



Paper Pocket Pillow by Faith Essenburg

My oldest son loves to write, draw and be creative. As we head back to school and he enters his first year of Middle School, I want to do all that I can to continue to grow his creativity at a time when other things are sure to distract him.

On school nights when bedtime is a bit earlier, it's nice to wind down with a notebook and pencil for those last bits of creativity and ideas to pour out from his mind. I thought this Paper Pocket Pillow would be just the thing to keep his favorite notepad, pencils and even a reading light in, and it's the perfect size to keep on his lap as a firm surface for writing too.



You will need the following to make one for your own sweet creative:

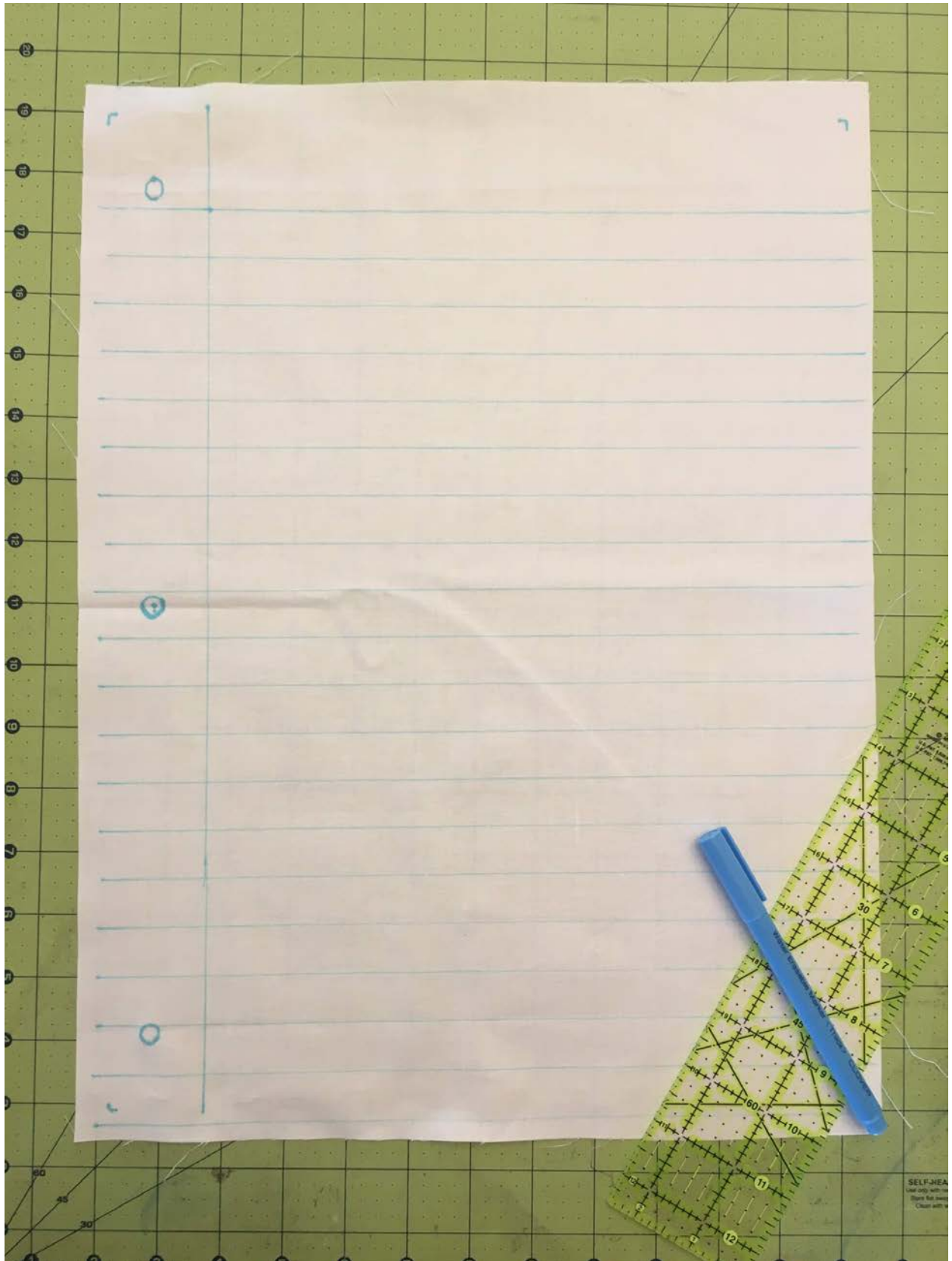
- White fabric 13x 17 for front
- Pocket back print 10x13
- Pocket front print 12x13 and 12x13 white for the back side of the front pocket
- Pencil pocket fabric 5x7.5 and white lining cut to same size
- 2.5 binding strip (about 65 inches long)
- Batting 14x18
- Blue, red, silver and navy thread for the paper front and a basic color for all other sewing
- A 12x16 pillow insert

