

WINNING SPIRIT

Figure Skating Workbook

Find Your Inner Game



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How to Use this Workbook as a Power Journal

It is important to have a Power Journal like this to keep a record of your progress. Remember, if your sport is worth doing, it's worth recording! Keep this in a place where you will use it regularly. Write down your hopes and dreams, your successes and achievements, your fears and failures.

Your Power Journal is not just something to write in. It is also something that you can reread later on. Some days, you will read what you have written and it will be just what you need. The questions and activities inside are designed to get you to think and feel more deeply about your sport. They will also help you to understand yourself better as an athlete and as a person.

The Power Journal works best with the *Winning Spirit: Figure Skating* book, but may be used alone. Feel free to approach this book in many different ways. If you like, begin with Chapter 1 and work through to Chapter 40, doing each in order. Perhaps you'd rather pick and choose chapters by their titles, completing them randomly. There are some chapters that you will want to come back to later on to check your progress in a specific exercise. You will also find sections and pages labeled for "Notes" for those ideas that pop up, but don't fit into an exercise or stated activity.

Feel free to work on some of this Power Journal with a skating friend, coach, or family member. Some items you'll want to do by yourself. However you choose to use your journal, we suggest that you complete at least one chapter a week, eventually finishing it in a year, roughly one skating season.

❧ My Skating Power Journal ❧



1

Love What You Do

I love to skate.

*When I am on the ice
there is no place I would rather be.*



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:





Eliminate "I have to" from your skating vocabulary and replace it with "I want to." Write down a few examples:

I have to _____

I want to _____

I have to _____

I want to _____

I have to _____

I want to _____

2

Have A Burning Desire

I keep improving every day.

I turn my desire into excellent practice.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



This year, I want to achieve _____

3

Appreciate Your Special Team

*My special teammates
help make it happen!*

*They give me encouragement,
confidence, and love.*



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



Make a list of every member of your special team. Then write each one of them a thank-you note or card. Use the space below to set up your "special teammates" list.

Member's Name

Member's Role



Write about why each "teammate" is so special. Include many of the things each does that support your skating.

A series of horizontal lines for writing, overlaid with a faint illustration of a skater in a rink. The skater is in the center, wearing a dark top and a light skirt, with one arm raised. In the background, there are several spectators' heads and shoulders, some wearing helmets or hats, looking towards the skater. The rink has a railing in the foreground.

4

Keep a Skating Journal

*Writing down my goals
helps me to know what I want.*

*Keeping a journal helps me
to understand myself better.*



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



What would you like to achieve as a skater?



What will it take to make this happen?



When you have achieved your goal, what will it look like? Draw a picture of your success:



List some of your off-ice goals, too:



Ask members of your special team what they like and appreciate about you the most.



Did anyone say anything that surprised you? What was it? Why were you surprised?



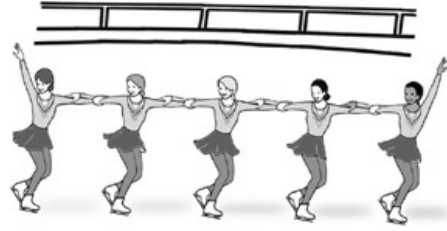
When others appreciate me, I feel . . .

6

Compete With The Best

*Skating with the best
brings out my competitive fire.*

I find out how much I have inside.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



Who are the most challenging and toughest competitors you know? List them below.

Skaters' Names:

What makes them tough?:

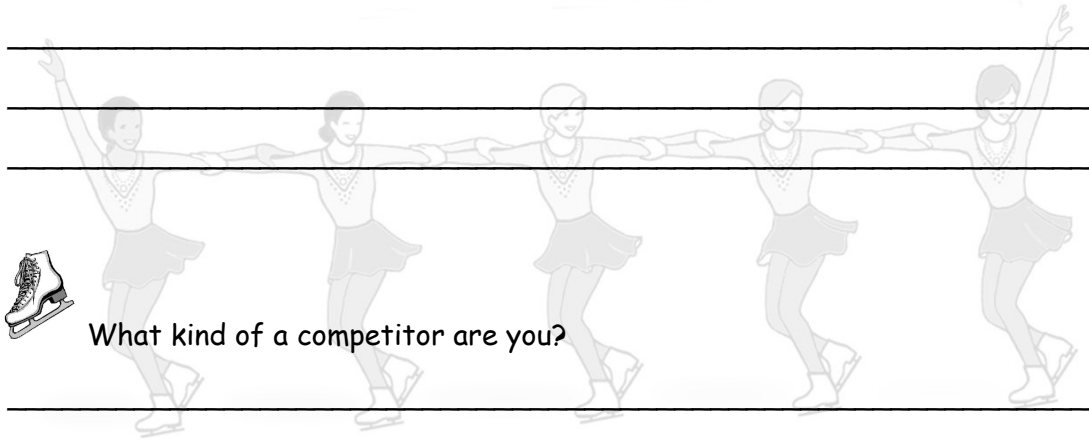
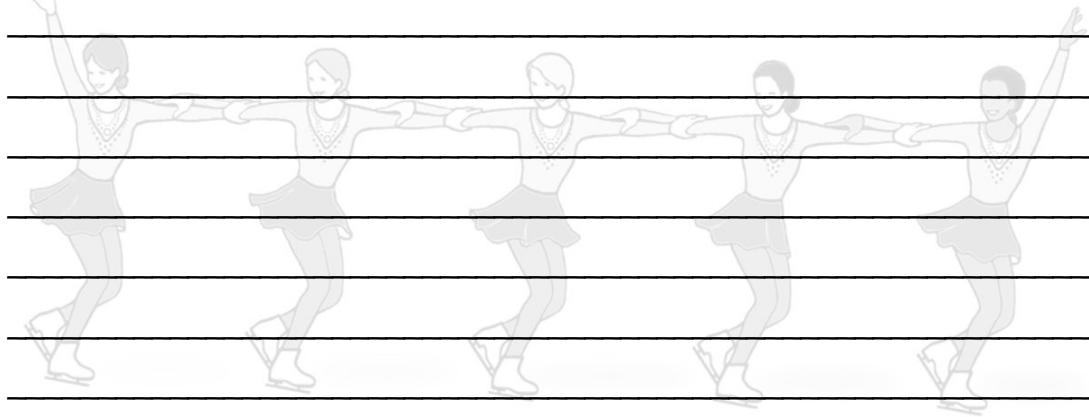
1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



What do you enjoy about competing?



What kind of a competitor are you?



7

Experience True Victory

I am a true winner.

No one can take away my personal victory.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



List some words and short phrases that describe your personal victory.

<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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Write a personal victory statement below. Write from your heart and include only things that you feel are true. Become really clear about your personal meaning of victory.

A series of horizontal lines for writing, overlaid with a large, faint illustration of a person ice skating. The person is wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt, dark pants, and ice skates, and is captured in a dynamic skating pose with one leg forward and arms slightly out.

8 Practice With A Purpose



I practice with a purpose.

I have fun, work hard, and improve my skills.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:





Write down the two areas in which you want to improve the most:

What do I want to improve?

How will I do it?

1. _____

2. _____

9 Be Creative

I am a creative and artistic athlete.

My program is my masterpiece.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



When do you feel the most creative on the ice?



How does being creative help you skate better?



OK! Let's put your creativity to work. Write a poem about skating—then draw a picture to illustrate it . . .

A rectangular box containing six horizontal lines for writing a poem.

A large, empty rectangular box for drawing a picture to illustrate the poem.

10

Be A Coach's Dream



I bring positive energy to practice.

*I listen to my coach and
work hard to improve.*



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



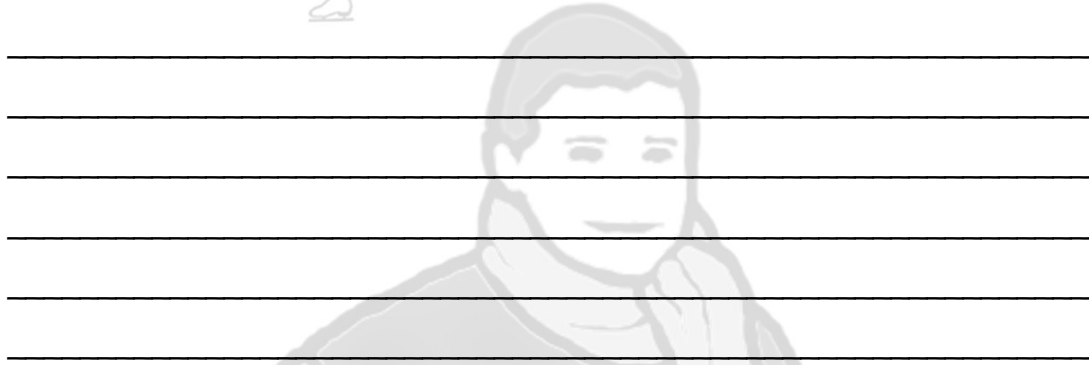
Choose three coaches at your arena and ask them if they ever have had a skater who was a coach's dream. If so, ask them to tell you about these skaters.

