

YEAH

MUSIC



IN TUNE SONGWRITING



**VIDEO
COMPANION
GUIDE**

GRADES 4-6



PBS

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RESERVE**

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IN TUNE SONGWRITING

This video series introduces children in grades 4–6 to the fundamentals of songwriting, guiding them through choosing topics, using rhyme and figurative language, and revision. Each lesson builds writing skills by connecting songwriting to core ELA concepts such as organization, voice, structure, and the writing process. Through engaging examples and hands-on practice, the series shows that songwriting is a powerful and creative form of writing.

Videos

- 1 Your Song
- 1.1 Your Song in Practice*
- 2 Rhyming
- 2.1 Rhyming in Practice*
- 3 Your Voice
- 4 Figurative Language
- 4.1 Figurative Language in Practice*
- 5 Song Structure
- 6 Good Day
- 6.1 Drafts and Revisions in Practice*

** Includes printable student page.*

Ohio Standard Connections

Music: Connecting

4.1CO-6.1CO Discuss the connection between emotion and music in selected musical works using elements of music.

4.3CO-5.3CO Discuss how the elements and subject matter of music connect with other subject areas.

6.3CO Explain and apply skills developed in music (critical thinking, collaboration) to other subject areas and/or other art forms.

ELA: Writing

W.4.4-W5.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.6.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

ELA: Language

L.4.5-L6.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Credits

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Your Song

Episode 1



Jake and Esther explore how songwriting starts with finding a topic. Through personal stories and examples, they show that songs can be inspired by anything you might be feeling, experiencing, or even imagining.

Vocabulary

Notebook/Journal – A place (paper or digital) where you write down ideas, thoughts, and lyrics

Brainstorm – To think of many ideas quickly and freely

Topic – The main idea or subject of a song or piece of writing

Lyrics – The words of a song

Inspiration – Something that gives you ideas or motivates you to create

Discussion Questions

1. What are some examples of song topics Jake and Esther talked about in the video?

They mentioned topics like cookies, cars, girls, action figure collection, friends, love, dreams, mood, space adventures, aliens, feeling left out, and ninja pirates.

2. Why do Jake and Esther say you don't need to go to outer space to write a song?

They explain that you can find inspiration in your everyday life, feelings, experience and imagination, so you don't need a big adventure to come up with ideas.

3. What is a topic you might choose if you were going to write your own song, and why?

Answers will vary, such as their friends, pets, a favorite hobby, or a big moment in their life, because that is meaningful or exciting to them.

4. How did Jake and Esther use their notebooks to help them write songs?

They wrote down ideas, lists, lyrics, rhymes, doodles, and topics in their notebooks to help them brainstorm and develop their songs.

5. How can your feelings or everyday experiences turn into a song?

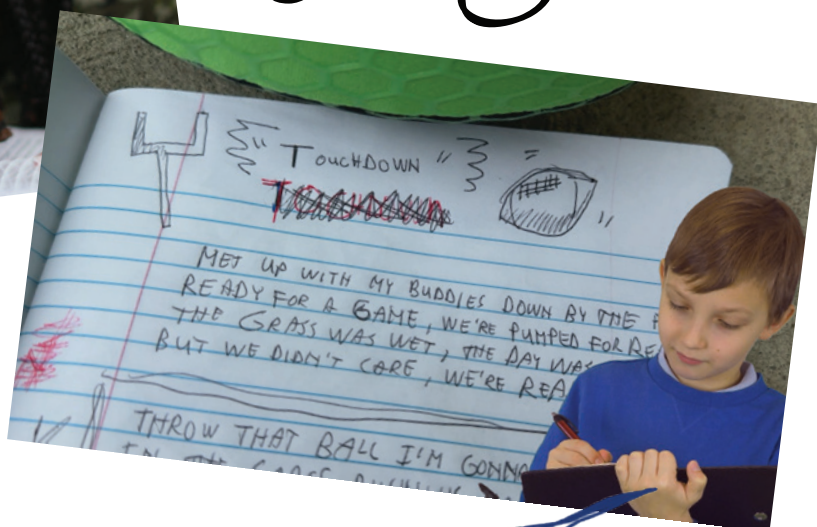
You can think about how you feel or what happens in your life to turn those thoughts into ideas for a song.





Your Song in Practice

Episode 1.1



After viewing the instructional video titled “Your Song,” watch this one-minute “Your Song in Practice” video that builds on the idea of choosing a topic by showing how to use a notebook or device to capture ideas and inspiration for songwriting. It guides viewers through the first steps of turning a topic into lyrics by brainstorming, organizing ideas, and preparing for whenever inspiration may strike.

This video includes an accompanying student page as part of the printable songwriting journal.



Rhyming

Episode 2



In this fun, breakfast-themed video, Jake and Esther explore how rhyming makes songs more memorable with help from rapper Jul Big Green. Through examples and a playful song about breakfast foods, viewers learn different types of rhymes and how to use them in their own songwriting.

