

Leaders of World War II Essay Questions—Volume 2

Following are brief biographies of five influential leaders of World War II. With each biography are questions to answer in essay form. The first pages give you the biography and the questions. Notebooking pages you can use for your answers follow.

British Air Marshal Arthur William Tedder

Born on July 11, 1890, in Stirlingshire, Scotland, Arthur Tedder saw many parts of Great Britain as his family traveled due to his father's employment. He later attended college and spent some time studying German. He joined the British army in 1913 and fought in World War I, where he received a serious injury. He transferred to the Royal Flying Corps, later known as the Royal Air Force or RAF. He continued serving in the RAF after World War I ended and became the commander of the Far East Command. He was appointed head of the RAF Middle East Command in 1941, and thereafter took control of all Allied air operations in North Africa and Italy. His contributions were invaluable to defeating the German forces in North Africa, to helping with the success of the evacuation of Crete, and to the Allies succeeding in the landings in Sicily and Italy. He oversaw the destruction of enemy supply lines and gave support to the ground troops. Arthur Tedder was appointed as the deputy supreme Allied commander to General Eisenhower in 1944 and became responsible for coordinating all Allied air operations in Western Europe. In this capacity, he successfully coordinated air operations to keep German reinforcements from reaching the Allied beachhead in Normandy. He also helped the Allied advance during the latter part of the war in Europe, coordinating the bombing of the German transportation network. He was appointed the first Chief of the Air Staff during peacetime in 1946 and, later, put into practice the arrangements for the Berlin Airlift. Arthur Tedder died on June 3, 1967.

How do you think the destruction of enemy supply lines helped the Allies win a foothold as they were fighting to retake Europe? Do you think the damage caused by interrupting the supply of ammunition, fuel, and equipment was more, less, or equal to the damage caused by interrupting the food resources of the army? Explain your answers.

Lieutenant General Bernard Freyberg

Born on March 21, 1889, in London, England, Bernard Freyberg was raised in New Zealand after his family moved there in 1891. He was educated by his mother and later attended Wellington College. He was a competitive swimmer, becoming the 100-yard champion in New Zealand in 1906 and 1910. He apprenticed with a dentist and was admitted to the Dentists' Register of New Zealand on May 22, 1911. In 1914, he left Wellington, New Zealand, for San Francisco, California, USA, spent some time in Mexico, and headed for England when he heard about the beginning of World War I in 1914. He joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserves. He put his swimming background to work when he swam ashore and set flares as a diversionary tactic during the early part of the Gallipoli campaign. He was badly wounded twice in World War I and in 1916, he transferred to the British Army. He was wounded twice while serving with the British Army. He spent time in New Zealand recovering from his wounds, but his health was suffering. When doctors discovered a heart problem, he was forced to retire from the army. When World War II began, he was able to have his medical grading changed so that he could again be in

active service. He was appointed to lead the Second New Zealand Expeditionary Force, which was to serve with British forces. It was clear, however, that Freyberg had the right to disobey any command by British superiors if he felt it did not agree with the commands of the New Zealand government. His troops took part in many battles during the war, notably in Crete, the second battle of El Alamein, the battle of Cassino, and many others in campaigns in Greece, North Africa, and Italy. He was wounded more than once and finally gave up command of his division on November 22, 1945, after accepting the post of New Zealand's governor general. He was the first governor general of New Zealand who had actually been raised there. He died on July 4, 1963, from complications of wounds suffered in World War I.

Bernard Freyberg is often considered to be New Zealand's greatest soldier. In addition to the fact that he was often in the thick of the battles with his troops, as shown by the many times he was seriously wounded, he was known to be extremely concerned about his troops and went to great lengths to ensure their welfare. How do you think a commanding officer balances the concern for his troops and the necessity to lead them into battles where he knows many will not survive?