Coach's Name:

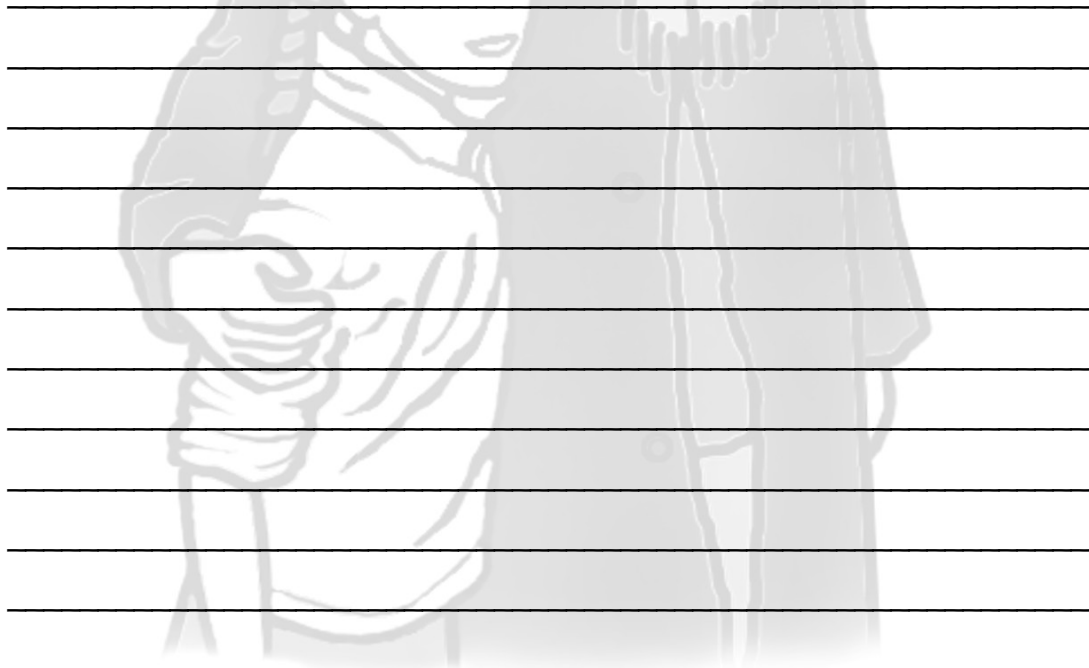
What s(he) said:



If you were a coach, what kind of skater would you want to work with?



Are you a coach's dream? Explain.



11

Work Hard For Greatness

I love to work hard.

When I give it my all, I feel good about myself.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



Go to the ice arena and observe which skaters work the hardest. Notice how they warm up, practice, and focus on improving. Make some notes below . . .

Skater's Name:

What I observed:



How do the skaters you observed stand out? Why did you choose them?

A set of horizontal lines for writing, with three faint line drawings of skaters in various poses overlaid on the lines.



Would other skaters choose you as a hard worker? Why or why not?

A set of horizontal lines for writing, with three faint line drawings of skaters in various poses overlaid on the lines.

12

Remember To Have Fun

Skating is fun.

On the ice, I feel free.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



When is skating fun?



When does skating feel like too much work?



Write about your happiest moments on the ice.

A series of horizontal lines for writing, with a large, faint illustration of a person ice skating in the background.

13

Confidence Comes From Within

I know that I can get the job done.

I trust my training and my preparation.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



When do you feel the **most** confident?



When do you feel the *least* confident?

14

Welcome the Pressure

I thrive in pressure situations.

I love the pressure. Bring it on!



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



The night before my competition, I feel . . .



On the day of my competition, I feel . . .

15

Think Like A Beginner



*Every time I skate,
I have something to learn.*

I love to discover new things about myself!



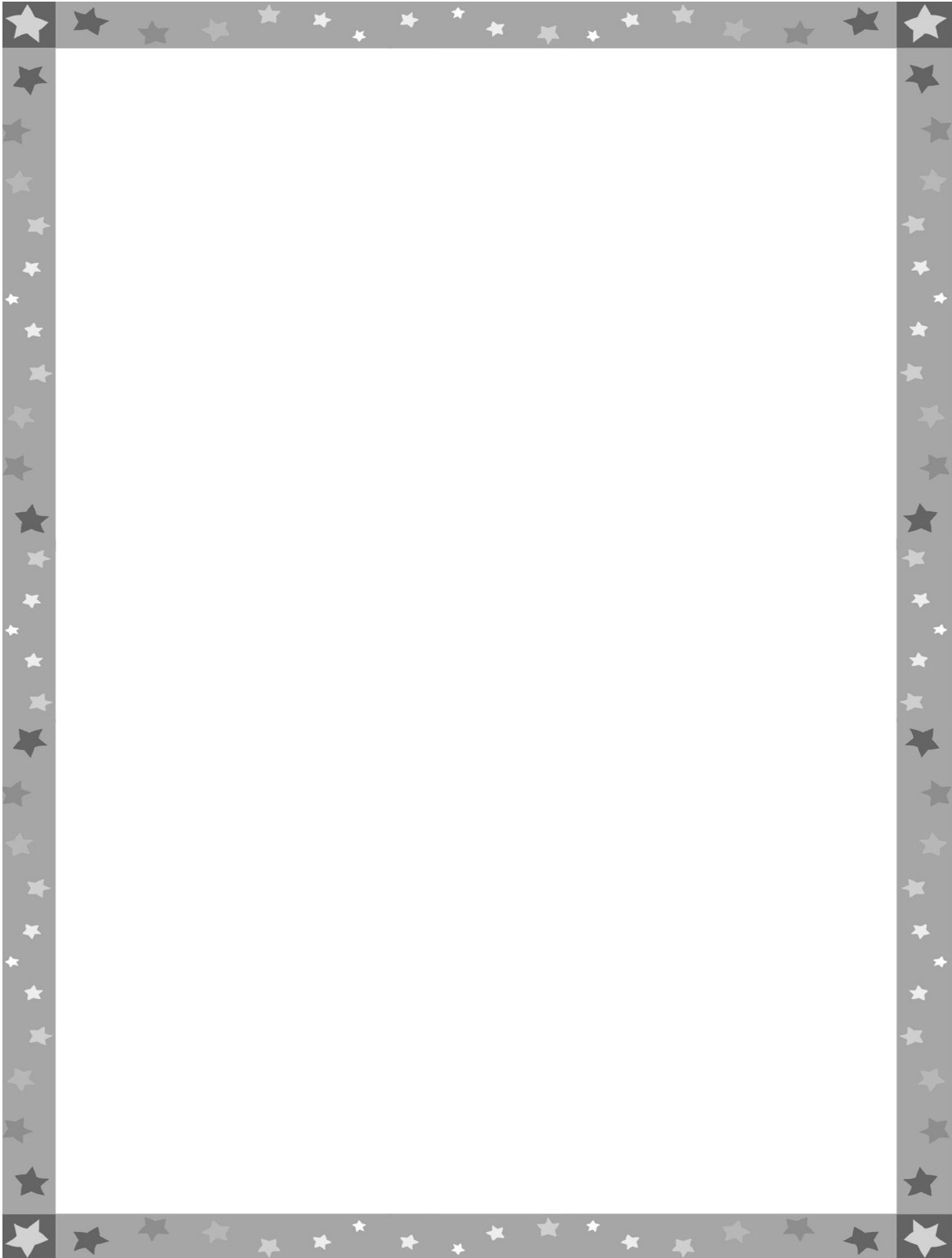
Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



What do you remember about your earliest experiences at the ice arena?



Paste some photos that show the kid in you:



16

Affirm What You Want

I speak encouraging words to myself.

I put positive thoughts in my mind.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



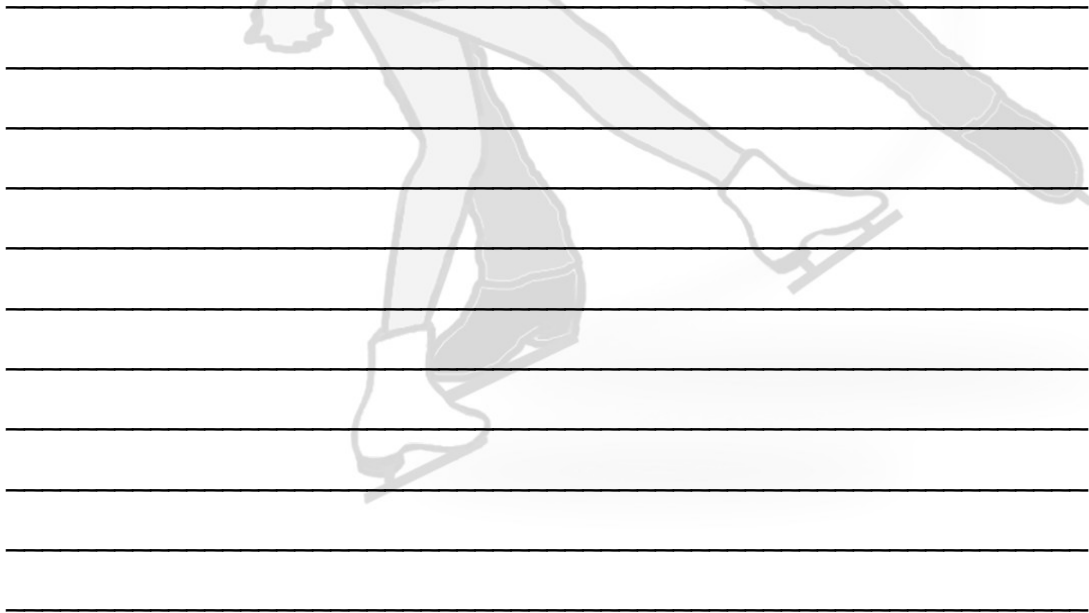
Imagine that someone at the arena comes up to you and tells you very positive things about your skating. Imagine that those encouraging words fill you with confidence. What did that person say? What were the words that made you feel so good?



What words do you want to erase from your skating vocabulary? _____



What are the most powerful words you can say to yourself? _____



17

Communicate with Your Coach

I communicate clearly with my coaches.