Discussion Questions

1. What is rhyming, and why is it important in songwriting?

Rhyming is when words have similar ending sounds, and it helps make songs more catchy and memorable.

2. What are two different types of rhyming patterns mentioned in the video?

One example is "AA" rhyme, where two lines rhyme with each other. Another is "AB" rhyme, where the lines alternate in their rhymes.

3. How did the group turn breakfast into a song?

They chose breakfast as their topic and then added rhyming words and rhythm to create lyrics for a fun and creative song.

Vocabulary

Rhyme – Words that have the same or similar ending sounds (like cat and hat)

Rhythm – The beat or pattern of sounds in music or words

Poetry – A type of writing that uses rhythm, feelings, and creative language

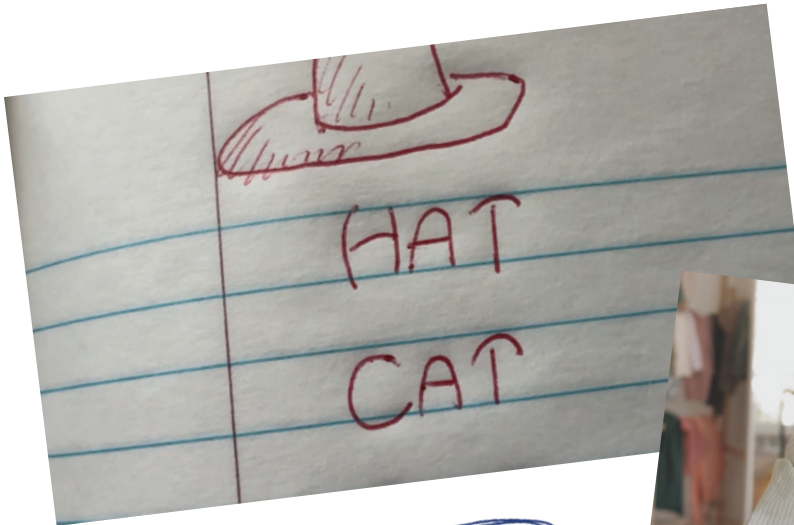
Couplet – Two lines of writing that rhyme with each other

Rhyme Pattern – The pattern of rhymes in a song or poem (like AA or AB)



Rhyming in Practice

Episode 2.1



After viewing the instructional video titled “Rhyming,” watch this one-minute “Rhyming in Practice” video that guides viewers through rhyming practice by choosing a topic, brainstorming related words, and finding rhymes to match.

This video includes an accompanying student page as part of the printable songwriting journal.



Your Voice

Episode 3



This video shows students using songwriting to express meaningful messages about kindness. Through collaboration, the children share ideas, organize their thoughts, and turn them into lyrics to make their own original song.

Discussion Questions

1. How did the students work together to create their song?
They collaborated by sharing ideas and listening to one another so everyone's voice was included.
2. What steps did the students take before writing the full song?
They began by discussing their topic, then organized their thoughts and created lists of words and rhymes to use in their lyrics.
3. How can songwriting be used to make a difference in the world?
It can raise awareness about important issues and encourage others to reflect on the topics.

Vocabulary

Collaboration – Working together with others to create or complete something

Voice (as in “using your voice”) – Sharing your opinions, ideas, and feelings, especially to make a difference





Figurative Language

Episode 4



This video shows Jake and Esther trying a new game while using figurative language to describe their experience in creative and imaginative ways. They explain how tools like similes and metaphors help songwriters create vivid pictures and stronger emotions in their lyrics.

Discussion Questions

1. What is figurative language, and how is it different from literal language?

Figurative language uses words in a creative way to make comparisons or create images in the reader's mind, rather than just stating facts exactly as they are.

2. Why do Jake and Esther use figurative language while playing whirly ball?

They use it to describe what they are experiencing more vividly so others can picture the action and excitement.

3. What is a simile, and can you give an example from the ideas in the video?

A simile compares two things using "like" or "as," such as "fast as lightning" or "like a mouse moving through a maze."

4. What is a metaphor, and how is it different from a simile?

A metaphor says something is something else without using "like" or "as," such as "my cat is a demon" or "he is a jackrabbit."

5. How does figurative language help in songwriting?

It helps create strong mental images and adds emotion, making songs more engaging and meaningful for listeners.

