

Writing

Ideas

A SELECTION OF NARRATIVE WRITING TASKS FOR
PRIMARY CHILDREN



INTRODUCTION

What is the Writing over Time (WoT) project?

The WoT project is all about how children's writing, in the Merseyside area, has changed over time. To investigate this, samples of Merseyside children's writing has been digitised from the APU archive—the largest historical archive of children's reading, speech and writing. Similar data has also been collected and digitised from local partner schools from 2020-2022. The digitisation of this writing enables the comparison of writing before and after the Digital turn and implementation of the National Curriculum.

So what is this booklet for?

Not only does this research allow for the exploration of language and language change but it also facilitates an impact on the wider educational community through the transfer of research into tangible outcomes. We have therefore created this booklet complete with activities taken from the 1979-1988 APU writing tasks. It is a resource which can be used to support children's writing both in school and at home.

FINISH THE STORY



We would like you to write a story. The story has been started already, and there is a picture to go with it. Look carefully at the picture and then finish the story. Here is the beginning of the story...

We had just arrived in Devon, placed our bags into the cottage and started on our walk down to the small beach at the bottom of the country road. As we reached the golden sands, Theo (my little brother) grabbed my hand and pulled me to go to explore. He was desperate to find treasure after reading his new adventure book in which a group of children discovered a huge treasure chest on the beach. As we were walking, we noticed a cave tucked away in the rocks. We turned to each other excitedly, of course we had to go inside. I went first, Theo following...



Some ideas to think about...

What is it going to be called? Think about an exciting title for your story.

Where is the story set? Will the characters be transported into a mystical land or maybe sent into outer space?


Who are the main characters? Think about what they look like, what they do in the story and how they feel.

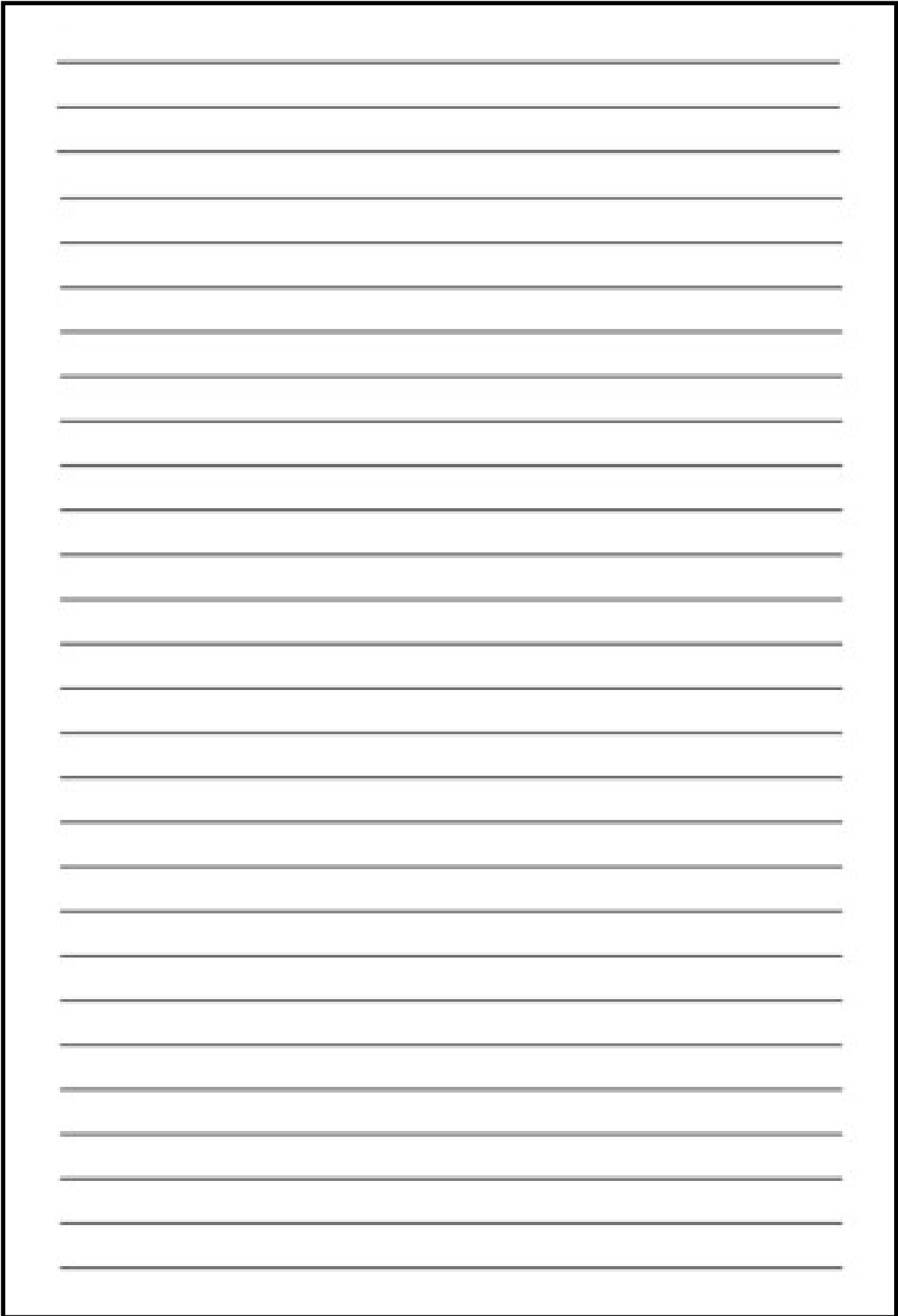
What is the plot of the story? Think about what is going to happen after entering the cave.