*I let them know
what I am thinking and feeling.*



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



The next time that you feel concerned or confused about something that involves your coach (or anyone else, for that matter), ask for some time when you can sit down and talk. You may want to write down your thoughts before the meeting so you will remember everything you want to say. Be truthful and honest when you talk, but also be respectful.



Is there anything between you and your coach that should be talked about?
What is it?

18

Know Your Inner Circle

I listen to the people in my inner circle.

They have my best interest at heart.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



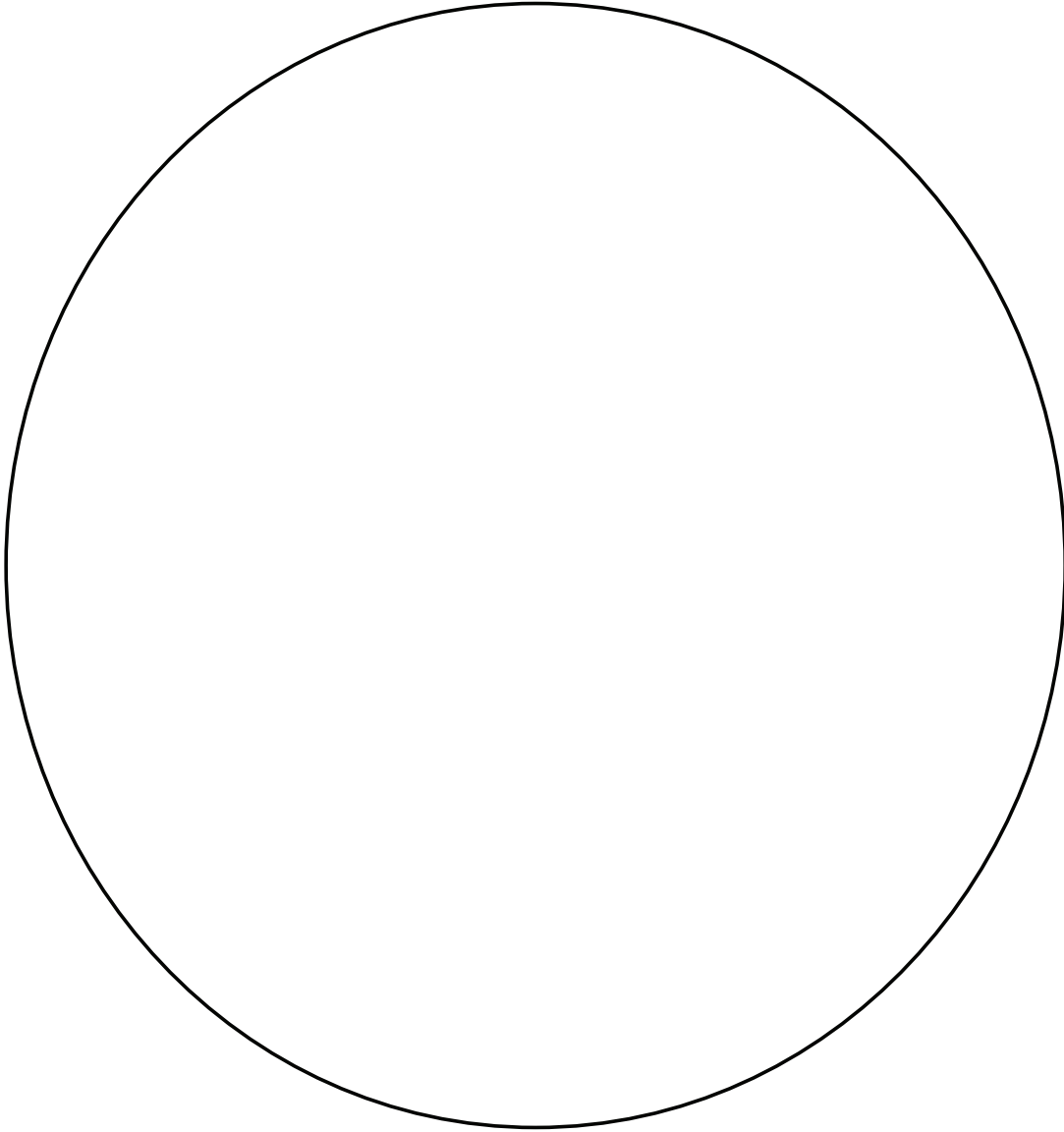
List the members of your inner circle. Remember, these are the people who have your best interest at heart.

Inner Circle Members:

How they encourage me:



In any way you'd like, fill in your inner circle. For example, you could cut out pictures, paste in photos, write a few words about who does what . . .



19

Let Your Emotions Out

Emotions are part of my spirit.

I express myself both on and off the ice.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



When was the last time you were really emotional about your skating? What did you feel?



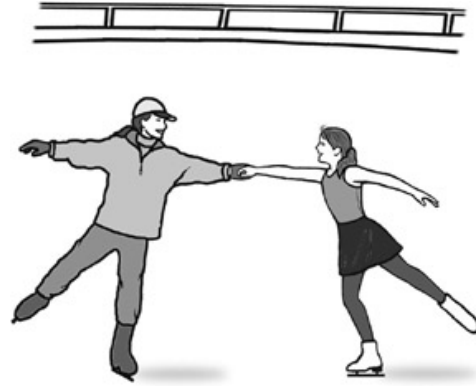
When was the last time you laughed really hard and had a great time? What were you doing?

20

Be Where You Are

The best place is right here!

The best time is right now!



Copy the affirmation above or write one of your own:



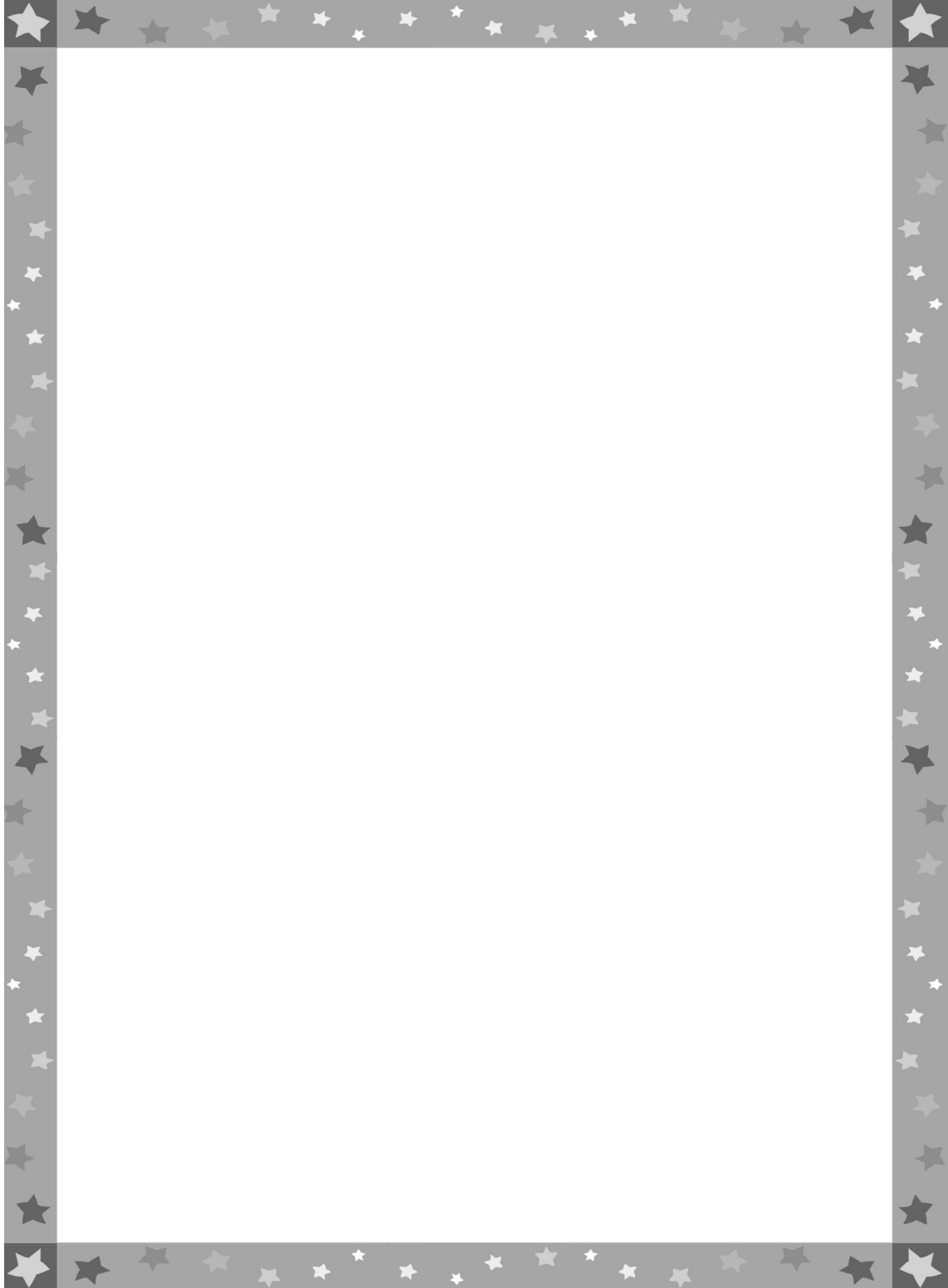
How do you feel when you're completely absorbed in the moment?



Find a "power center," an actual place where you can feel safe and content. Describe this special place.



Draw a picture of you in your special place . . .