Vocabulary

Figurative language – Words or phrases that create pictures or comparisons in the mind instead of being taken literally

Literal meaning – The exact, real meaning of words without imagination or comparison

Simile – A comparison between two things using "like" or "as"

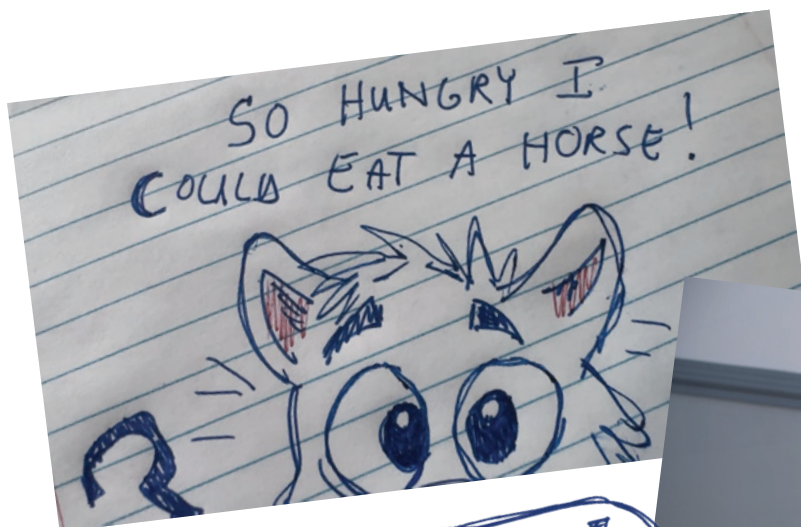
Metaphor – A comparison where one thing is another thing to show similarity

Imagery – Words that help create pictures in the mind



Figurative Language in Practice

Episode 4.1



IMAGERY



This video builds on the previous lesson about figurative language by showing a closer, hands-on approach to writing it into your own songs. Viewers are guided to practice turning emotions into creative comparisons for lyrics.

This video includes an accompanying student page as part of the printable songwriting journal.



Song Structure

Episode 5

In this video, Jake and Esther introduce how organizing a song is similar to structuring an essay, with a clear beginning, middle, and end. It guides viewers through turning a topic into verses and a repeating chorus, so their ideas are easy to follow and understand.

Vocabulary

Organization – Putting ideas in order so they are clear and easy to understand

Structure – The way something is put together, like the parts of a song or essay

Topic – The main idea of a song

Chorus – The part of a song that repeats and shares the main message

Verse – A section of a song that gives details or tells part of the story

Discussion Questions

1. How is writing a song similar to writing an essay?
Both have a clear structure with a beginning, middle, and end, and both are used to share ideas in an organized way.
2. What is the purpose of the chorus in a song?
The chorus repeats the main idea of the song and helps listeners remember the message.
3. What should you do after choosing a topic for your song?
You should develop ideas about your topic and turn them into verses that explain or give examples.
4. What role do verses play in a song?
Verses provide details that support the main idea introduced in the chorus.
5. How does the last line of the song act as a conclusion?
The last line wraps up the main idea of the song to leave the listener with a clear message.
6. Why is organizing your ideas important when writing a song?
It helps make your message clear and easier for listeners to understand what you are trying to say.





Good Day

Episode 6



This video follows Jake and Esther into a recording studio where they collaborate with musicians to turn a song draft into a full recording. It shows how songwriting evolves through revision, collaboration, and attention to structure, tone, and emotion as the song takes shape.

Vocabulary

Recording studio – A special place where music is recorded, mixed, and produced

Draft – A first or early version of a song or written work that can be changed and improved

Revise – To make changes to something to improve it

Chorus – The part of a song that repeats and usually shares the main idea

Verse – A section of a song that tells part of the story or adds details

Structure – The way something is organized or put together

Tone – The feeling or attitude a song gives to the listener

Emotion – A strong feeling like happiness, sadness, excitement, or anger

Percussion – Musical instruments that are hit or shaken to make rhythm, like drums

Engineer (as in “sound engineer”) – A person who controls and records the sound in a studio

Collaboration – Working together with others to create something

Discussion Questions

1. Why are drafts important in songwriting?

Drafts help writers organize their ideas and allow for making changes and improving the song so the final version clearly communicates what they want to say.

2. What is the role of a chorus in a song?

The chorus is the central part of the song that repeats and expresses the main idea or message.

3. How is percussion compared to punctuation in writing?

Percussion is like punctuation because it helps shape the rhythm and signals pauses or changes, just like a period or question mark does in sentences.

4. What does “tone” mean in songwriting?

Tone is the feeling or attitude the song gives to the listener, such as happy or sad.