Sir Edmund Herring

Born on September 2, 1892, in Maryborough, Victoria, Australia, Edmund Herring won scholarships to attend Melbourne Church of England Grammar School. He went on to Trinity College, University of Melbourne, and then to New College, Oxford, England. He fought with the Royal Field Artillery in World War I in France and then in Macedonia, where he won the Military Cross. He was commanding the brigade by the end of the war and was awarded the Distinguished Service Order. He intended to be a lawyer and returned to school after the war. He began to practice law in 1921. Because he was concerned about the spread of communism, he felt the regular army should be reinforced with civilians able to respond in case of invasion. When World War II began, Edmund Herring accepted an invitation to join the Australian Imperial Forces (AIF). Fighting in North Africa, his artillery division played an important part in the victories achieved in Bardia and Tobruk. His artillery division was also vital in delaying the German advances in Greece while the Allies were retreating. He then returned to Australia to aid in its defense against the threat from the advancing Japanese. Beginning in the Northern Territory in March 1942, one month after an air raid had laid waste to Darwin, he worked to reorganize the defenses in the Territory. He later was stationed as a commander in Papua and New Guinea.* Edmund Herring had a reputation of looking for the best in people, requiring respect from those who served with him, and not trying to be popular. He also had the quality of correcting mistakes with a firm constant tone, without the need to raise his voice. After he left the service, he became chief justice of Victoria and worked to reform the effectiveness of the court system. Edmund Herring served in many positions, including lieutenant-governor and chancellor of the Church of England Diocese of Melbourne. Edmund Herring died on January 5, 1982.

As a Christian, Sir Edmund Herring had a firm belief that problems, whether they be economic or political, would only be solved when people paid attention to moral values. He felt that indifference to moral values and not taking action was one of the major dangers people faced when threatened by outside forces. What do you think of that viewpoint? Do you think he was right? Why or why not? What do you think is a major danger faced by people today when threatened by outside forces?

General Eedson Louis Millard Burns

Born on June 17, 1897, in Westmount, Quebec, Canada, Eedson Louis Millard Burns, known as E.L.M. Burns, began his military career at the age of 16 when he joined the Canadian militia. The next year, he was accepted into the Royal Military College at Kingston, Ontario. His formal education at that time ended when he received a Special War Certificate from the college on his eighteenth birthday in order to join the Canadian Expeditionary Force in France during World War I. He served as a signals officer in France with the Royal Canadian Engineers. He was wounded twice in combat and was awarded the Military Cross for his bravery. After the war, he remained in the service in many different staff positions, including as an instructor at the Royal Military College. When World War II began, E.L.M. Burns served as a general staff officer and was later assigned to a camp in Nova Scotia. Here, he was able to work with tank units prior to their deployment to England and then on to Sicily. E.L.M. Burns did not go with the tank units, but instead was assigned to command the 2nd Canadian Division. He felt that no one should go into battle without knowing what to expect, so he simulated artillery fire and smoke, including firing live rounds above the heads of the men in training, in order to get the troops ready for the sounds of battle. The 2nd Canadian Division took part in Operation Overlord, but E.L.M. Burns had been sent to command a Canadian Armored Division in Italy in 1943. He led the 1st Canadian Corps in the Liri Valley, which led to the capture of Rome, and in the very successful attack on the Gothic Line. He retired from the army in 1947. E.L.M. Burns died on September 13, 1985.

E.L.M. Burns was intelligent, attentive to detail, and a very able planner, but he had a very serious side and was not known as someone well-liked by either his superiors or those he commanded. His seriousness made it hard for those who served with him to know him well enough to have confidence in him. What do you think it takes for a person to be a good leader? What is the best way to help people have confidence in you? What obstacles do you see in maintaining your position as a commander of troops and still knowing when and how to be approachable and informal?

Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr.