21

Deal With Tough Situations

*I have the courage
to deal with tough situations.*

I am willing to work things out.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



Is there anyone in your life who is difficult to deal with? Why?

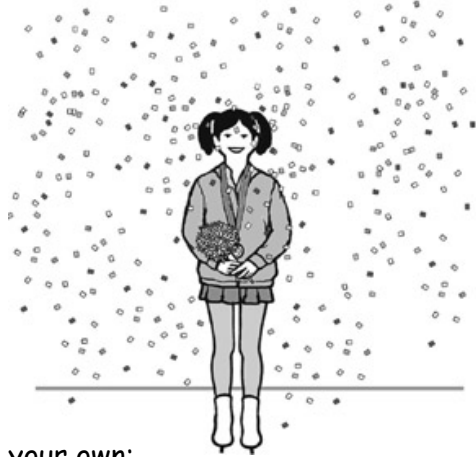


How are you dealing with them?

Enjoy Your Success

I enjoy my accomplishments.

I celebrate my success.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



The next time that you achieve success on the ice, go out of your way to celebrate it. You can celebrate any way you like. You can hang out with your coach and family members. You can go somewhere or do something special. You can also write about your accomplishment in this journal. *The important thing is that you give something back to yourself* for all the effort you put forth.

Some of my skating achievements:

24

Share What You Know

I share what I know with others.

I enjoy helping people.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



Ask non-skating friends or relatives to go to a general session with you. They could be complete beginners or maybe have a little skating experience. Once you are on the ice together and see how they skate, teach them some of the basic skating skills that you know so well.

Who would you invite?

What would you show them?

Free Your Mind

I picture my program in my mind.

*I see myself skating great
and achieving my goals.*



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



Find a place where you can be undisturbed and fully focused. Get into a comfortable position. Take a minute to print a word or short phrase inside the flame on the next page. Then look at the image, allowing your eyes to relax. Don't stare; blink as often as you need to.

If your mind wanders, gently guide it back to the flame. Continue your breathing as you settle into a relaxed focus. Slow, deep breathing will help you become calm and centered.

Be patient! This takes time, but it's worth it.



Words or phrases to put inside of the flame:



Know Your Inner Coach

I listen to the coach within.

My inner coach is always with me.



Copy the affirmation above or write one of your own:



The next time you find yourself lacking confidence, feeling confused, or needing a solution to a problem, go to a favorite place where you can be alone. Be relaxed so that you can have a conversation with yourself as if you were talking with your best friend. Tell yourself what is going on and what you are feeling. Don't hold anything back.

Listen for inner direction so that you can clearly see what steps you need to take. Allow a few minutes of silence to pass as you listen for a message or an answer from within.



What did you learn from this exercise?

Aim At The Effort, Not The Result

*I feel good about myself
when I give my best effort.*

I focus on one element at a time.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



How do you mentally prepare for each competition? What do you do to get ready?

29

Put Yourself In Their Skates

*I treat other skaters
the way I want to be treated.*

*I try to understand
what they are going through.*



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:

From your own experience, you know that there are so many things that can cause a skater to feel unhappy: for example, a poor performance, hurt feelings, or personal problems.



List a few of your tough times:



Who helped you through those times?

When other skaters are having a tough time, practice a little compassion. The best thing you can do is to ask if they are okay and if there is anything they need. You don't have to give advice or offer solutions. Just be a good listener and show that you care. Sometimes, that's all it takes.



List a few times when you have helped someone:

Skater's name:

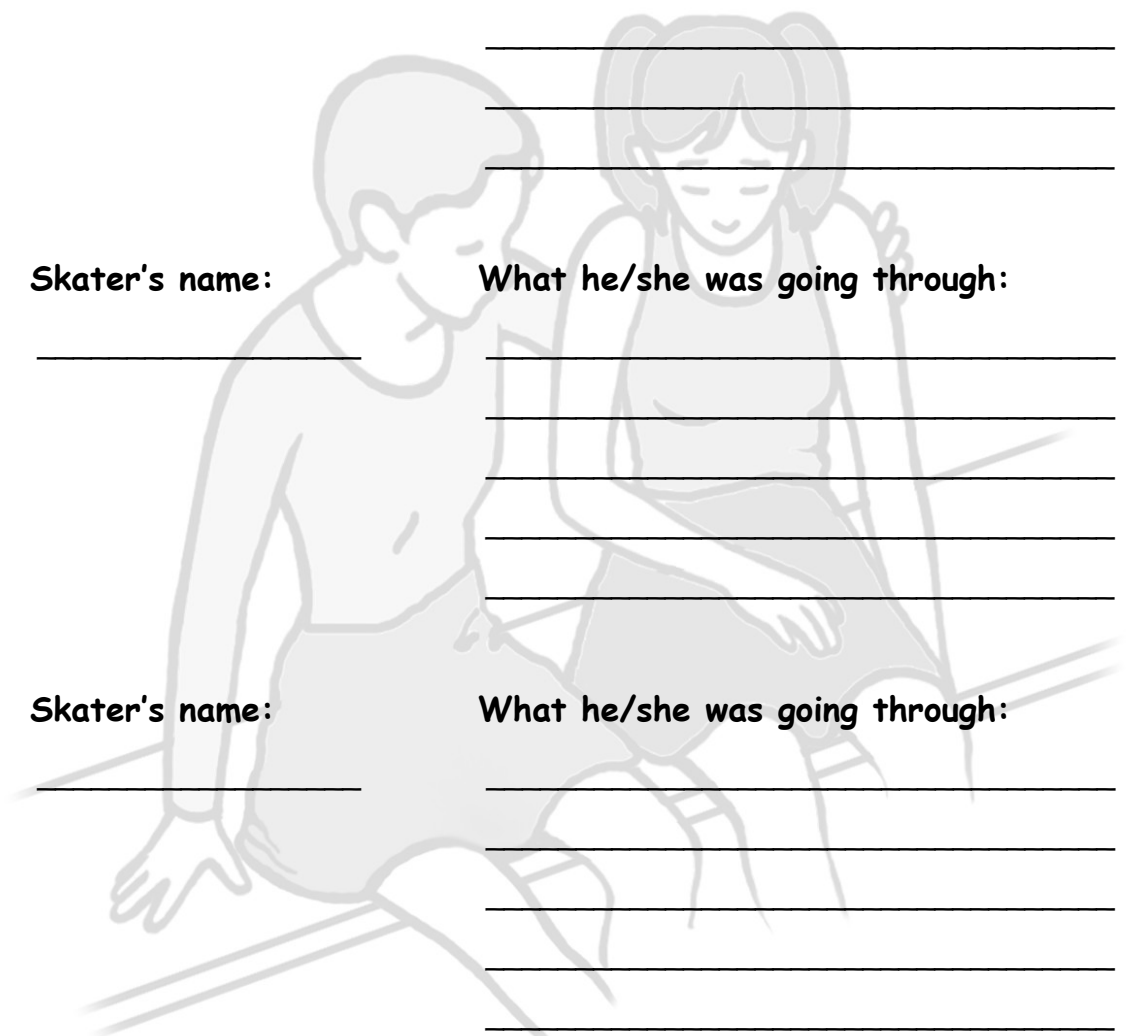
What he/she was going through:

Skater's name:

What he/she was going through:

Skater's name:

What he/she was going through:

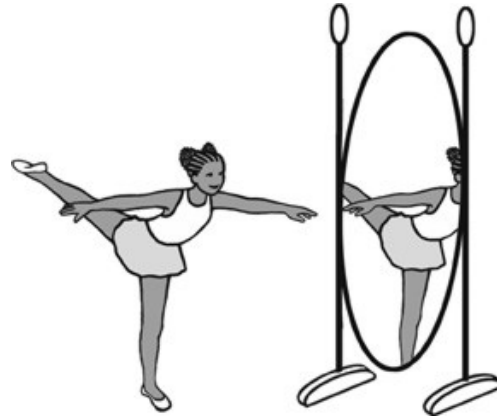


30

Critique Yourself

Knowing my strengths gives me confidence.

Knowing weaknesses gives me determination.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



Do this exercise alone and, in all honesty, answer the following questions:

What are my strengths? _____

Where do I need to improve? _____

Am I a coach's dream? _____

Do I practice with a purpose? _____

Am I prepared? _____

Do I enjoy competing? _____



Do this exercise each month and see if and how your answers change.
(You might want to make copies of this page before using it.)