5. Why is teamwork important in the recording studio?

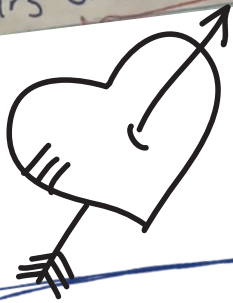
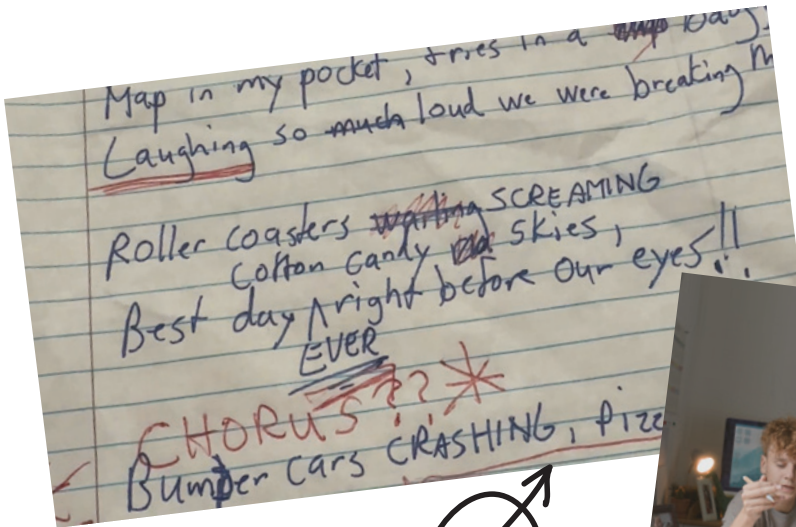
Teamwork helps musicians improve the song so that all parts come together smoothly.





Drafts and Revisions in Practice

Episode 6.1



SONGWRITING

This video explains how songwriting is a process of revising and improving work over time, showing that first drafts are just the beginning. It encourages writers to make changes and work with others to refine their songs into stronger final versions.

This video includes an accompanying student page as part of the printable songwriting journal.



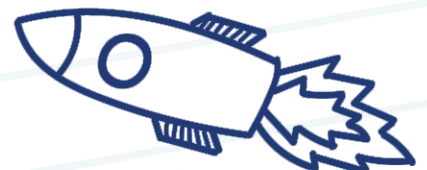
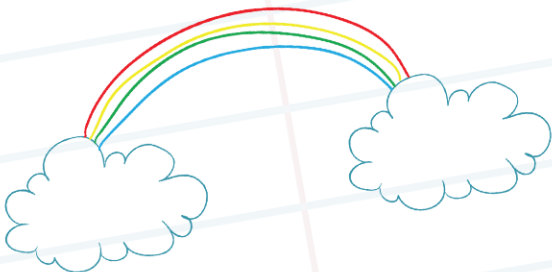
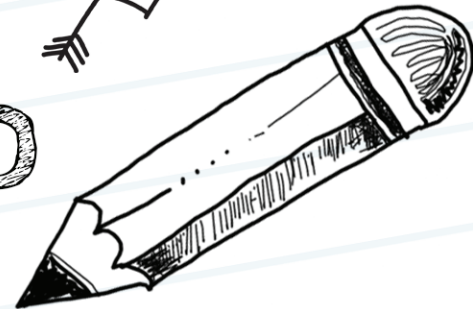
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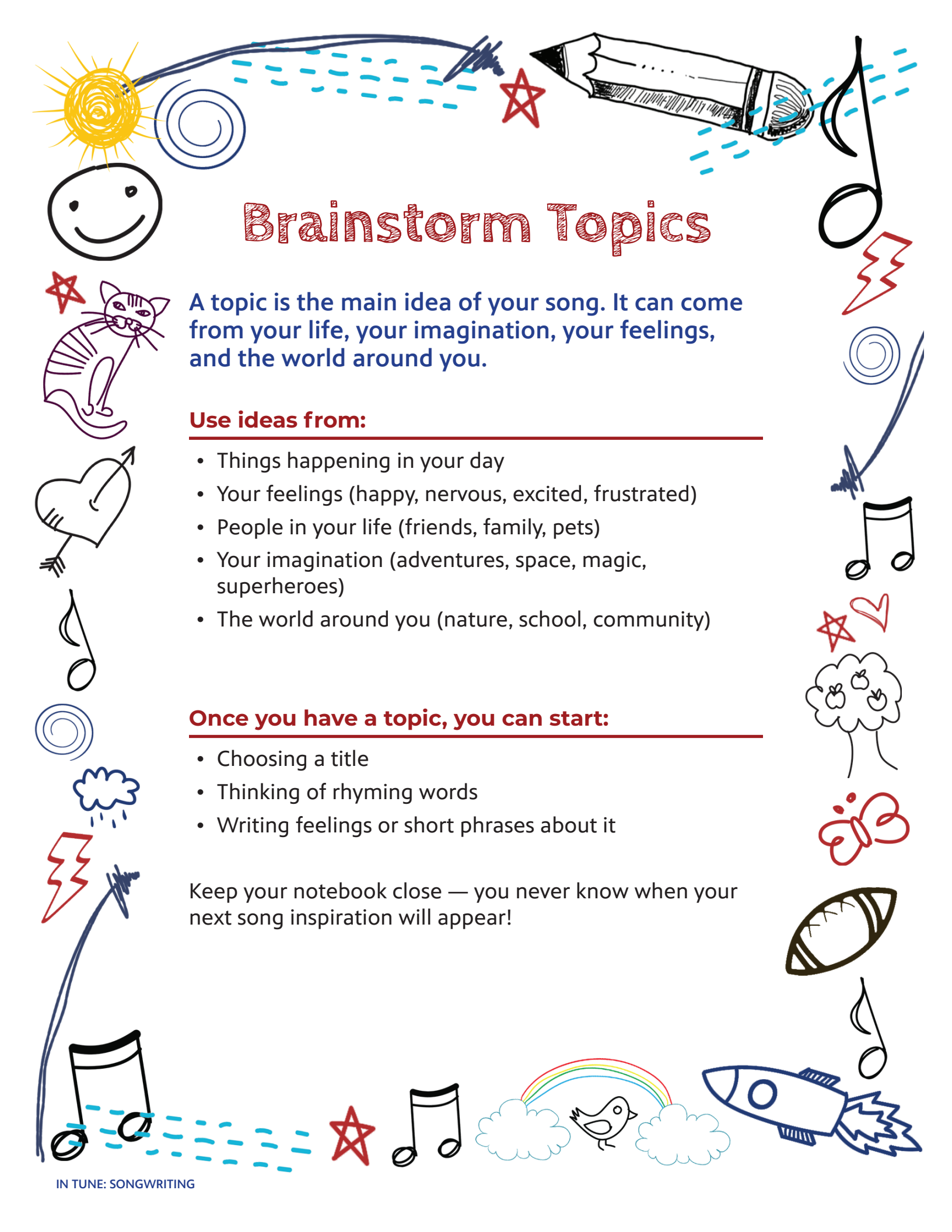