What features will your writing have?

How is the story going to end? Will your characters learn something? Will a problem be solved?

Here is some space to write. If you wish, you can continue onto additional pages.

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A TRADITIONAL TALE



Think of a story most people know. It could be a story from history, a folk-tale, a legend, even a fairy story. Invent a new and completely different way for the story to end. Tell your ending to the story in about half a page.


Here are some stories. You might choose one of these or think of your own.

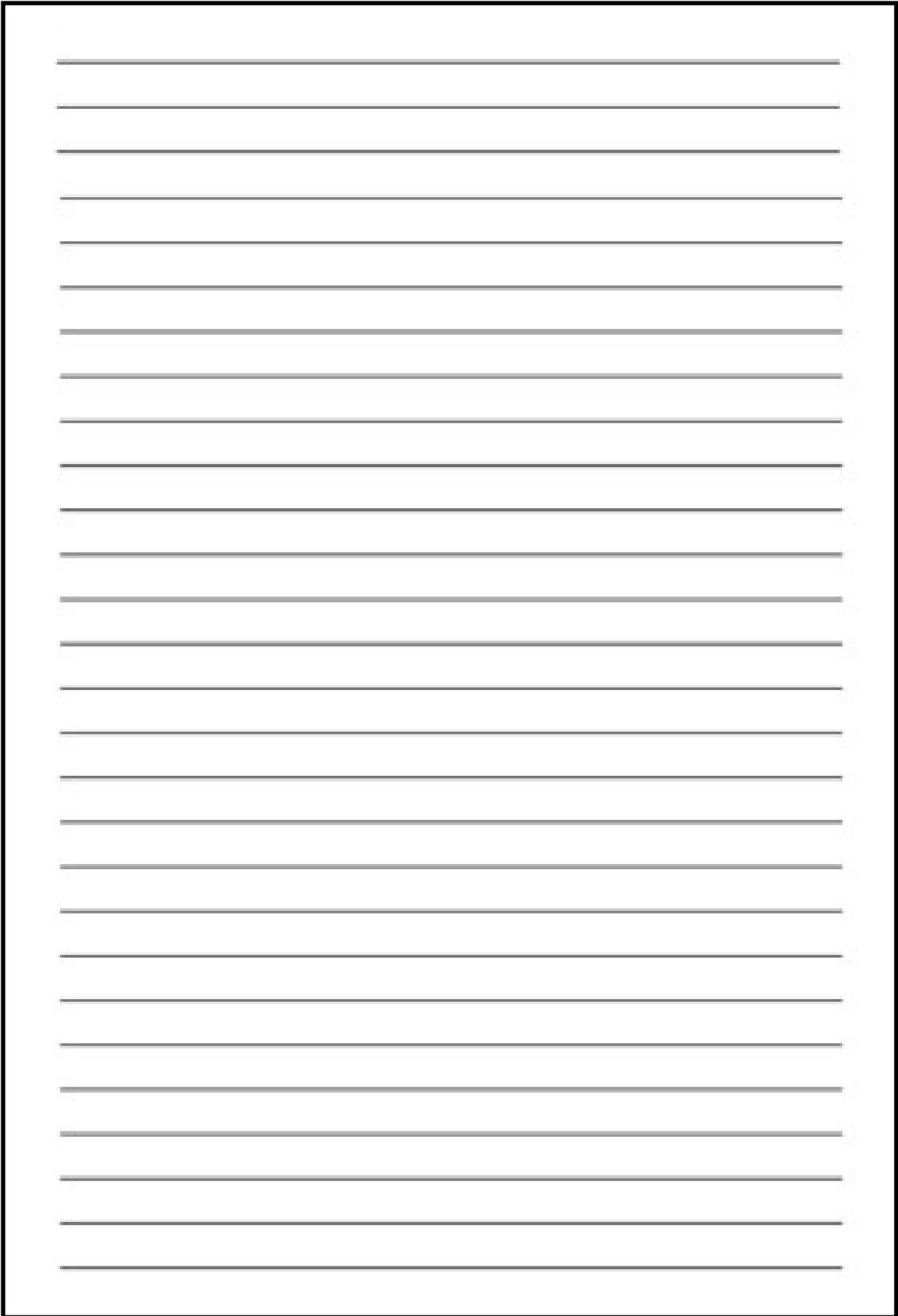
Hansel and Gretel	Cinderella	Robin Hood
Rapunzel	The Tortoise and the Hare	Jack and the Beanstalk

Some ideas to think about for your ending...

Will there be new characters?	Will there be a different setting?	Will there be a problem that is solved at the end? Or will a problem not be solved? Maybe the prince never finds Cinderella.
How will the characters feel?	Will the characters change?	

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WRITE A STORY



Write a story which would be suitable for reading aloud to a 4 or 5 year old child.

Some ideas to think about...

What characters are you going to have in your story? Think about what will be most exciting and interesting for a 4 or 5 year old.

Where is your story going to be set? Will it be a castle? In outer space? On a farm? Or maybe in a mystical land?