Sewing feet used:

- A for basic sewing steps
- F2 for sewing "illustration"
- G for machine binding

Tools:

- Water soluble fabric pen
- Rulers and cutting tools
- Spray baste
- Spray bottle



Start by marking your corners about a half inch in (this is about where your binding will be sewn and gives you a guide on how to center and mark your “paper” lines).

Mark your first line 2 inches from the top using a ruler, then mark each following line $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch lower than the next until you reach the end of your page.

Mark your “red” line 2 inches from the left of the “page”.

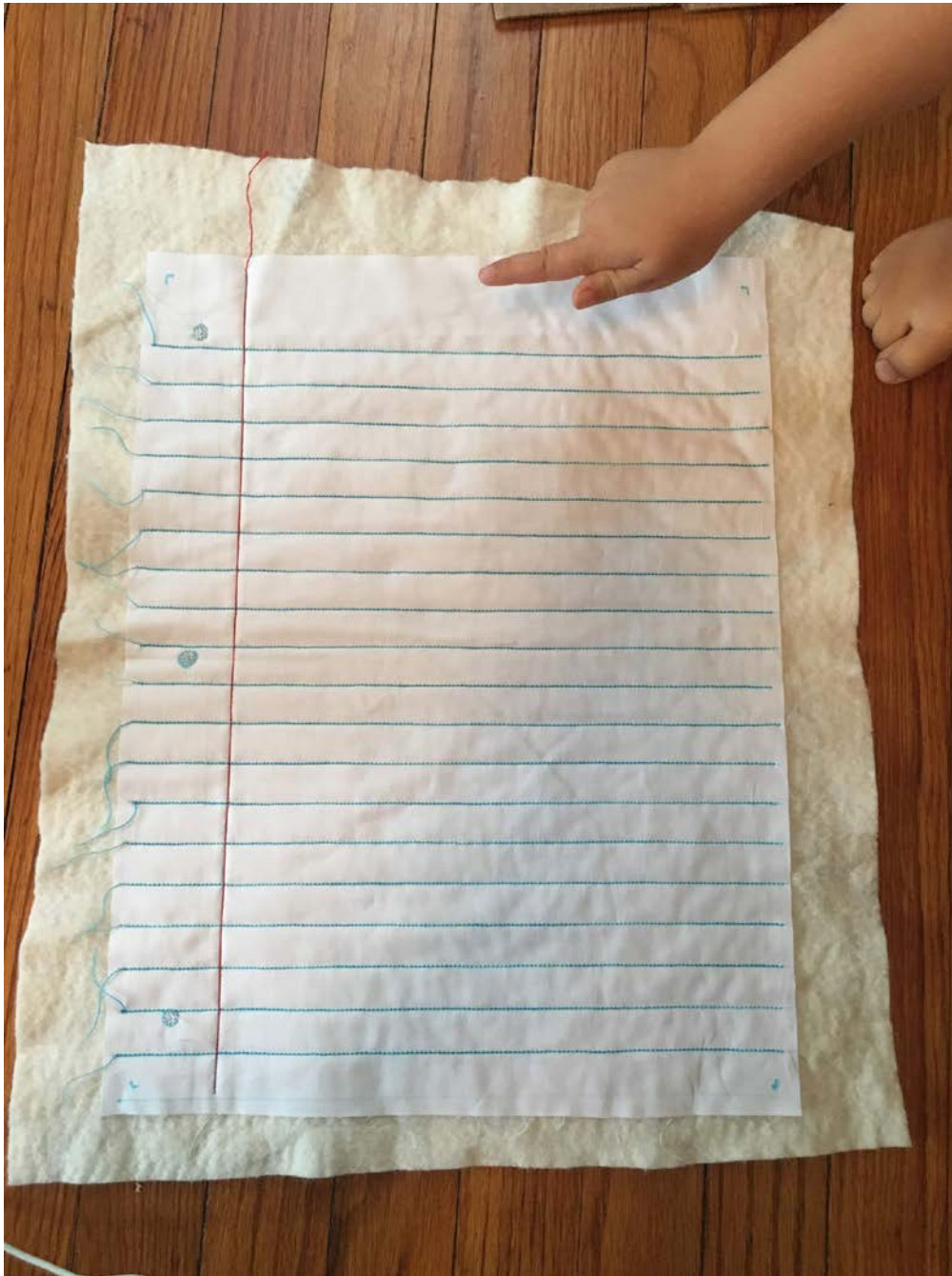
Folding your fabric down in half, make a crease at the center side and mark your “punch hole” (your pen will bleed through to the other side and mark the front for you).