SONGWRITING JOURNAL



BELONGS TO





Brainstorm Topics

A topic is the main idea of your song. It can come from your life, your imagination, your feelings, and the world around you.

Use ideas from:

- Things happening in your day
- Your feelings (happy, nervous, excited, frustrated)
- People in your life (friends, family, pets)
- Your imagination (adventures, space, magic, superheroes)
- The world around you (nature, school, community)

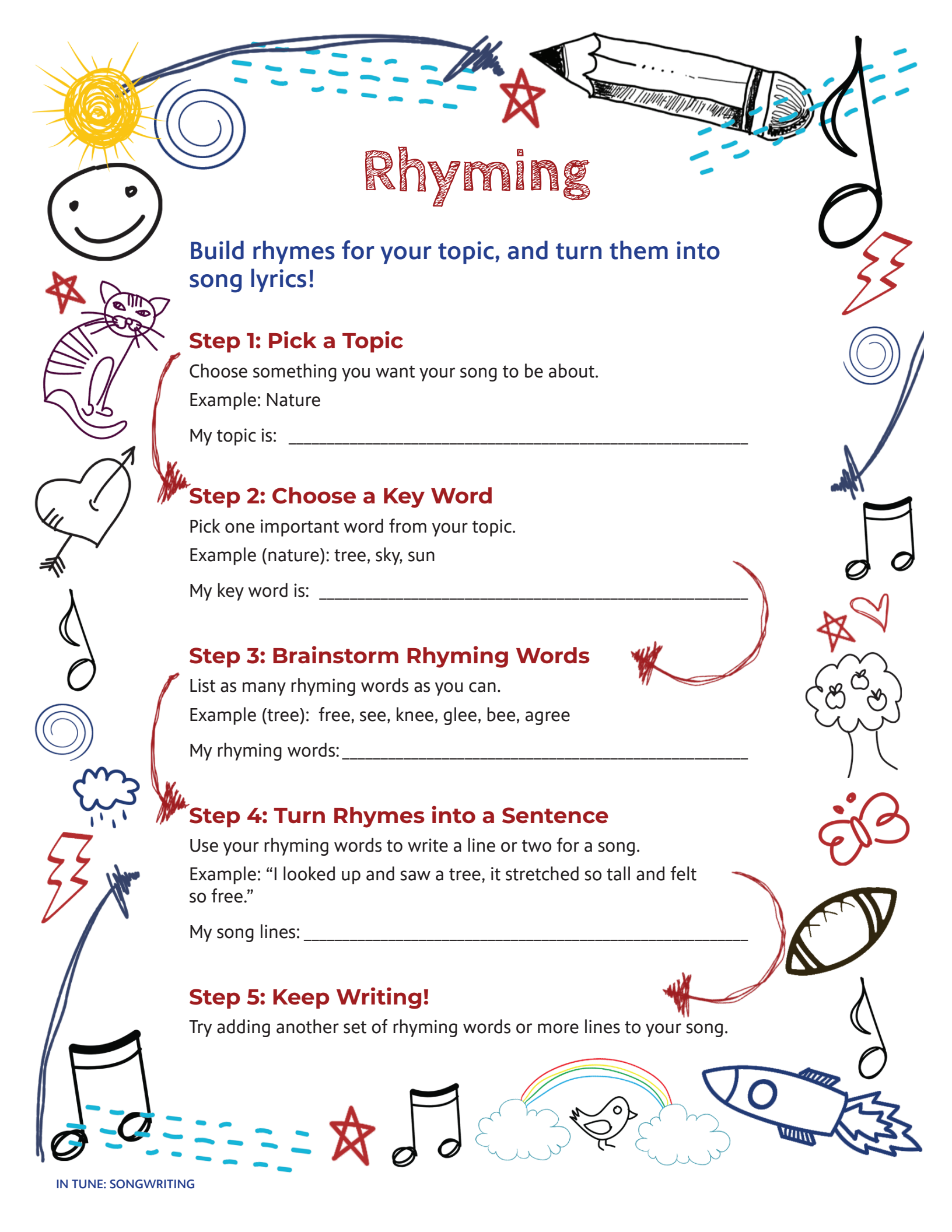
Once you have a topic, you can start:

- Choosing a title
- Thinking of rhyming words
- Writing feelings or short phrases about it

Keep your notebook close — you never know when your next song inspiration will appear!

My Topic Ideas





Rhyming

Build rhymes for your topic, and turn them into song lyrics!

Step 1: Pick a Topic

Choose something you want your song to be about.

Example: Nature

My topic is: _____

Step 2: Choose a Key Word

Pick one important word from your topic.

Example (nature): tree, sky, sun

My key word is: _____

Step 3: Brainstorm Rhyming Words

List as many rhyming words as you can.

Example (tree): free, see, knee, glee, bee, agree

My rhyming words: _____

Step 4: Turn Rhymes into a Sentence

Use your rhyming words to write a line or two for a song.

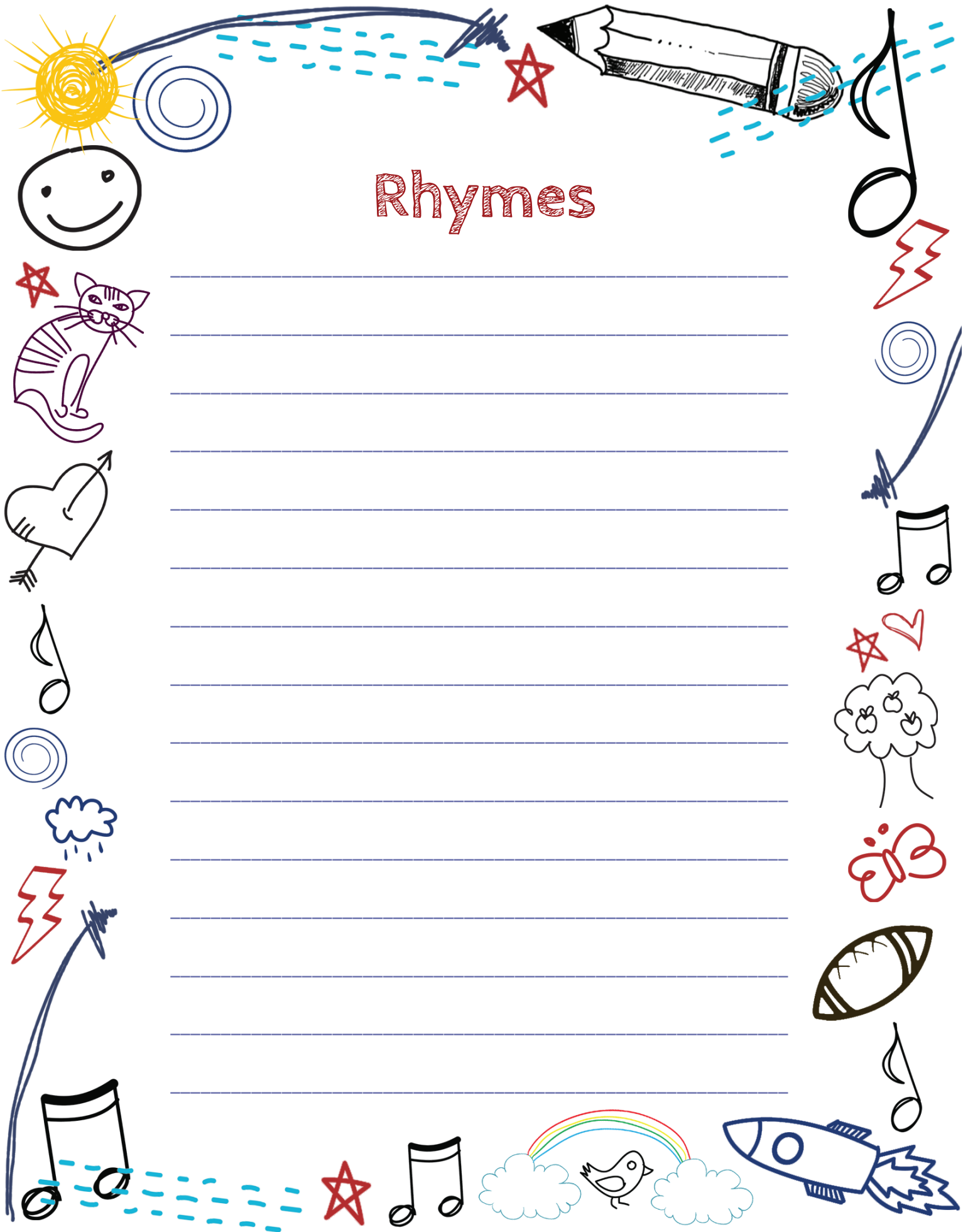
Example: "I looked up and saw a tree, it stretched so tall and felt so free."

