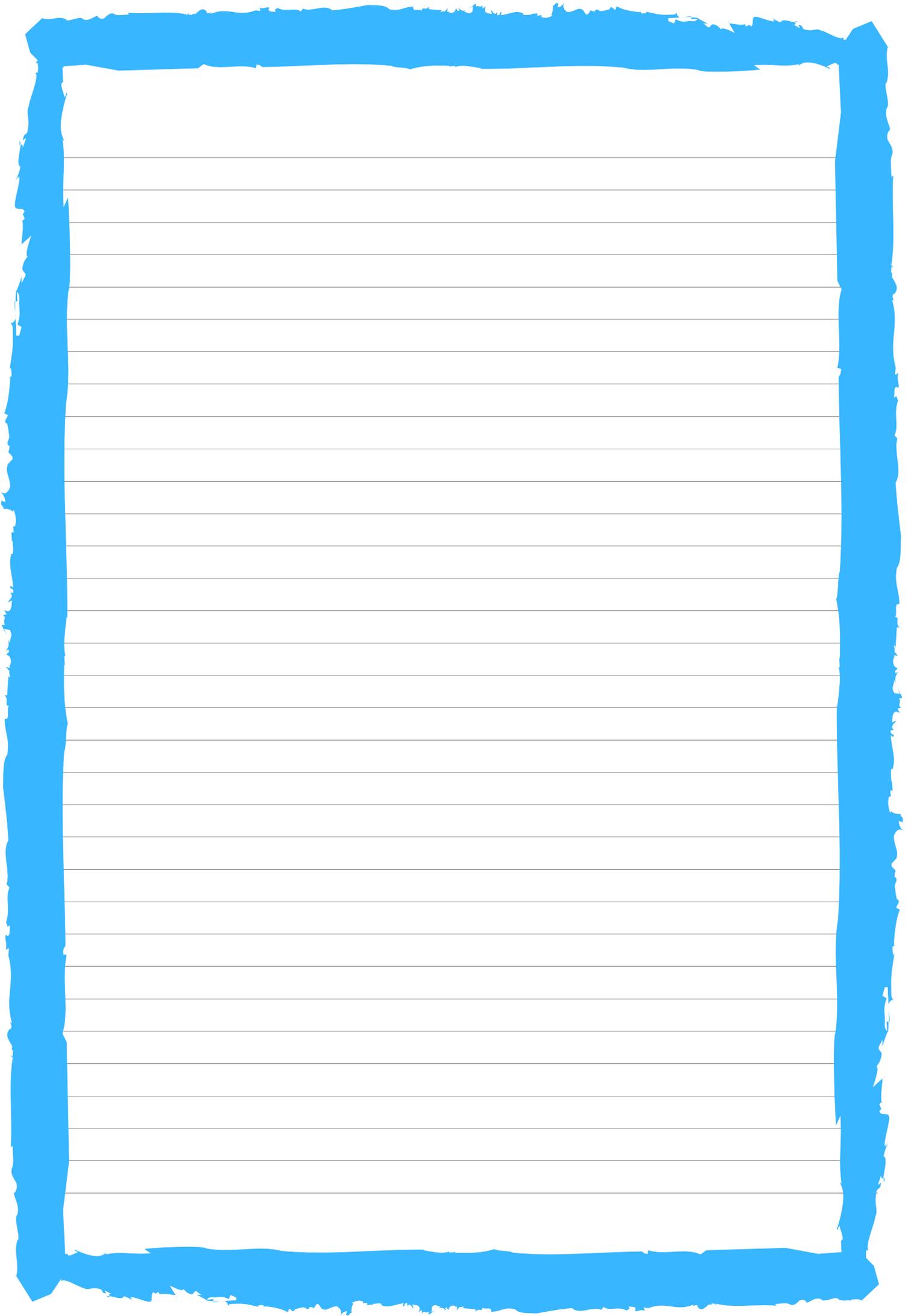




A large, blank, lined area for writing, consisting of approximately 25 horizontal lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page, leaving a margin on the left and right sides.











A series of horizontal lines for writing, consisting of 25 evenly spaced lines extending across the width of the page.