Measure 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches from center hole to make your top and bottom “punch holes”.

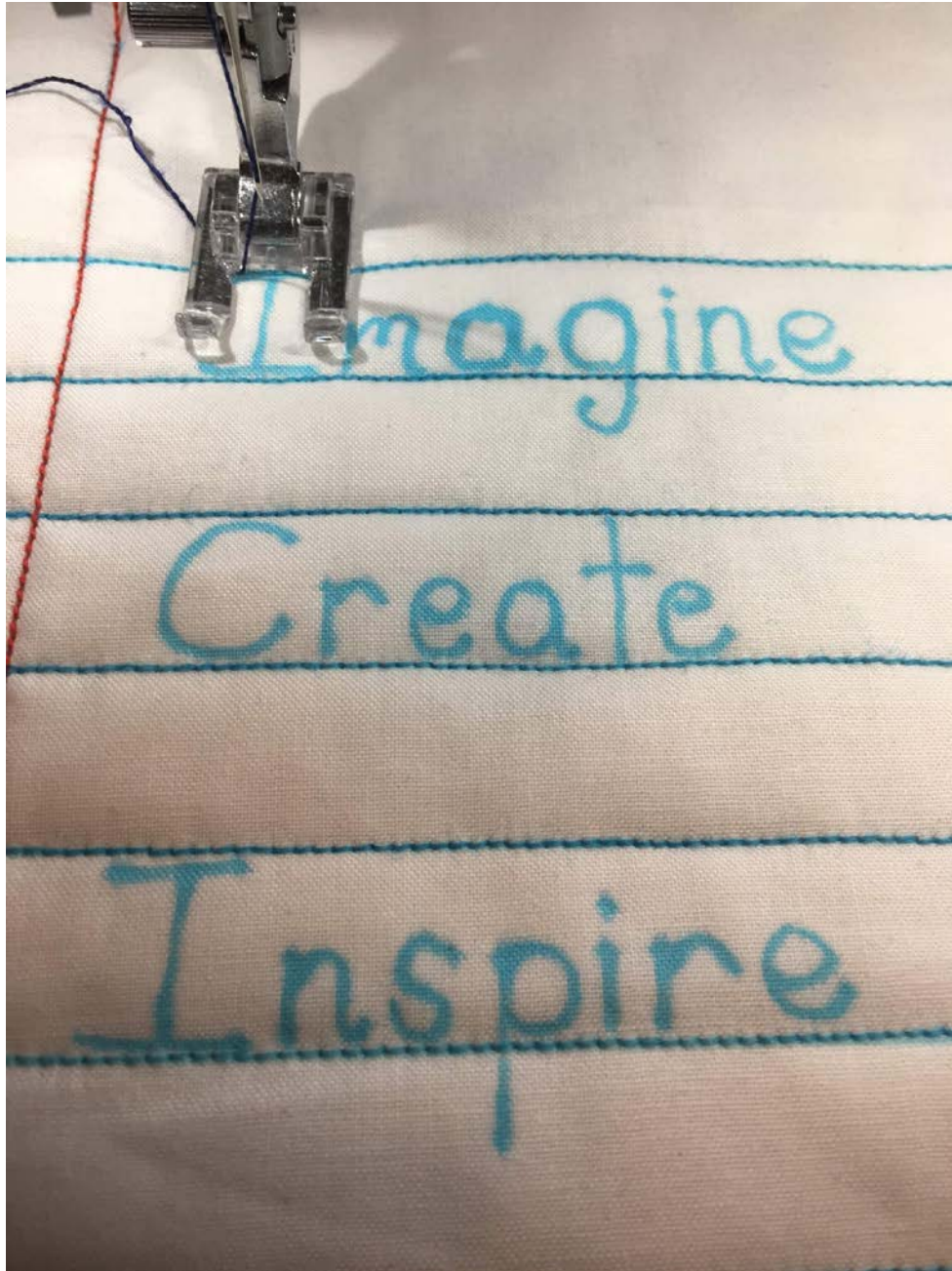
Cut batting roughly one inch wider around than your white fabric and spray baste together.



