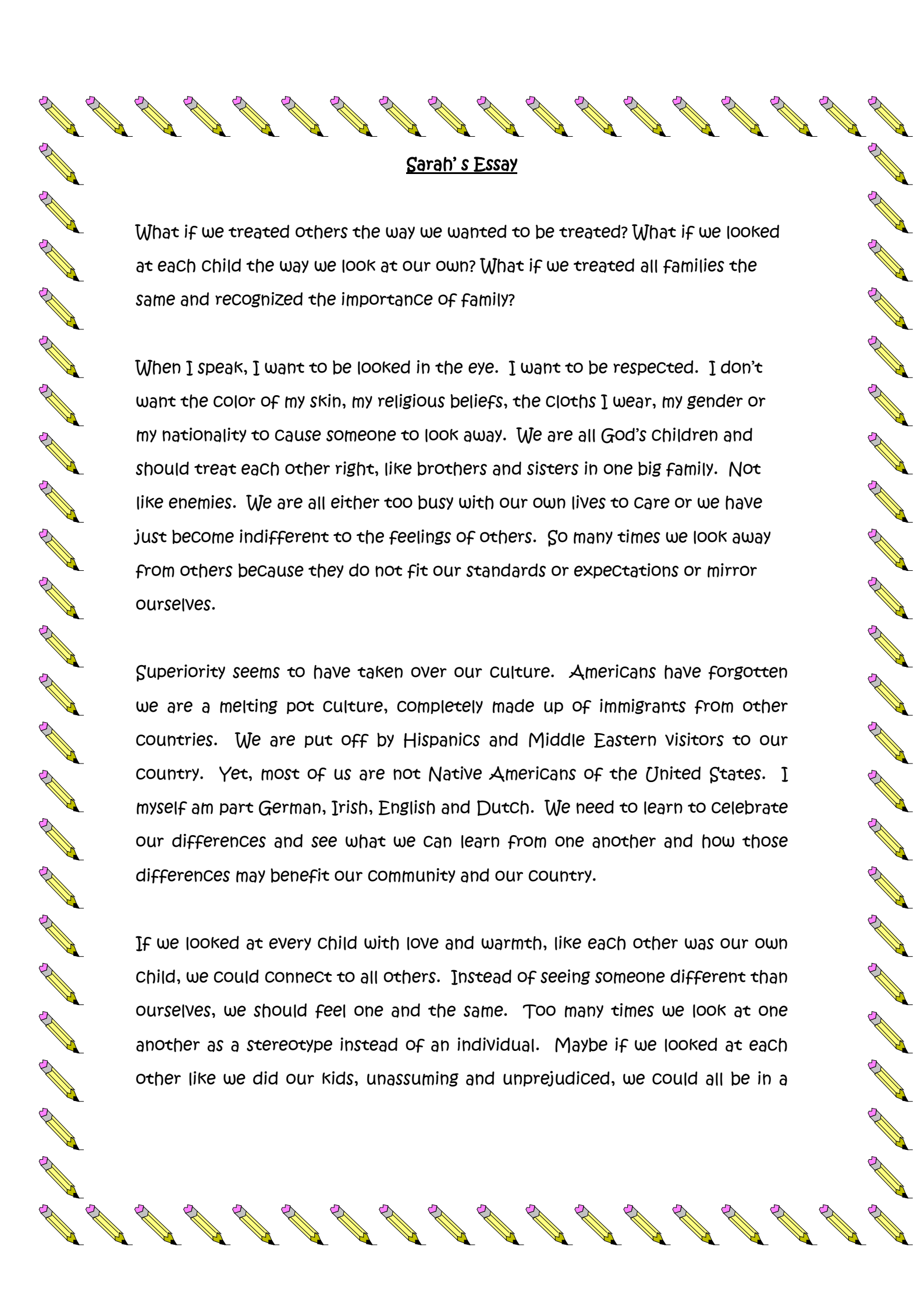




10<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Winner

**Sarah Asher**  
Hamilton High School  
Hamilton, Ohio

Principal: Mr. Malone  
Teacher: Mrs. Blount



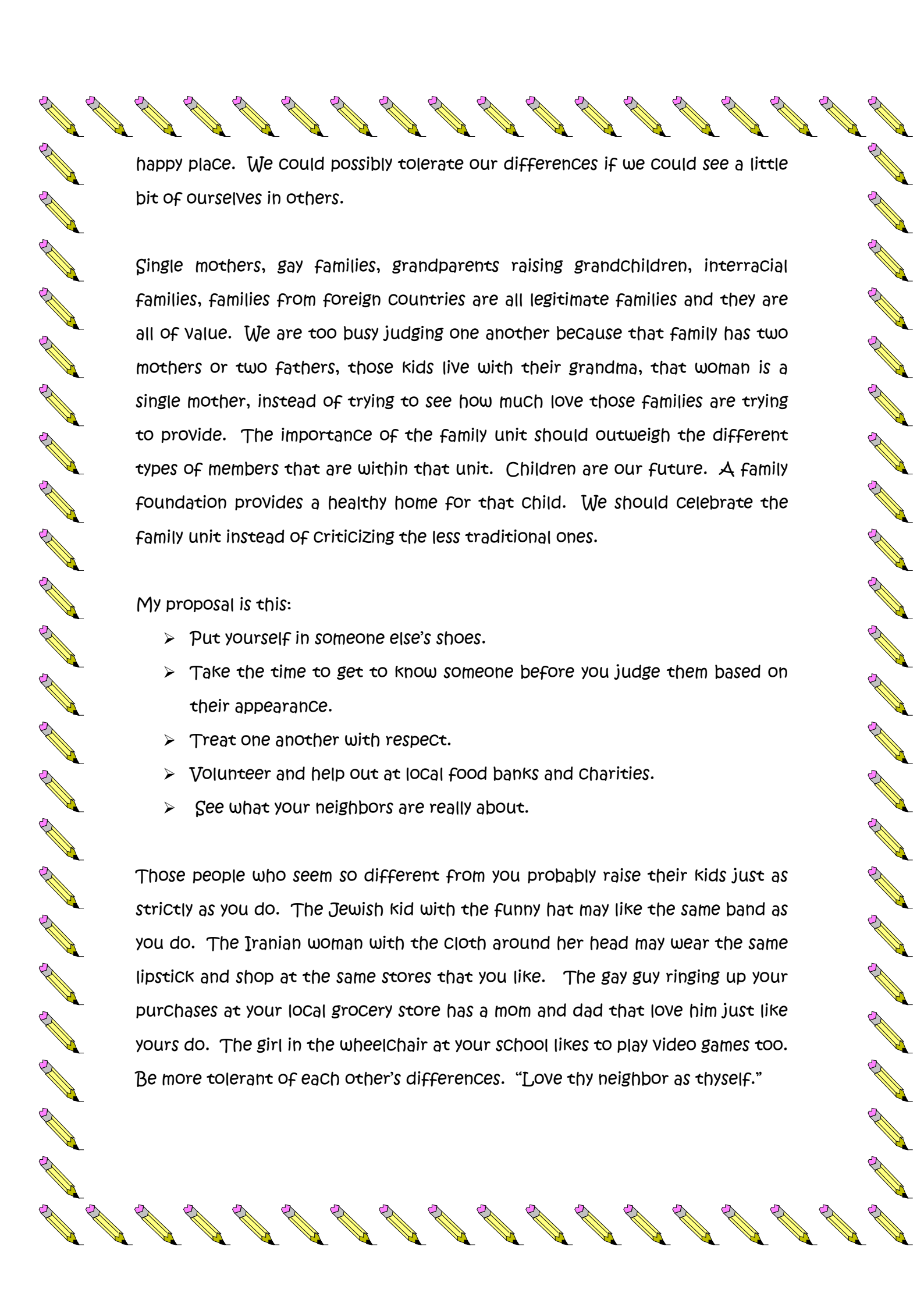
## Sarah's Essay

What if we treated others the way we wanted to be treated? What if we looked at each child the way we look at our own? What if we treated all families the same and recognized the importance of family?

When I speak, I want to be looked in the eye. I want to be respected. I don't want the color of my skin, my religious beliefs, the cloths I wear, my gender or my nationality to cause someone to look away. We are all God's children and should treat each other right, like brothers and sisters in one big family. Not like enemies. We are all either too busy with our own lives to care or we have just become indifferent to the feelings of others. So many times we look away from others because they do not fit our standards or expectations or mirror ourselves.

Superiority seems to have taken over our culture. Americans have forgotten we are a melting pot culture, completely made up of immigrants from other countries. We are put off by Hispanics and Middle Eastern visitors to our country. Yet, most of us are not Native Americans of the United States. I myself am part German, Irish, English and Dutch. We need to learn to celebrate our differences and see what we can learn from one another and how those differences may benefit our community and our country.

If we looked at every child with love and warmth, like each other was our own child, we could connect to all others. Instead of seeing someone different than ourselves, we should feel one and the same. Too many times we look at one another as a stereotype instead of an individual. Maybe if we looked at each other like we did our kids, unassuming and unprejudiced, we could all be in a