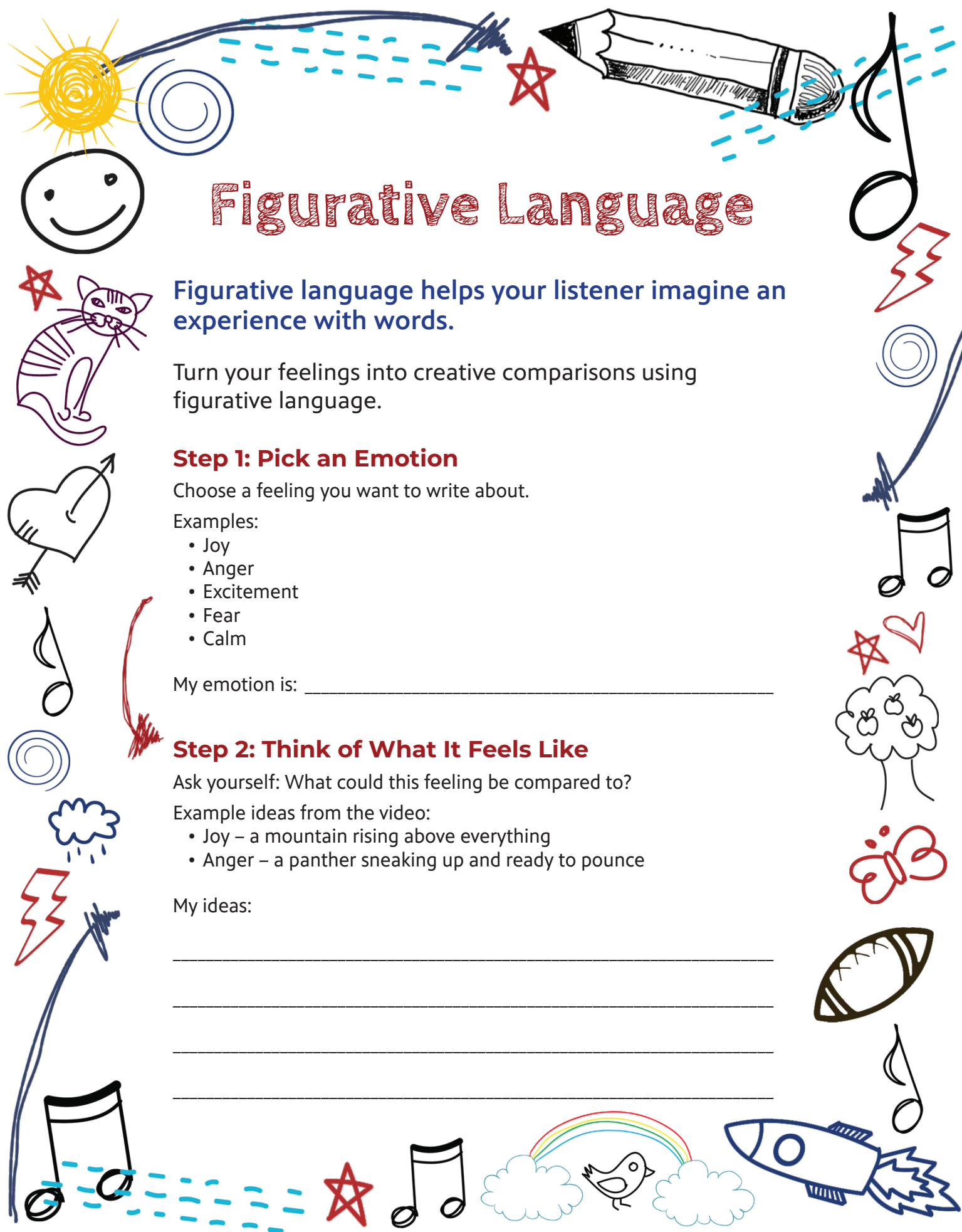
My song lines: _____

Step 5: Keep Writing!