Sew your blue paper lines followed by the red line and lastly “fill in” the little circles with gray giving your paper the “hole punch” look.



Next comes the fun part! Once your lines are sewn use your fabric pen to write your inspiration message to your kiddo. Don't worry if your penmanship is lacking, take your time, test it out on actual lined paper and give it a go. After all, it is meant to look like handwriting, not exactly perfect!

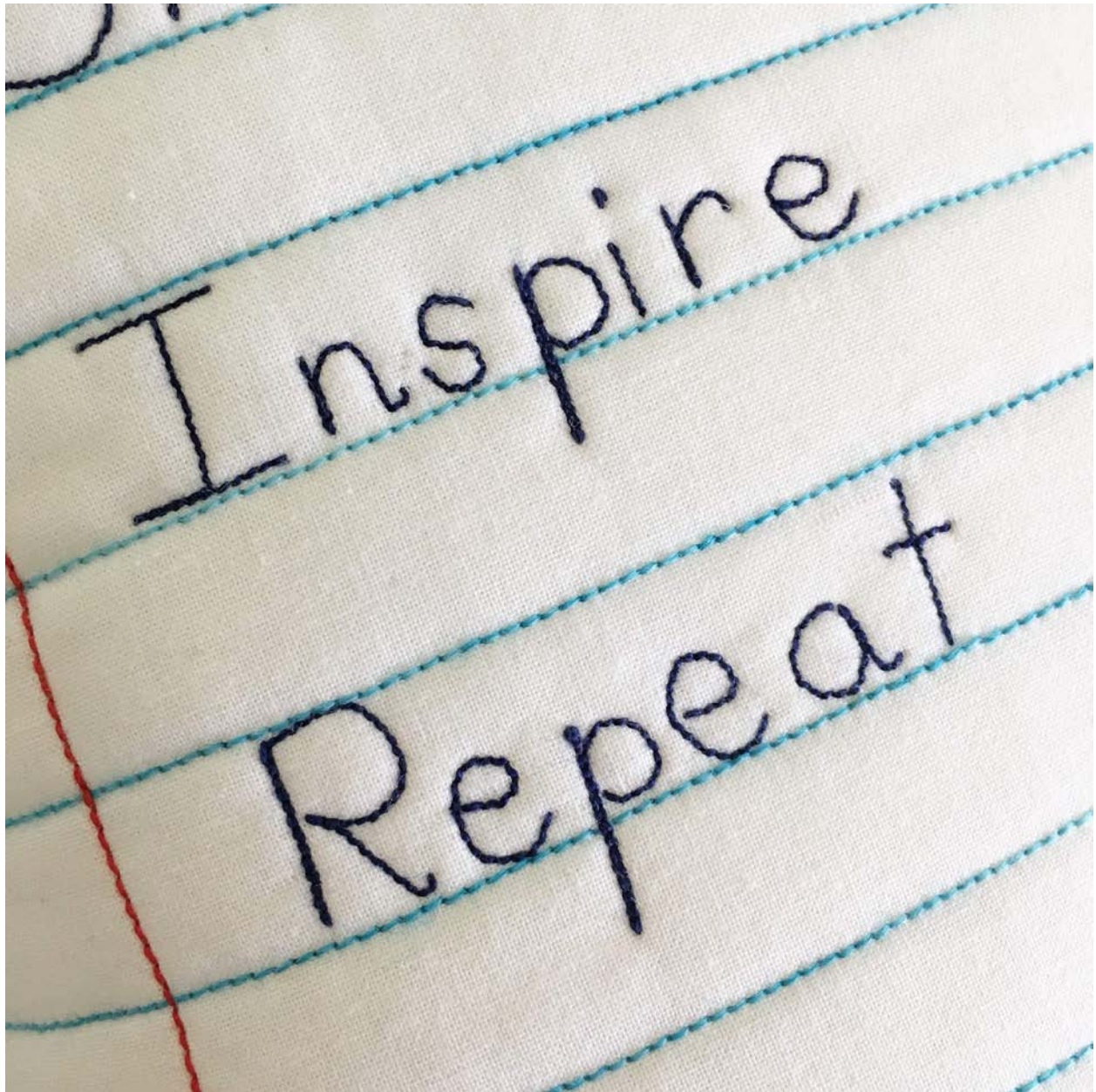


For this step I like to use my open foot so I can clearly see where I am sewing, and also a much smaller stitch length (1.5) for a cleaner look.