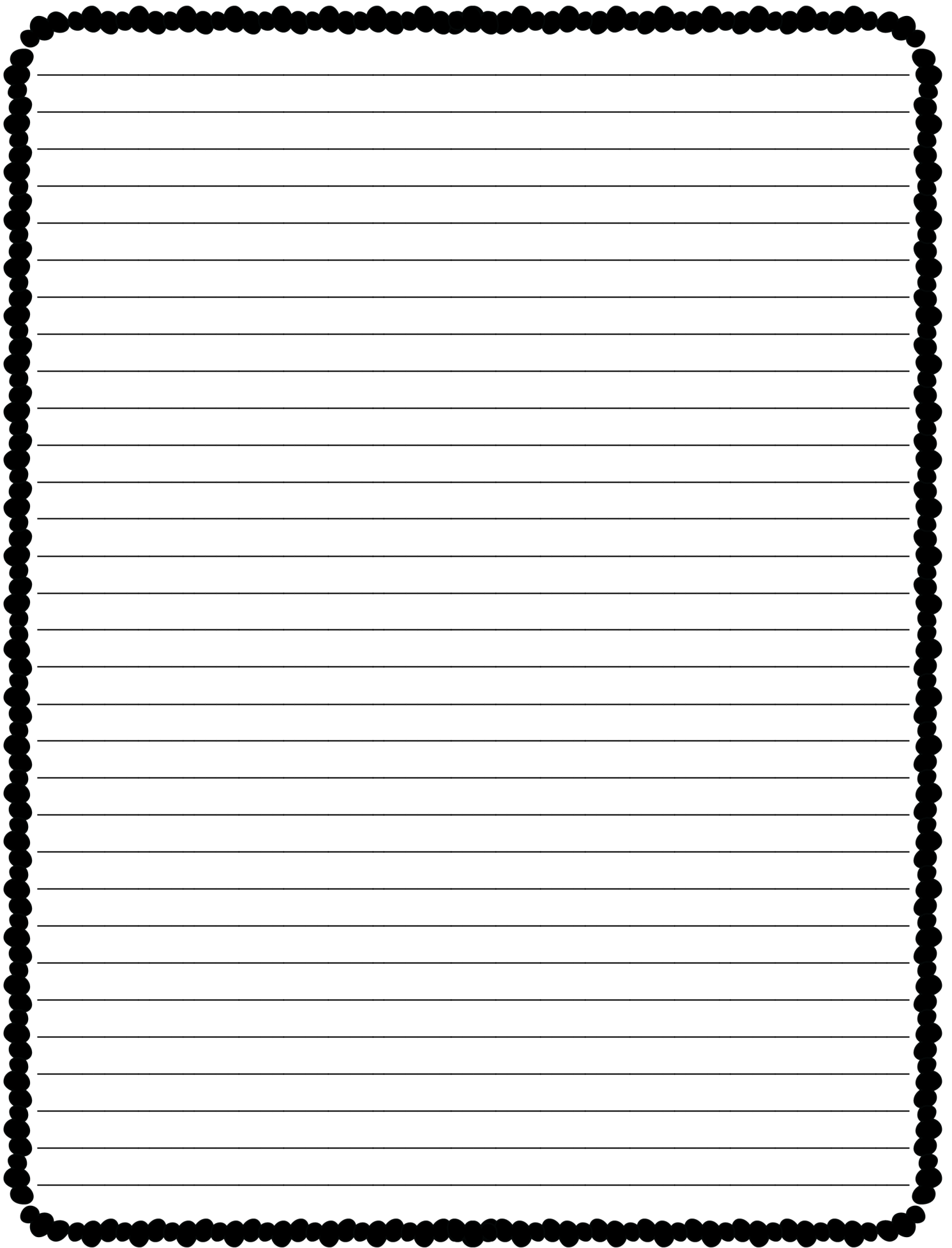
Born on October 30, 1882, in Elizabeth, New Jersey, USA, William F. Halsey, Jr. was the son of a U.S. Navy Captain. He graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, in 1904, and served as a destroyer commander in World War I. After the war, he became a naval aviator and attained the rank of vice admiral. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, which brought the United States into World War II, the task force commanded by Halsey was the only major operational battle group left in the Pacific. While the United States was rebuilding its naval fleet, Vice Admiral Halsey directed surprise attacks on islands held by the Japanese. It was his group of ships that was able to move close enough to Tokyo for the first bombing of the Japanese capital, which was carried out by planes under the command of James Doolittle. He was well-known for his aggressive combat tactics and was nicknamed "Bull" by the press. He was appointed commander of the South Pacific force in October 1942 and was subsequently promoted to admiral. In 1944, he became commander of the 3rd Fleet and led the carriers in amazing air strikes. His fleet was responsible for supporting U.S. land operations and finding and destroying many of the ships in the Japanese fleet in the Battle of Leyte Gulf. In other instances, he led his fleet through typhoons while giving support to military operations. The Japanese surrender was signed on his flagship, the *Missouri*. He was promoted to the rank of fleet admiral