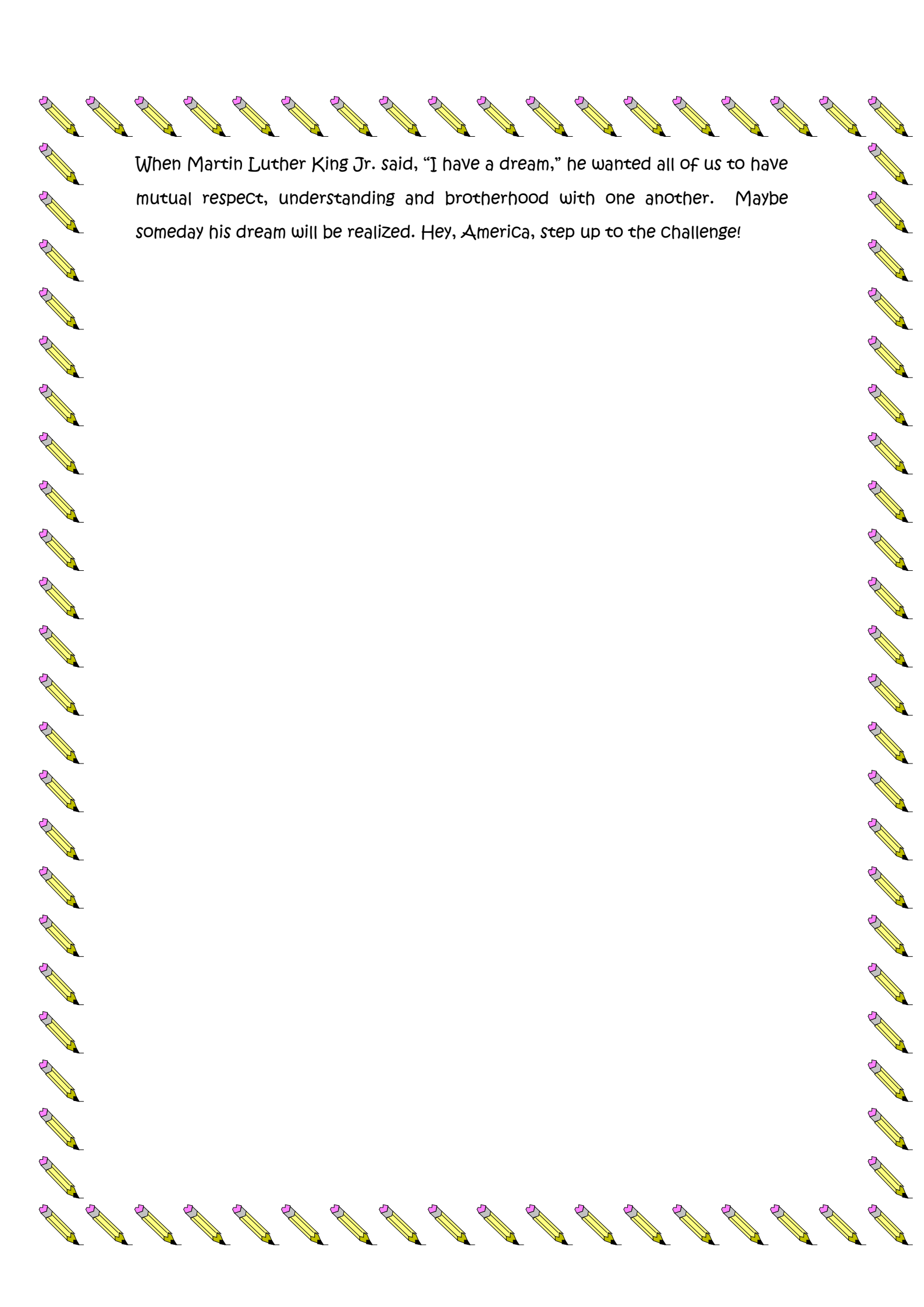
happy place. We could possibly tolerate our differences if we could see a little bit of ourselves in others.

Single mothers, gay families, grandparents raising grandchildren, interracial families, families from foreign countries are all legitimate families and they are all of value. We are too busy judging one another because that family has two mothers or two fathers, those kids live with their grandma, that woman is a single mother, instead of trying to see how much love those families are trying to provide. The importance of the family unit should outweigh the different types of members that are within that unit. Children are our future. A family foundation provides a healthy home for that child. We should celebrate the family unit instead of criticizing the less traditional ones.

My proposal is this:

- Put yourself in someone else's shoes.
- Take the time to get to know someone before you judge them based on their appearance.
- Treat one another with respect.
- Volunteer and help out at local food banks and charities.
- See what your neighbors are really about.

Those people who seem so different from you probably raise their kids just as strictly as you do. The Jewish kid with the funny hat may like the same band as you do. The Iranian woman with the cloth around her head may wear the same lipstick and shop at the same stores that you like. The gay guy ringing up your purchases at your local grocery store has a mom and dad that love him just like yours do. The girl in the wheelchair at your school likes to play video games too. Be more tolerant of each other's differences. "Love thy neighbor as thyself."



When Martin Luther King Jr. said, "I have a dream," he wanted all of us to have mutual respect, understanding and brotherhood with one another. Maybe someday his dream will be realized. Hey, America, step up to the challenge!