Lock your stitches at the beginning and end of each letter, clipping threads as you go.

Take your time, making a couple stitches at a time or even just one, then stop to lift your presser foot and turn your fabric as needed.

Note: if you have never tried this method before, let me assure you it's much easier than it looks! Give it a try and like me, you may just find something you really enjoy. A 12 weight thread is my favorite for this "ink" look.



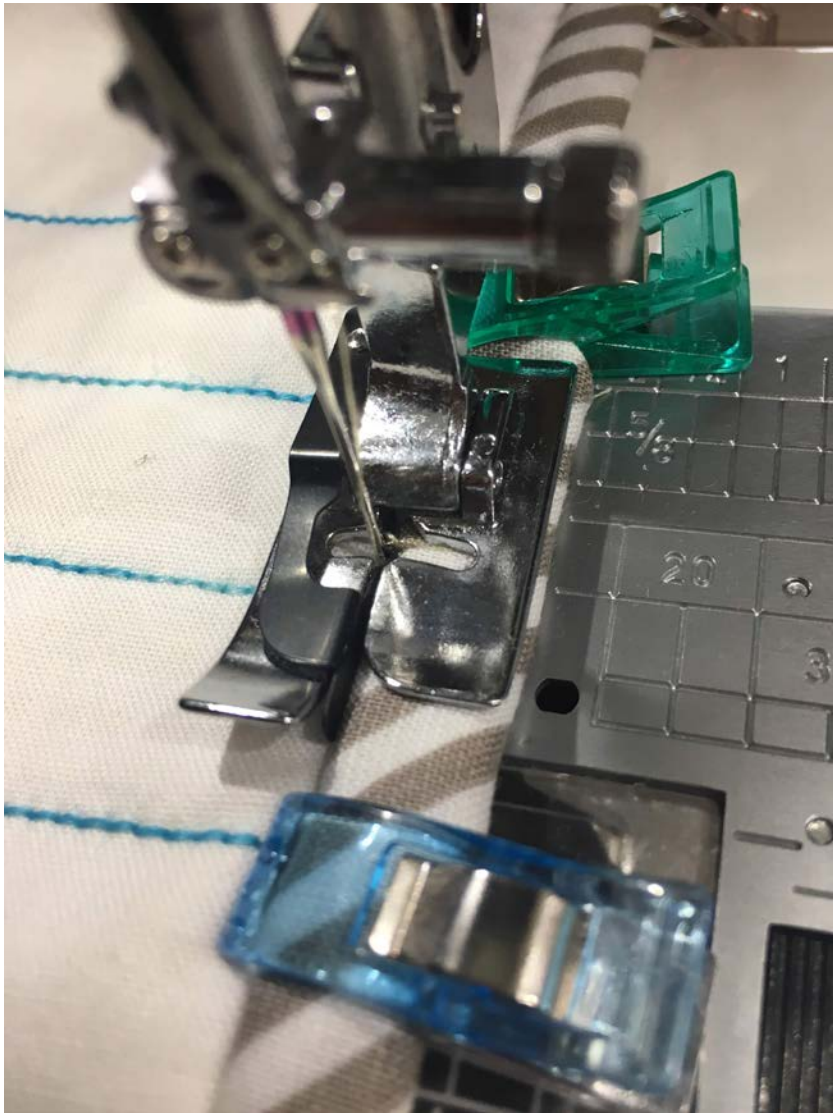
Spray your project with your water bottle and allow to dry and ink to disappear. Once dry you may iron.