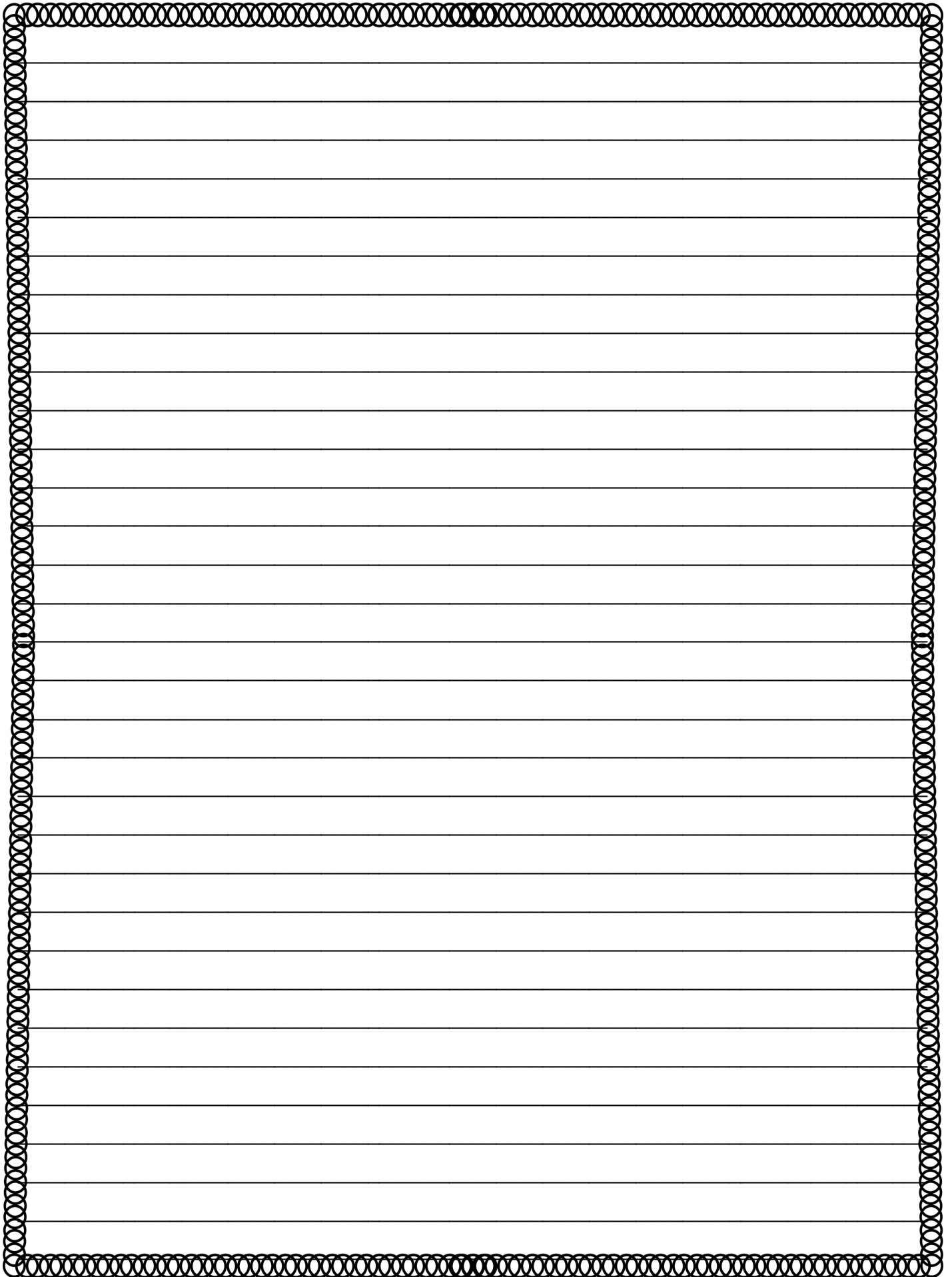
in 1945 and retired in 1947. William F. Halsey, Jr. died on August 16, 1959.