Today's date: _____

What are my strengths? _____

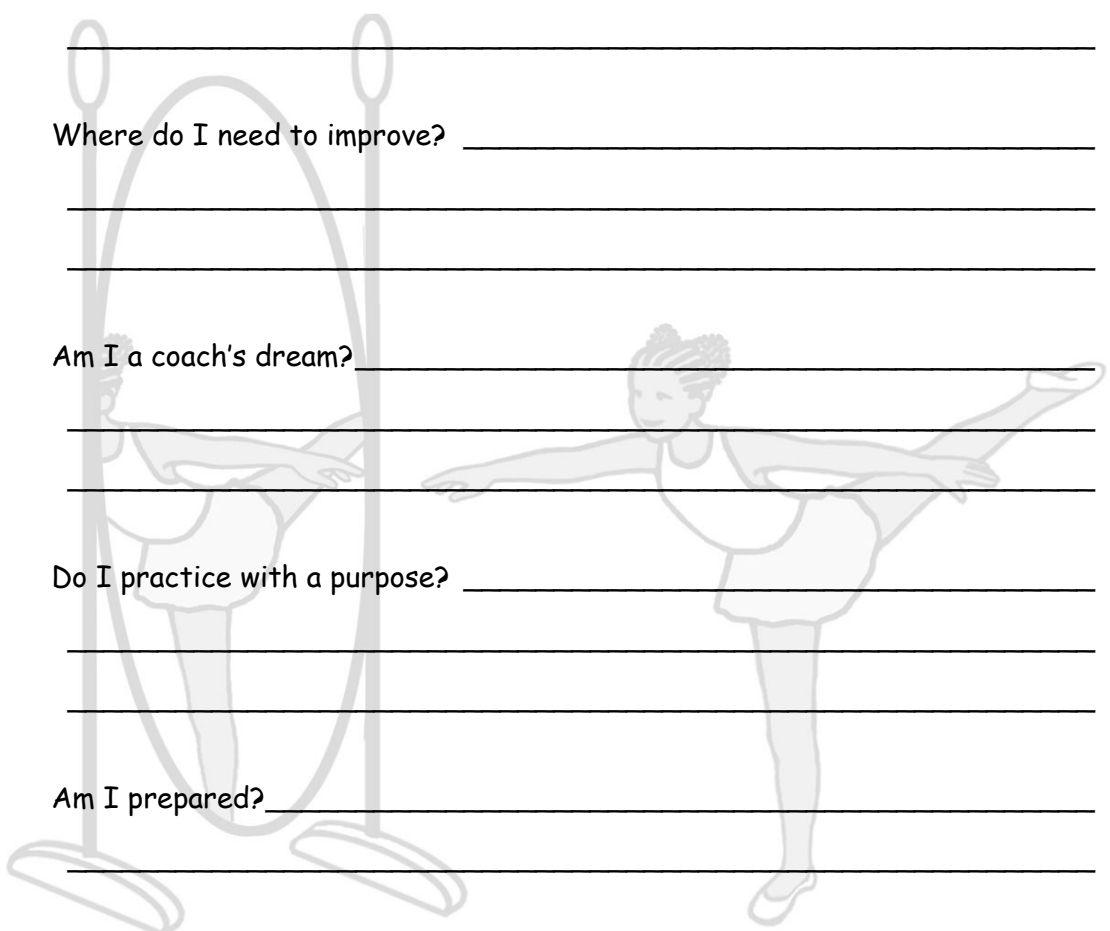
Where do I need to improve? _____

Am I a coach's dream? _____

Do I practice with a purpose? _____

Am I prepared? _____

Do I enjoy competing? _____



31

Skate In The Moment

I bring my full attention into the moment.

I know this time won't come again.



Copy the affirmation above or write one of your own:



How does it feel when you are skating fast?



What does it feel like when you spin?



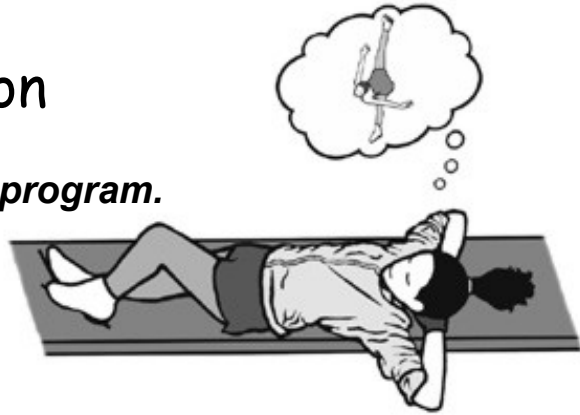
Describe the sensation of jumping.

32

Use Your Imagination

I picture each element of my program.

I see my great performance.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:



The *Skate for the Love* CD has a ten-minute visualization track that can awaken your imagination. If you don't have the CD, you can use the exercise below. Read the words out loud or have someone read them to you.

Imagine that you are stepping onto the ice for warm up before a competition. Imagine you are in your knees, pushing with full extension and powerful stroking. See yourself with your head held high as you skate tall.

Focus on your jumps. Your positions feel comfortable; you trust each set up and follow through on your take off. The power explodes upward from your ankles and legs as you lift into the air. You have centered rotation and are over your skating hip as you prepare to land. Your checkouts are strong, your timing for combinations is precise, and your landings are balanced and solid.

Next, think about your spins. You find the sweet spot on your blade and center every spin. Each position is fully extended with a strong back. Spin faster and faster until you feel yourself blur.

Change the focus to your footwork. You are quick and light on your blades. Feel the rhythm of your movement.

Now the waiting and warm up is over and your name is announced. Feel confident as you take your starting position. As the performance begins, make every movement count. The arena is filled with your presence.

33

Relax For A While

When I relax, I feel calm and centered.

I feel energy flowing throughout my body.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:

Find a place where you can be undisturbed. Get into a comfortable position such as sitting in a chair or on a mat with your back straight. Place your hands on your knees or in your lap, relax your shoulders, and close your eyes.

As you settle in, become aware of your breathing. Breathe naturally as you notice the air move in and out. When your mind wanders and thoughts pop into your head, gently guide your attention back to your breathing. Continue this exercise for five to ten minutes.

That's all there is to it! With practice, this exercise will become a way for you to become calm, relaxed, and centered.



How do you feel after this relaxation exercise?



SLOWLY, (like when you first learned to write) copy the following lines.
After each line, take a few gentle, deep breaths and move on to the next line.

I love to relax.

(Take a few deep breaths)

I take slow, deep breaths.

(Take a few deep breaths)

I feel calm and centered.

(Take a few deep breaths)

I feel energy flowing through my body.

(Take a few deep breaths)

I take slow, deep breaths.

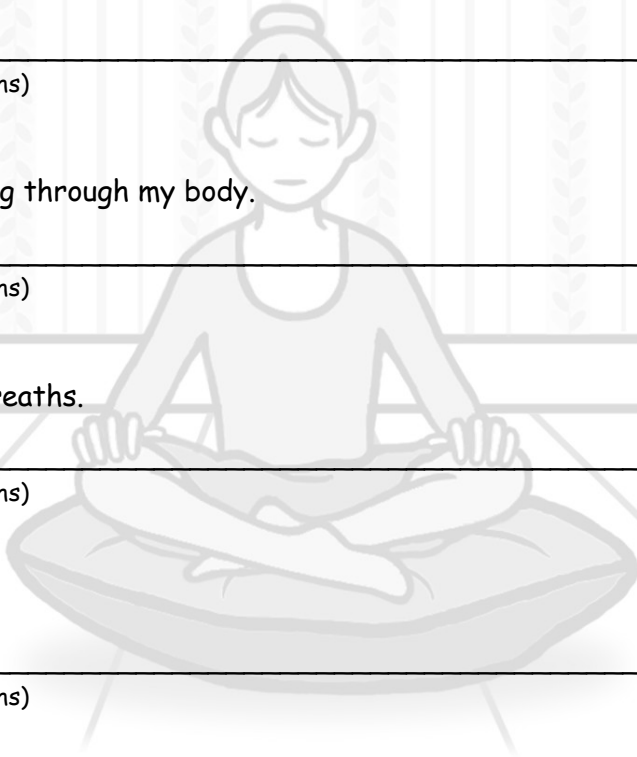
(Take a few deep breaths)

My mind is at ease.

(Take a few deep breaths)

I feel calm and full of energy.

(Take a few deep breaths)



34

Be A Determined Skater

I am a determined and committed skater.

I never give up on my dreams.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:

Recall a time in your life when you faced a big challenge. Possibly, the odds of success seemed to be against you and others didn't believe you could succeed. But you knew that you could do it—and you did! Somehow you tapped into the spirit of determination.



What was the challenge you faced?



How did you tap into your power?



Is any big challenge currently facing you? Explain.

Lined writing area for the first prompt, featuring a decorative border at the top and a faint background illustration of a figure skater in a graceful pose.



How will you tap into your powerful spirit to beat the odds?

Lined writing area for the second prompt, featuring a faint background illustration of a figure skater in a dynamic pose.

35

Protect Yourself

I know that there is greatness within me.

*I will not let anyone interfere
with my love for skating.*



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:

Get in a comfortable position and begin to practice a few minutes of deep relaxation. Make sure that you pay attention to your breathing, allowing your breaths to become slow and deep.

Then, using the power of your mind, begin to imagine that a shield of light is surrounding your entire body. Visualize it encircling and protecting you.