To make your pencil pocket place your 5x7.5 fabrics right sides together and sew around leaving a 2 inch hole at bottom. Turn right sides out using a tool to get nice pointy points.

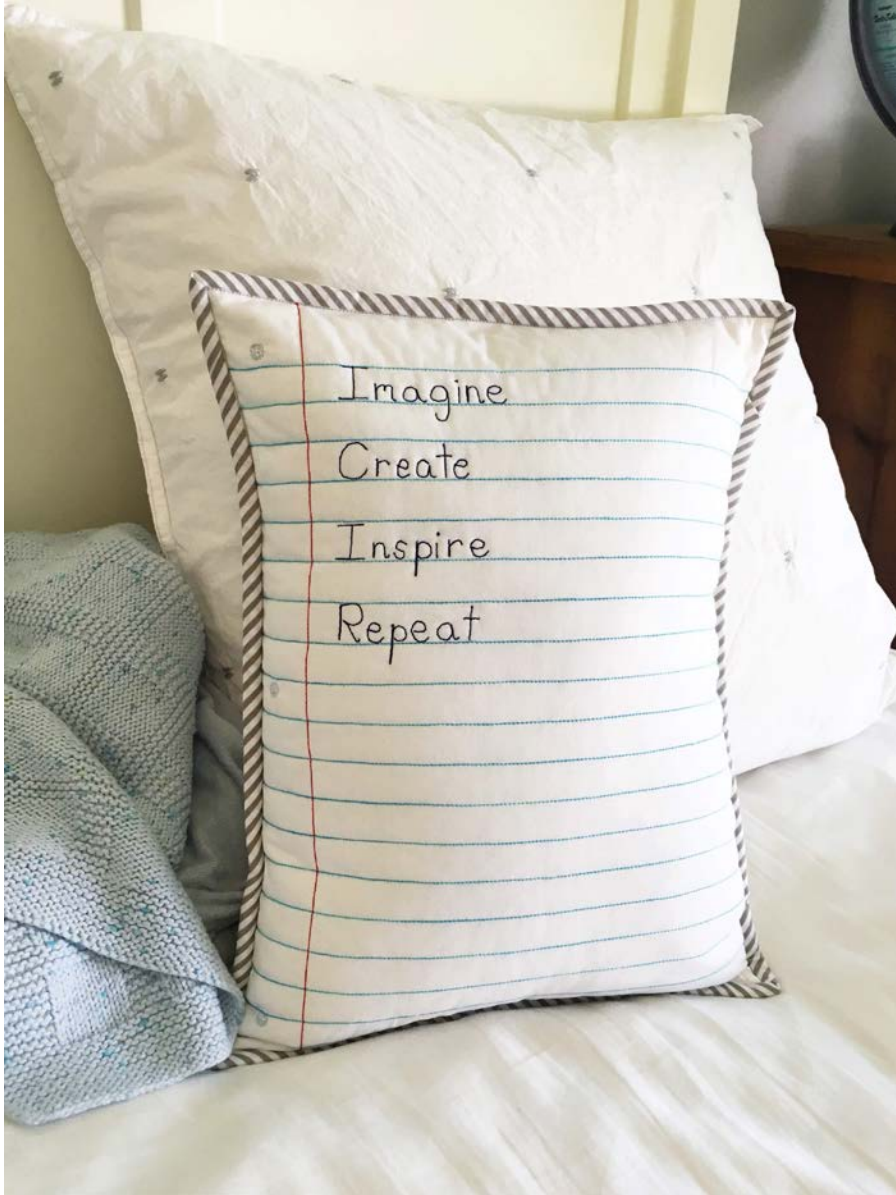
Pin to your outside back pocket (12x13 print panel) 2 inches from bottom and 3 inches from right side. Starting at top right, sew around pocket using a $\frac{1}{8}$ seam allowance and locking your stitches at beginning and end. Add lines for your pencil holders spaced roughly 1 inch apart (I left a bigger section to hold a reading light as well) making sure to lock stitches at the top and bottom.