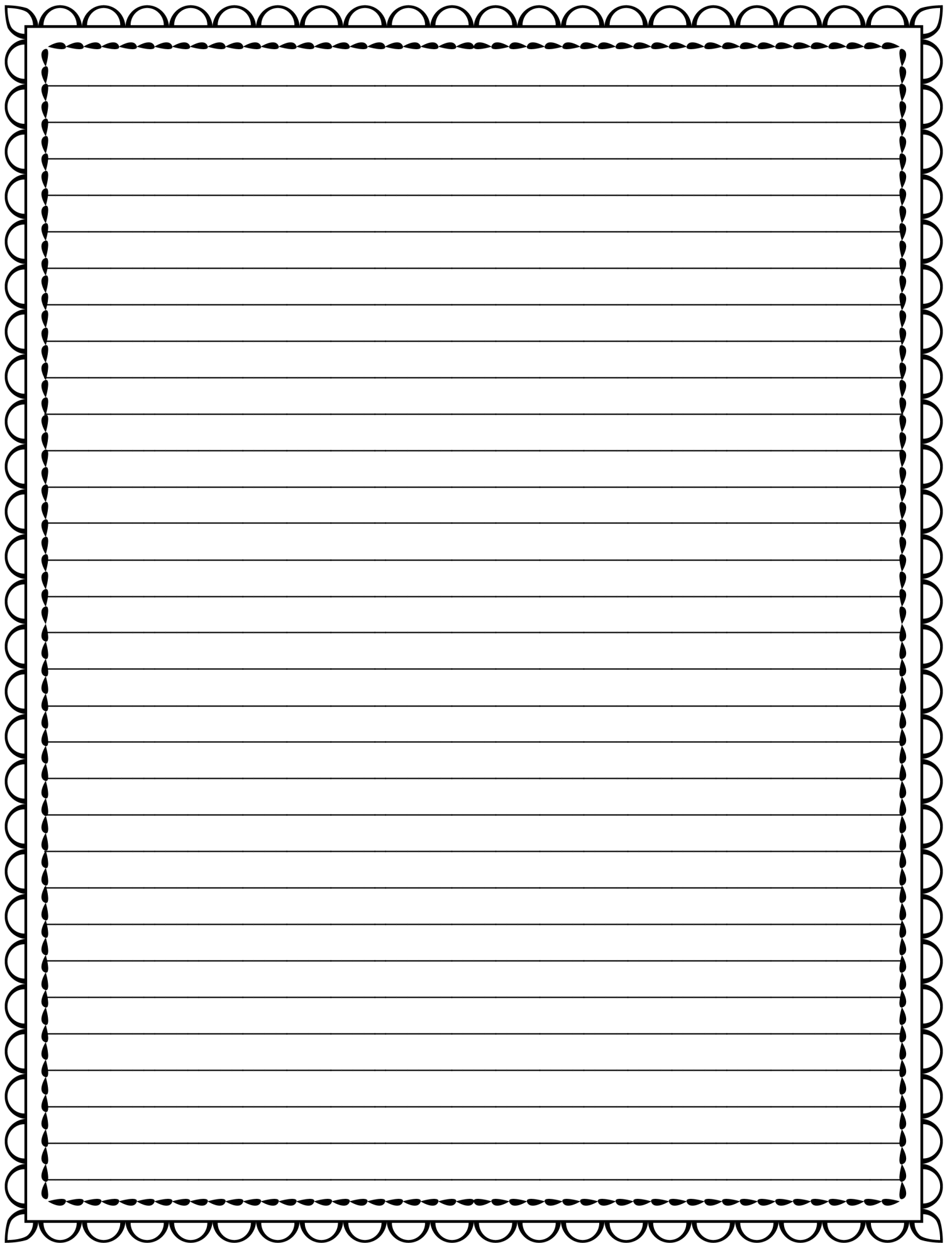
Even though Admiral Halsey was known for his daring and often unorthodox ways of carrying out missions, in general his men had faith in his decisions and were ready to follow his commands. How do you think a person would make the decision as to whether to follow orders to the letter or to make adjustments depending upon the circumstances? How could you be certain you were basing your decisions on the need for changes to the orders or if you were basing them on your own desire to do what you felt was best regardless of orders? If you did do things in an unorthodox way, how hard would it be to convince those serving under you to follow your commands, even when they knew it was not the usual way of doing things?