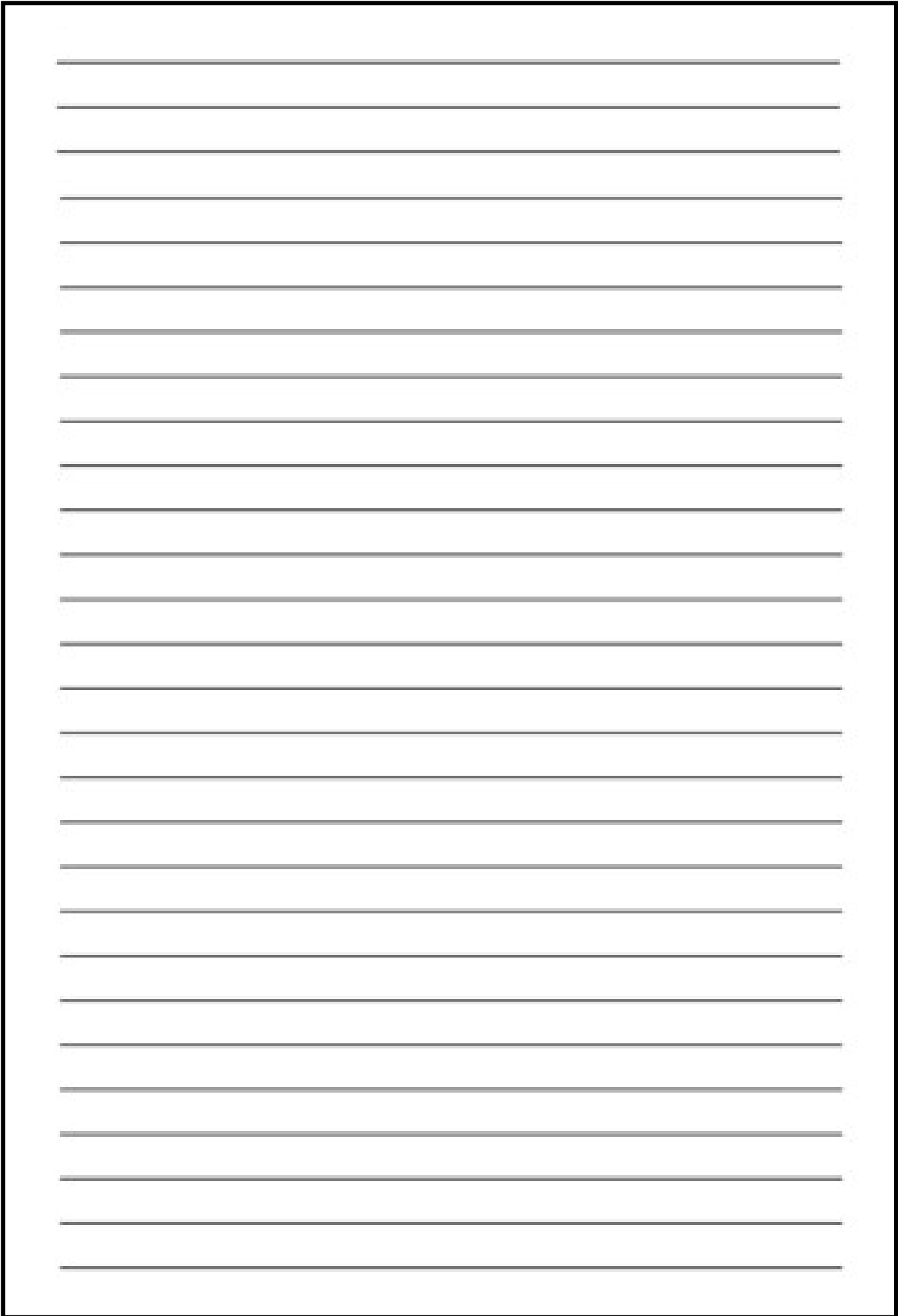
What is going to happen in your story? Think carefully about the plot of your story. Will your characters be going on a trip? Will they make a magical discovery? Or maybe they will make a new friend?

How are you going to end your story? When you have decided what is going to happen in your story, think about how it is going to end. Will one of your characters save the day? Will they learn something new? Will a problem be solved?

What is your story going to be called? Think about an exciting title for your story.

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A UFO SIGHTING



Read the account of the sighting of a strange object in the sky. Then read the 'Advice for UFO spotters'. Imagine that you are the person in the story and that you wish to report your experience to the Ministry of Defence. Following the advice given, write a report of what you saw.

UFO account

It was the 9th January at around 8pm and I was sitting on the couch watching TV. From the corner of my eye I could see a blue flashing light in the sky. I spun my head around and I was shocked at what I saw. There in the sky was a grey disk like object dotted with blue lights. As it spun rapidly, a beam of light shot down onto the ground.

Advice for UFO spotters

If you observe a UFO and decide to report it, then it is important to follow the steps below when writing your report.

1. Identify the location of the sighting.
2. Identify the time that the sighting occurred.
3. Give a full description of exactly what was observed.


Some ideas to think about...