Once your pencil pocket is sewn on the 12x13 print fabric place your solid white lining fabric (also 12x13) on top with right sides together and sew along the top. Turn wrong sides together and press to make a smooth edge at top, top stitch at $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

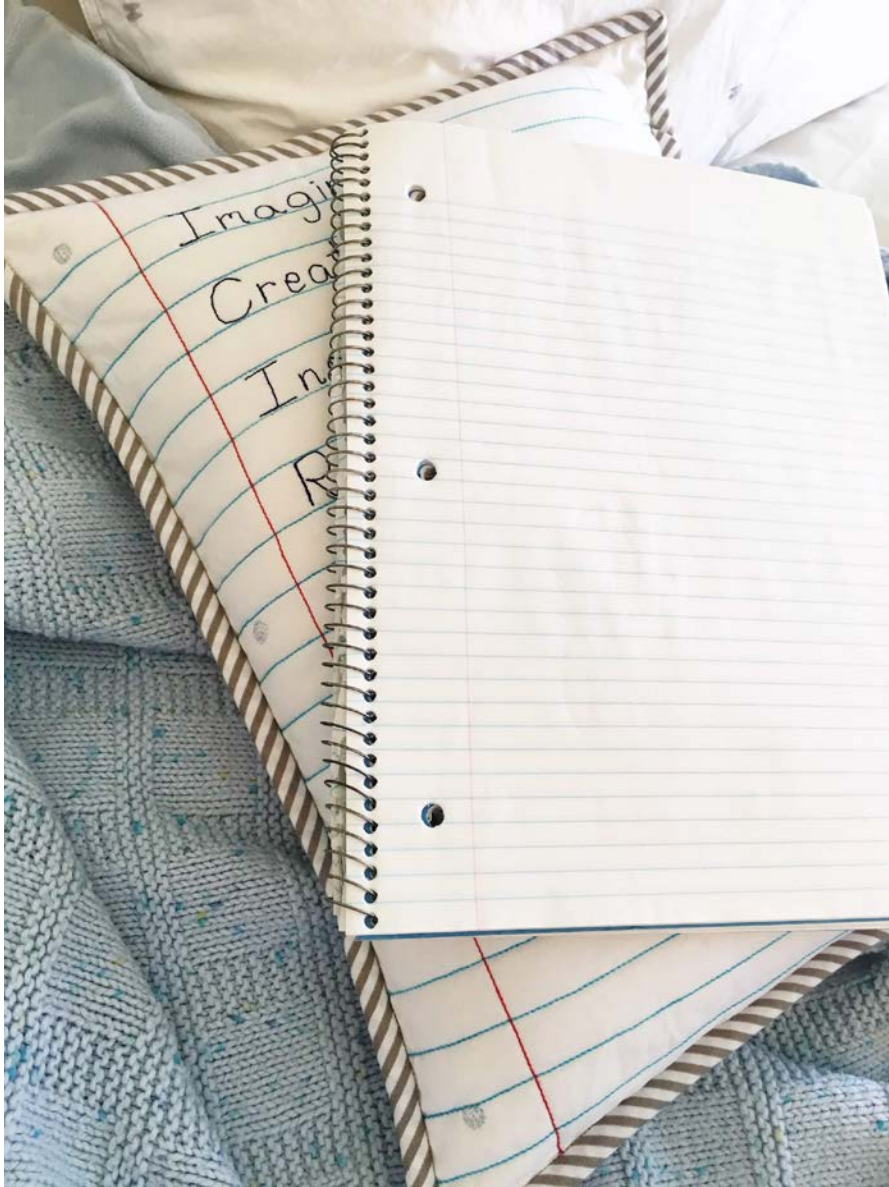
Trim up your front panel, cutting away any excess batting, place right side down. Next place your 10x13 pocket fabric right side up and your outer pocket 12x13 (lined and with pencil pocket sewn onto it) right side up also. Use clips to hold layers together and sew all the way around using a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam.