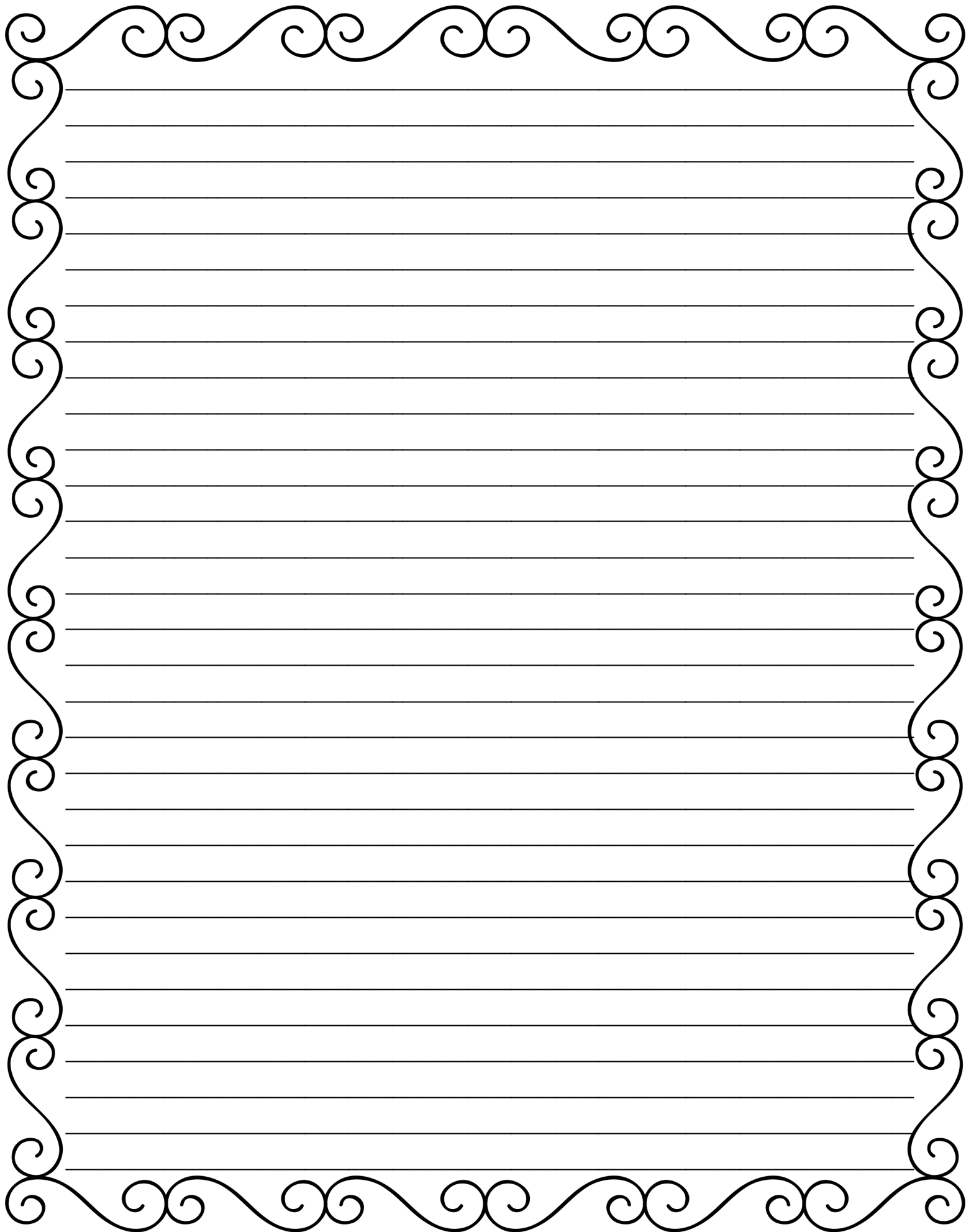
*Sir Edmund Herring: "Papua and New Guinea" is not synonymous with "Papua New Guinea." Papua New Guinea is a country in the Pacific situated on the island of New Guinea and other islands. Papua is a region of Indonesia that includes part of the island of New Guinea and neighboring small islands.











Copyright © 2018 by Bonnie Rose Hudson

Select graphics used courtesy of [Sonya DeHart Design](#).

All Rights Reserved. This book may not be reproduced or transmitted by any means, including graphic, electronic, or mechanical, without the express written consent of the author except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews and those uses expressly described in the following Terms of Use. You are welcome to link back to the author's website, <http://writebonnierose.com>, but may not link directly to the PDF file. You may not alter this work, sell or distribute it in any way, host this file on your own website, or upload it to a shared website.

Terms of Use: For use by a family, this unit can be printed and copied as many times as needed. Classroom teachers may reproduce one copy for each student in his or her class. Members of co-ops or workshops may reproduce one copy for up to fifteen children. This material cannot be resold or used in any way for commercial purposes. Please contact the publisher with any questions.