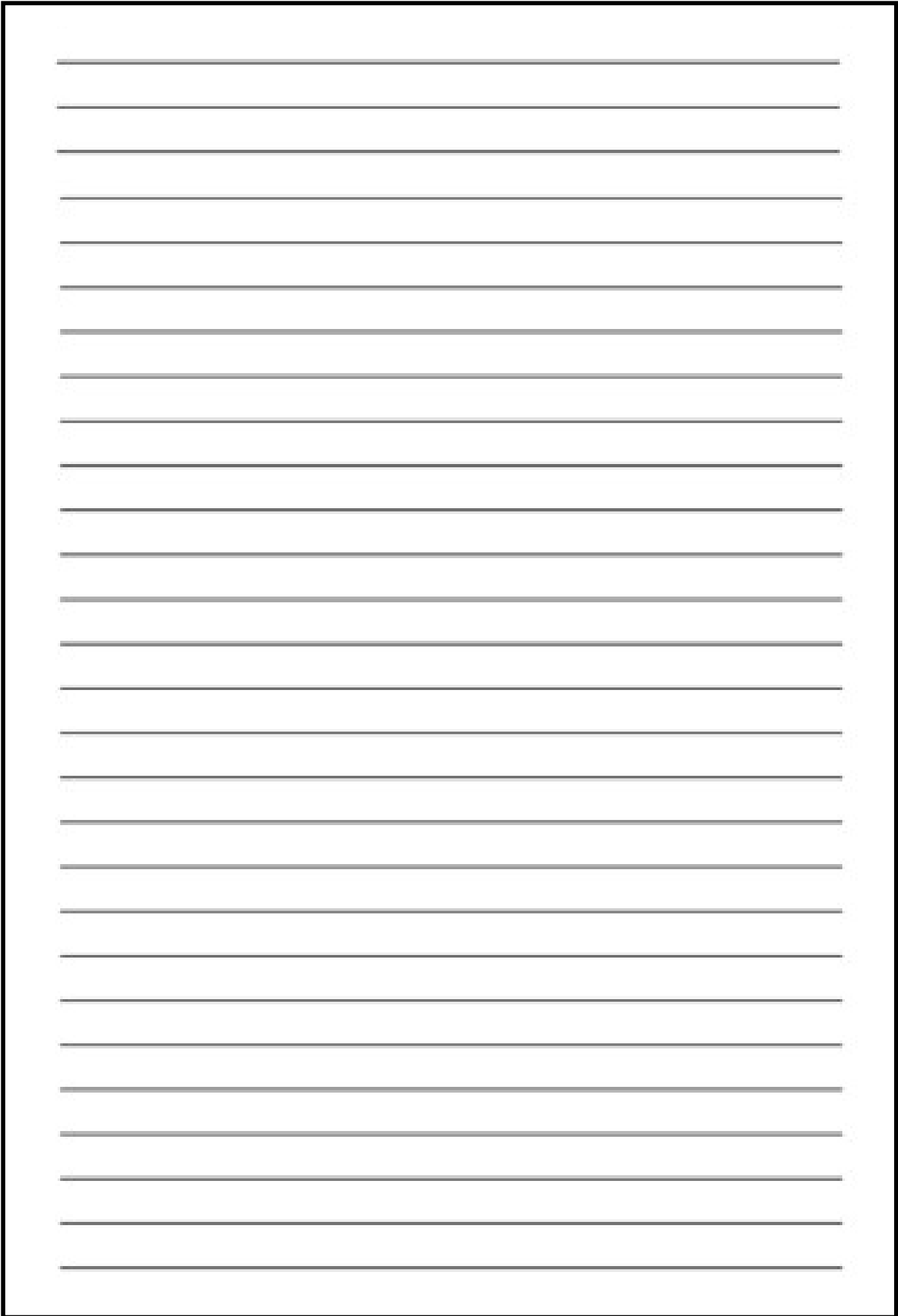
Location: Think about where you saw the UFO. Is it your hometown? Are you on holiday?

Time: Make sure to add in the time that you saw the UFO. Was it at night? Or maybe it was in the daytime?

Describe: What did it look like? What colour was it? How did it move? Did it have lights? What shape was it? Did you see more than one?

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SET THE SCENE



Look at the picture below. Imagine that the picture is taken from a television film. Study the picture carefully and try to work out what might have happened in the film that would lead up to this particular scene, and what happens next.

Write a story that you think goes well with the picture using your ideas of what has happened before the scene and what is going to come next.