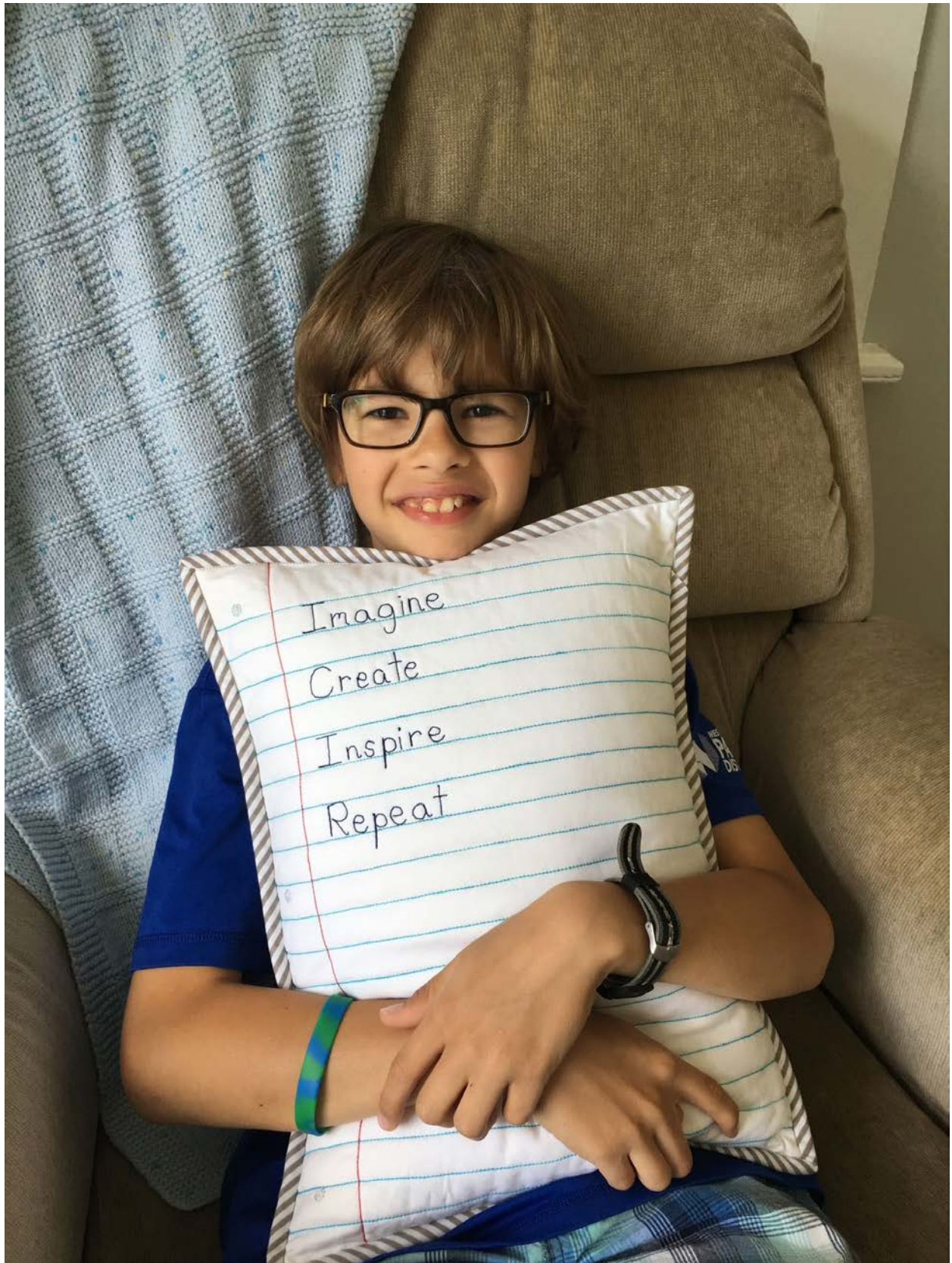
Lastly make and add your binding using your preferred method. I machine bind mine for added durability (especially on a kids project like this) and find it helpful to use the G foot to get my stitches even and right against the front binding strip.



I asked my son what fabric I should use for the binding and he liked this stripy one because it looked like spiral binding to him.



All ready for imagination and creativity to fill the pages.



And one happy boy ready to inspire!