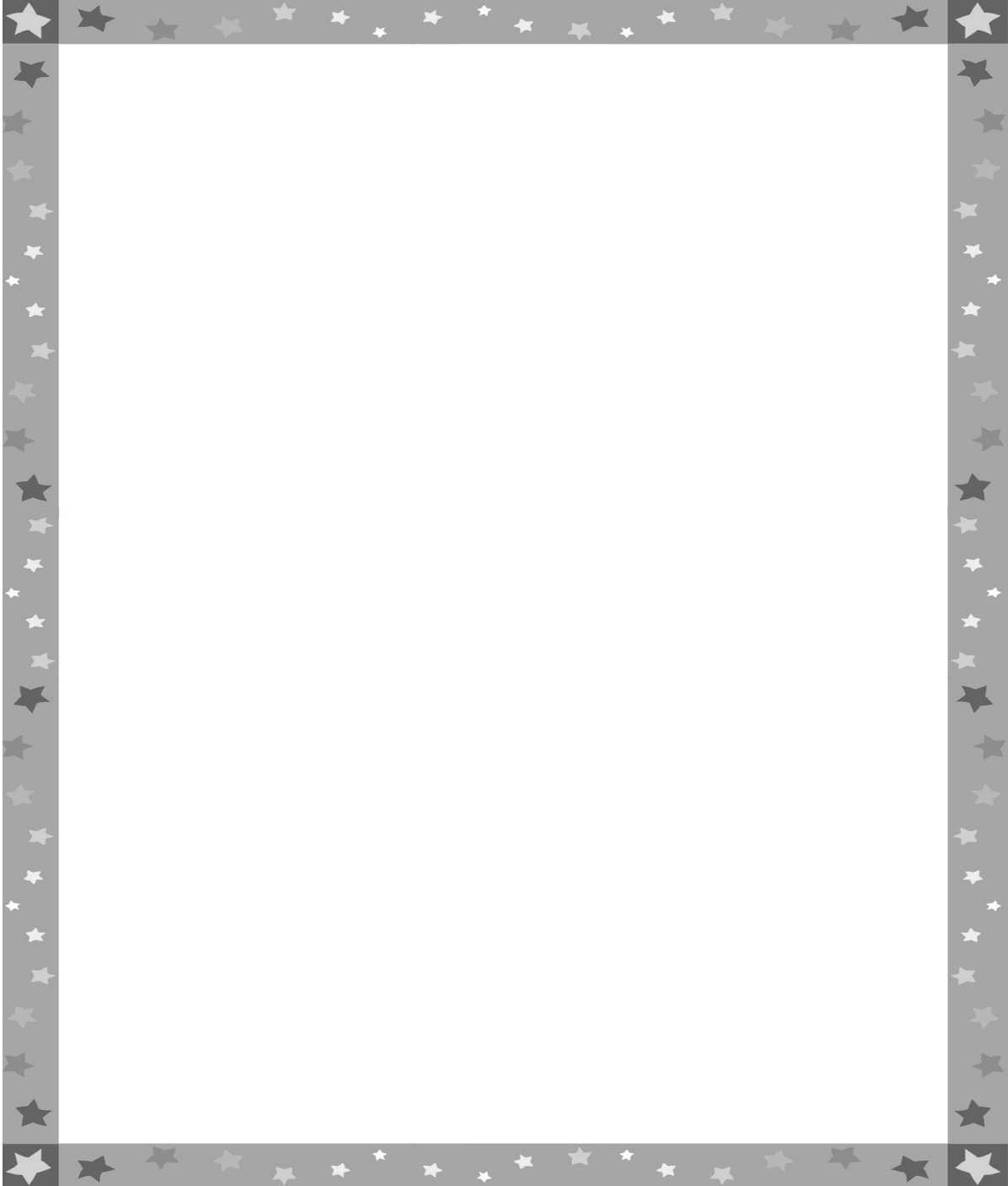
The next time you are in a situation when something has a negative effect on your performance, use this technique to protect yourself. Imagine that the shield of light is blocking out everything that is not helpful so that you can remain positive and confident.



How does it feel to be surrounded by your shield of light?



Find a favorite picture of yourself (on the ice, if you have one). Paste in or draw an image of yourself below. Then, draw the shield of light around you that you imagined. Be sure to add color.



36

Ask For Help



***I ask for help from people
I trust and respect.***

I tell them what is going on inside of me.



Copy the affirmation above or write one of your own:



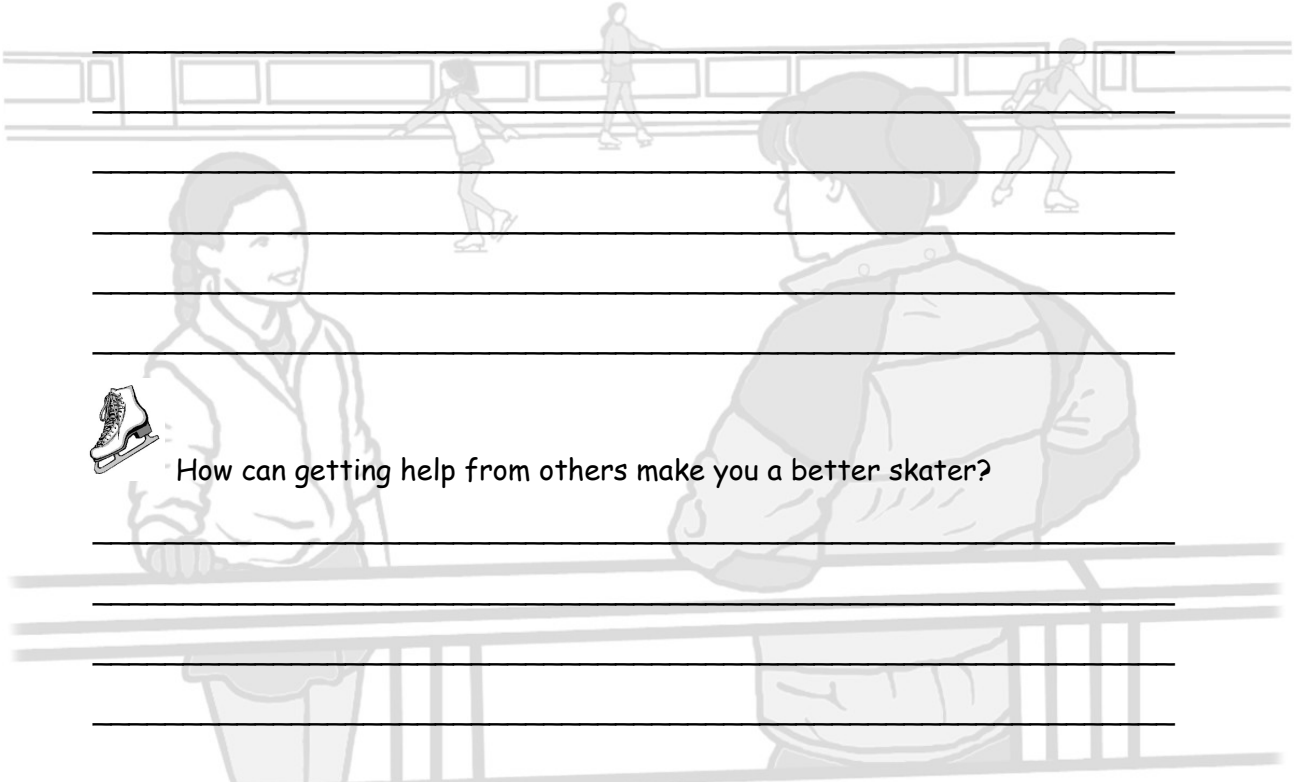
Ask yourself if there is anything going on in your skating that you could use some extra help with. Are you struggling with an aspect of your skating? Are you feeling unprepared or anxious about an upcoming event? Is anything else going on in your life that is causing you to lose some of your direction and motivation? Do you need some help?

If so, identify people who can help. Have the courage to ask for advice. When you do get sound advice, make sure that you really understand it. Then, put this knowledge and advice into practice and see what happens.

Write your results below:



Was it easy for you to ask for help? Explain.



How can getting help from others make you a better skater?

37

Push Out Your Greatness

*I push out my greatness
and put my competitive spirit to work.*

There is no limit to what I can accomplish.



Copy the affirmation above or write one of your own:

Pick any day in your skating schedule. For example, let's say the day you're thinking of is Monday. From now on, every Monday will be your "Power Day!" Mark it down on a calendar.

Power Day is that one day each week when you take your skating to another level, no matter what. On Power Day, you will practice with greater concentration, energy, and intensity.

_____ will be my Power Day!



Make a list of things to work with on Power Day:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



How does it feel to really "dig in" and push your greatness out?

A series of horizontal lines for writing, overlaid with a large, faint illustration of a figure skater performing a one-foot spin. The skater is shown in profile, with one leg raised and arms extended, set against a background of horizontal lines.

38

Use Fear To Your Advantage

I use fear to my advantage.

I create an attitude of courage and confidence.



Copy the affirmation above or **write** one of your own:

One good way to cope with fear is to face it. The following exercise will help you better understand what your fears are:

My Skating Fears:

How I can use this fear to my advantage:

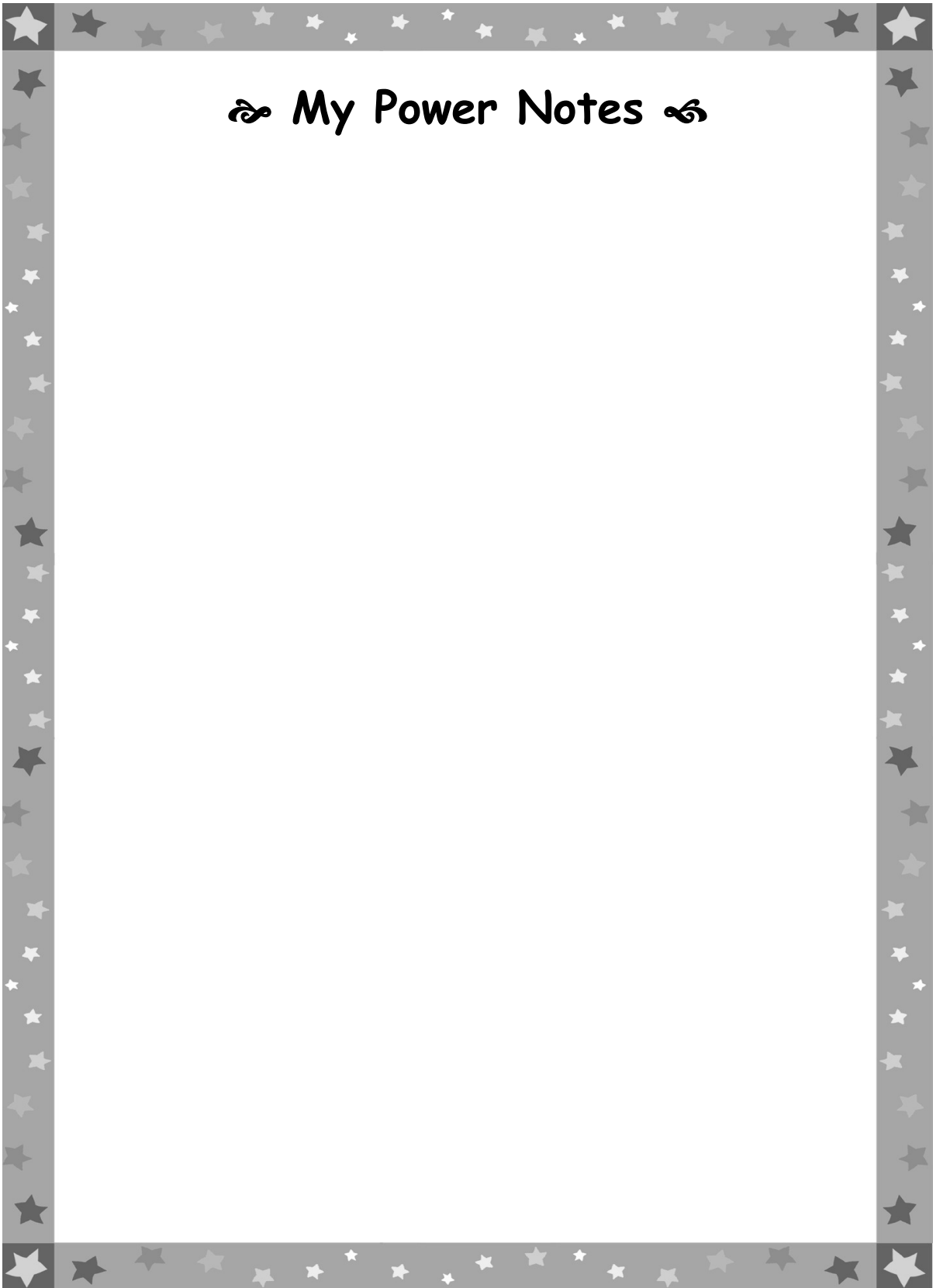
1. _____

2. _____

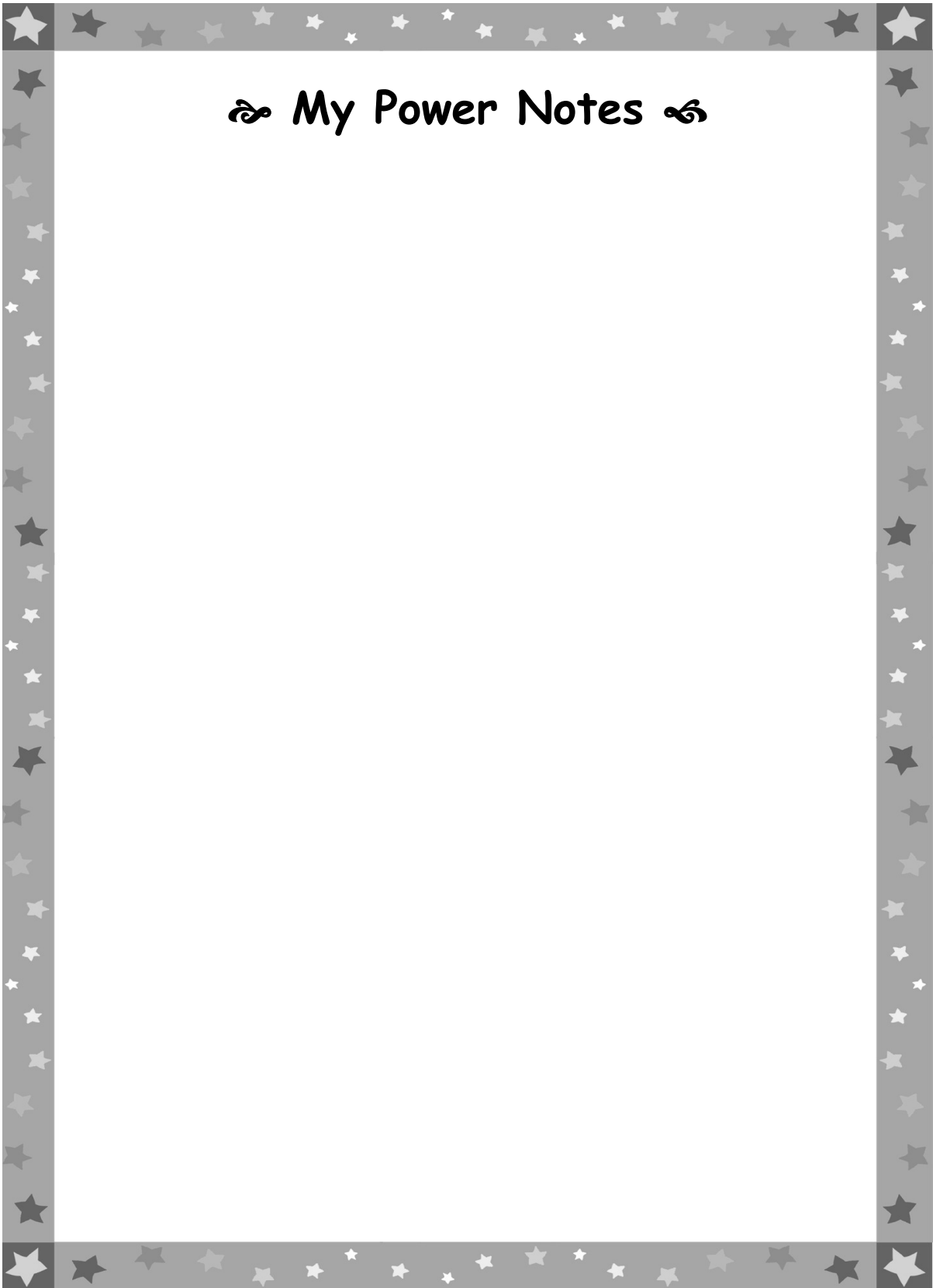


Create a collage of some of your personal treasures. You can paste in photos of your home, family and friends. You can also cut and paste some of your favorite words.

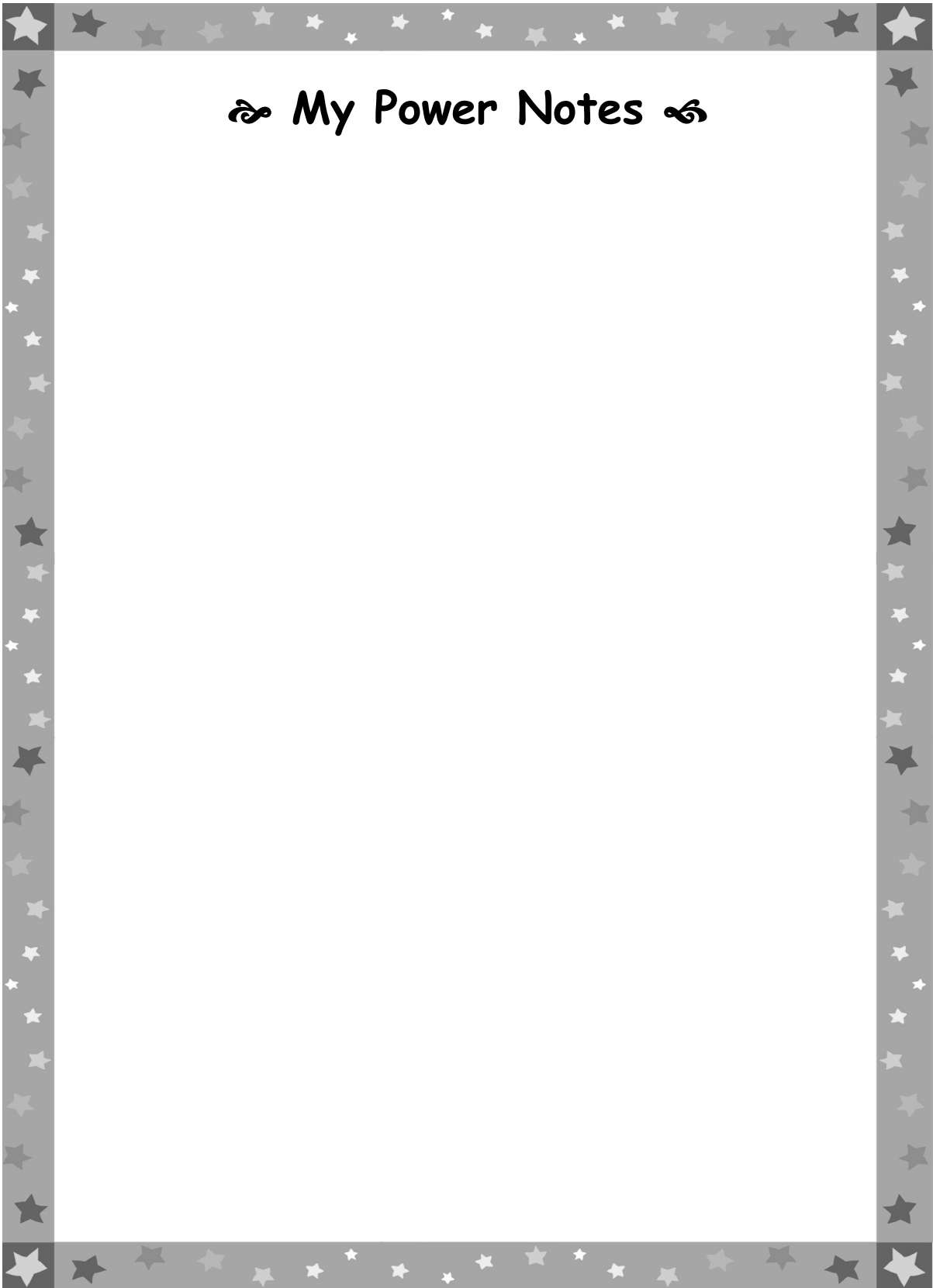
A large, empty rectangular box with a double-line black border. It is intended for students to create a collage of their personal treasures, photos, and favorite words.