What is the title going to be?

Where is the story set?


Who are the main characters?

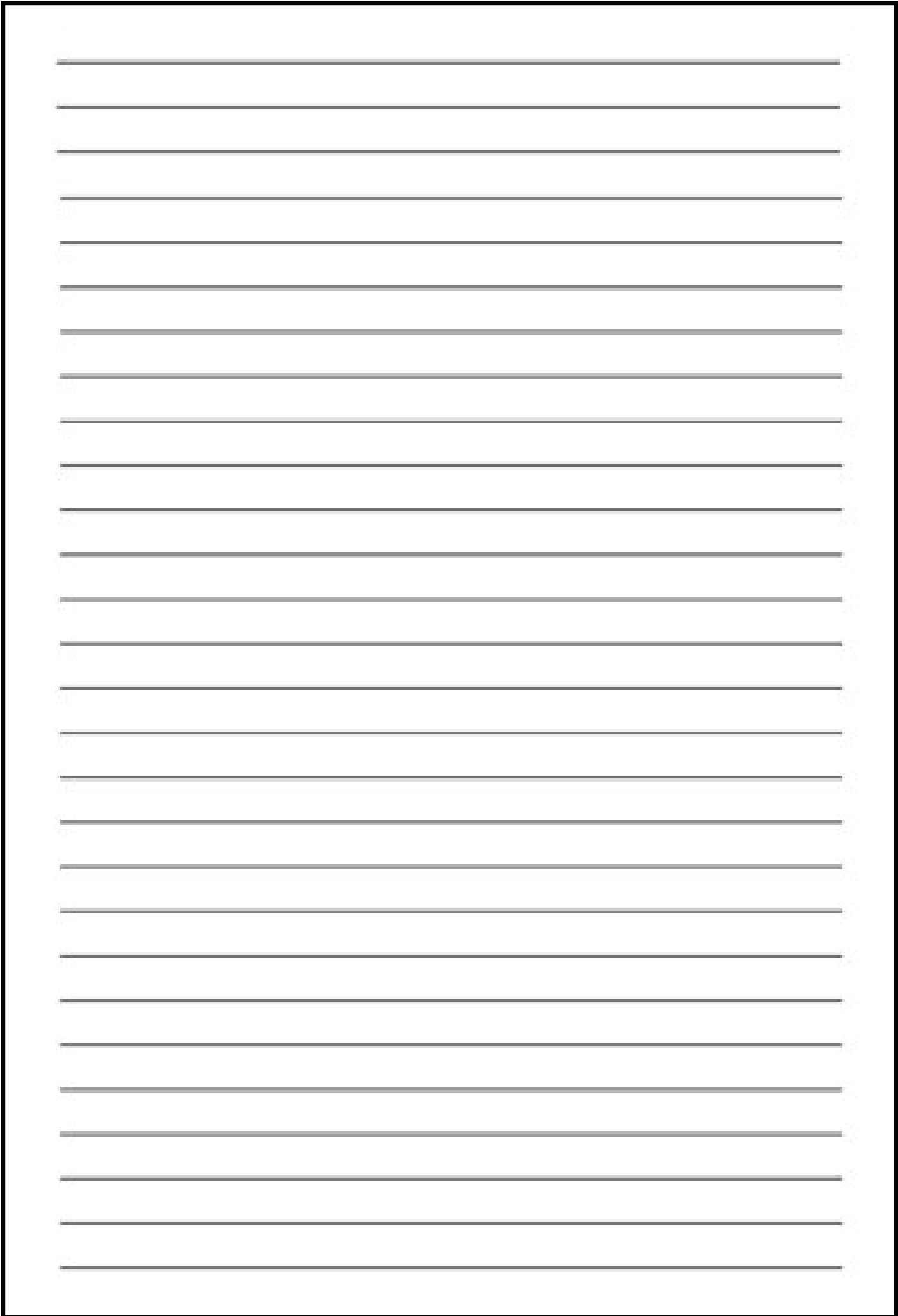


What happened to lead up to the image?

How does the story end?

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