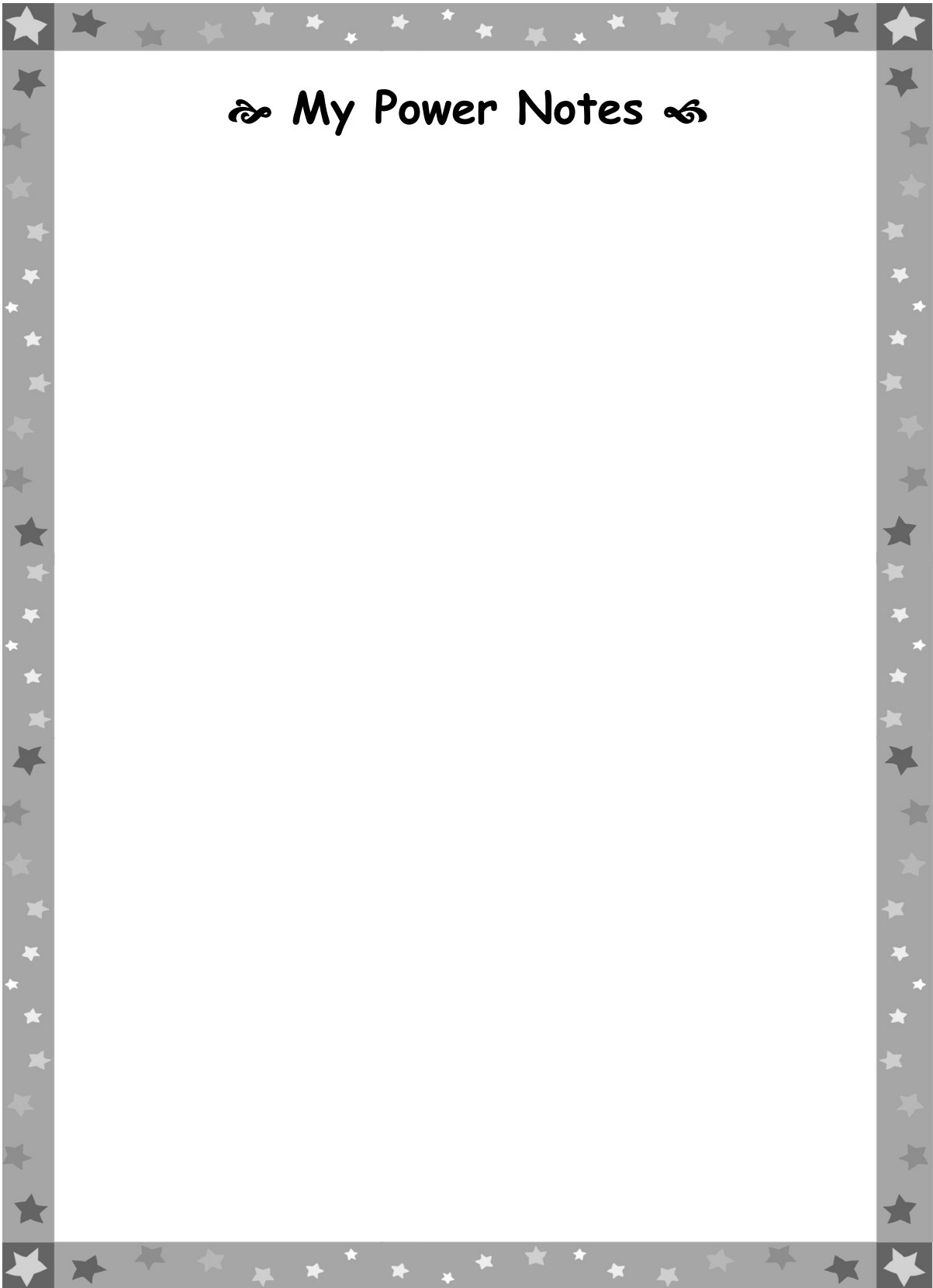
☞ My Power Notes ☞



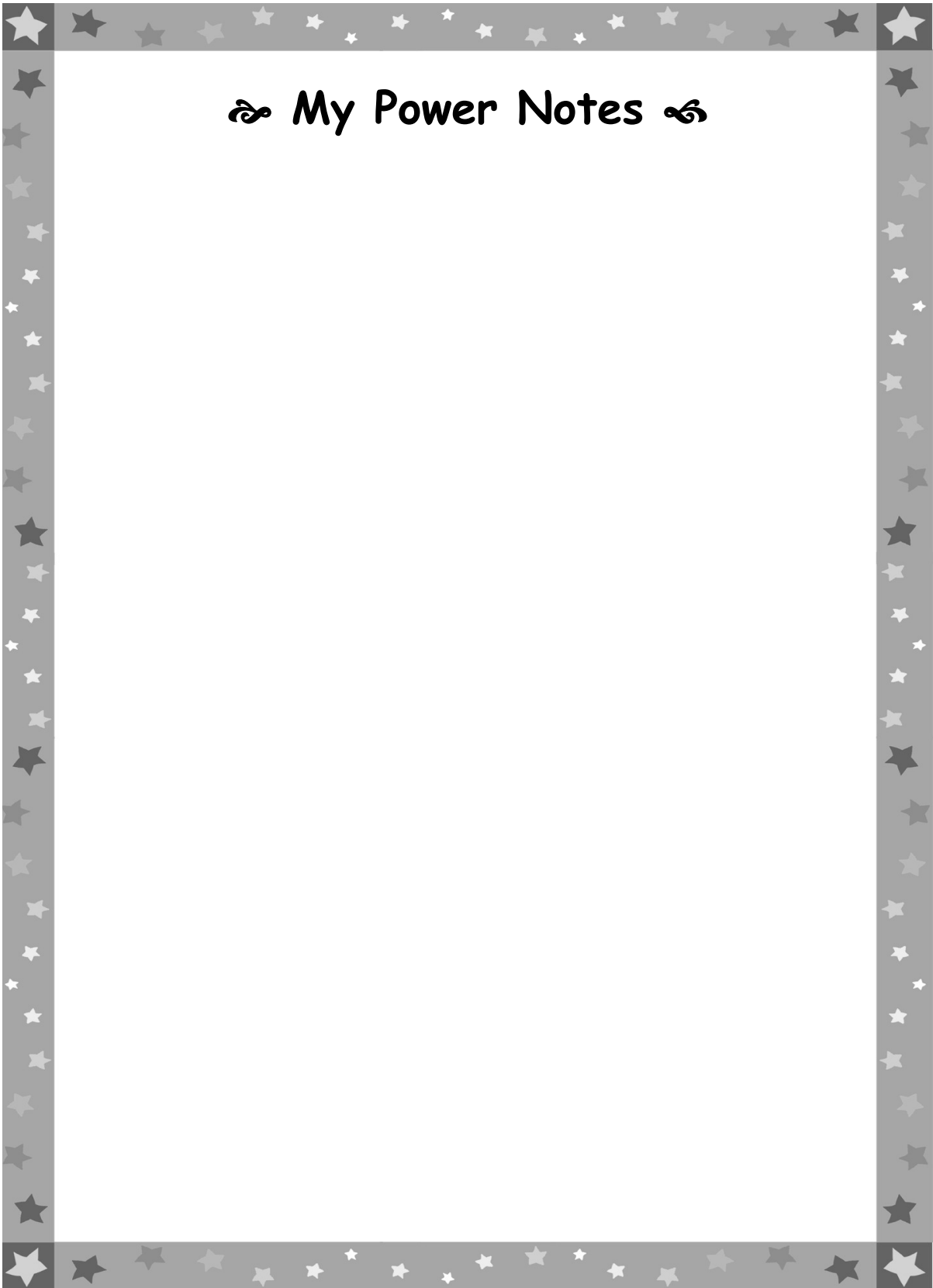
☞ My Power Notes ☞



☞ My Power Notes ☞



☞ My Power Notes ☞



☞ My Power Notes ☞

Writing down the journey...

Three decades ago, when I entered college on a four year, full athletic scholarship, I had no intention of becoming a writer. I had no real interest in studying psychology, or philosophy. I primarily thought of myself as an athlete and education was secondary to my sport. I had just come from a very successful high school senior year, being named to the All Philadelphia Team as well as the All Pennsylvania State Team. As far as I was concerned, I was going to college to play my sport and get an education in the process.

My very first college class was a humanities class. Little did I know that this class and its teacher, Charles Darr, would permanently change my academic focus and help to clarify my personal attitudes. Over the course of the next four years, this humanities professor exposed me to the magic and power of the written word by encouraging me to keep an on-going journal that recorded my sport, academic, and personal life.

Journal-keeping helped to keep me motivated when things got tough. I was able to record my triumphs and take an objective look at my failures. It also gave me the opportunity to explore new ideas and unanswered questions.

When I began teaching at the college level, I also encouraged my students to keep journals. Since those first days in college, I continue to believe and profess that, for an athlete, if your sport is worth doing, worth devoting a great deal of your life to, it's worth recording. To consciously do so is to become your own teacher.

Tom Mitchell
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