Try adding another set of rhyming words or more lines to your song.

Rhymes





Figurative Language

Figurative language helps your listener imagine an experience with words.

Turn your feelings into creative comparisons using figurative language.

Step 1: Pick an Emotion

Choose a feeling you want to write about.

Examples:

- Joy
- Anger
- Excitement
- Fear
- Calm

My emotion is: _____

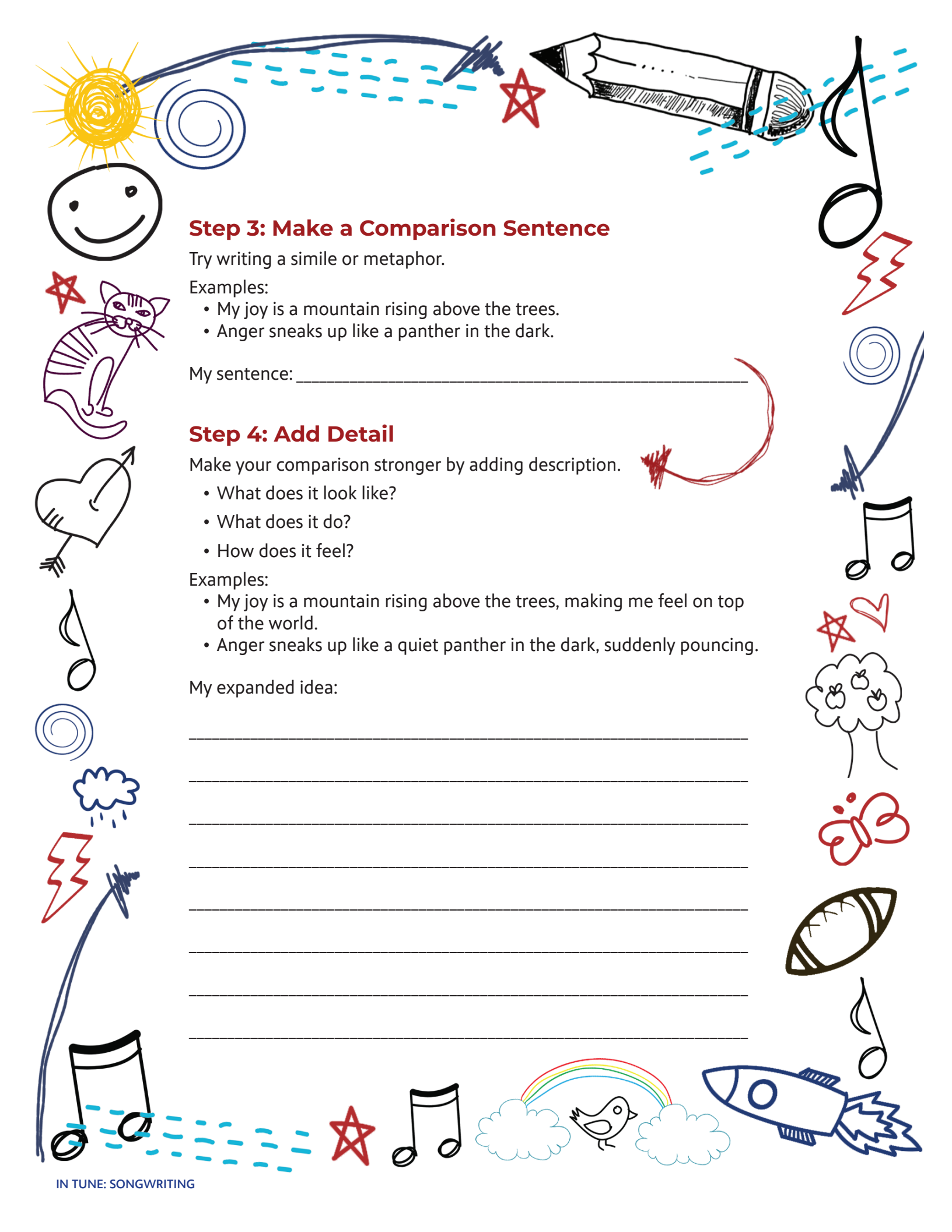
Step 2: Think of What It Feels Like

Ask yourself: What could this feeling be compared to?

Example ideas from the video:

- Joy – a mountain rising above everything
- Anger – a panther sneaking up and ready to pounce

My ideas:



Step 3: Make a Comparison Sentence

Try writing a simile or metaphor.

Examples:

- My joy is a mountain rising above the trees.
- Anger sneaks up like a panther in the dark.

My sentence: _____

Step 4: Add Detail

Make your comparison stronger by adding description.

- What does it look like?
- What does it do?
- How does it feel?

Examples:

- My joy is a mountain rising above the trees, making me feel on top of the world.
- Anger sneaks up like a quiet panther in the dark, suddenly pouncing.

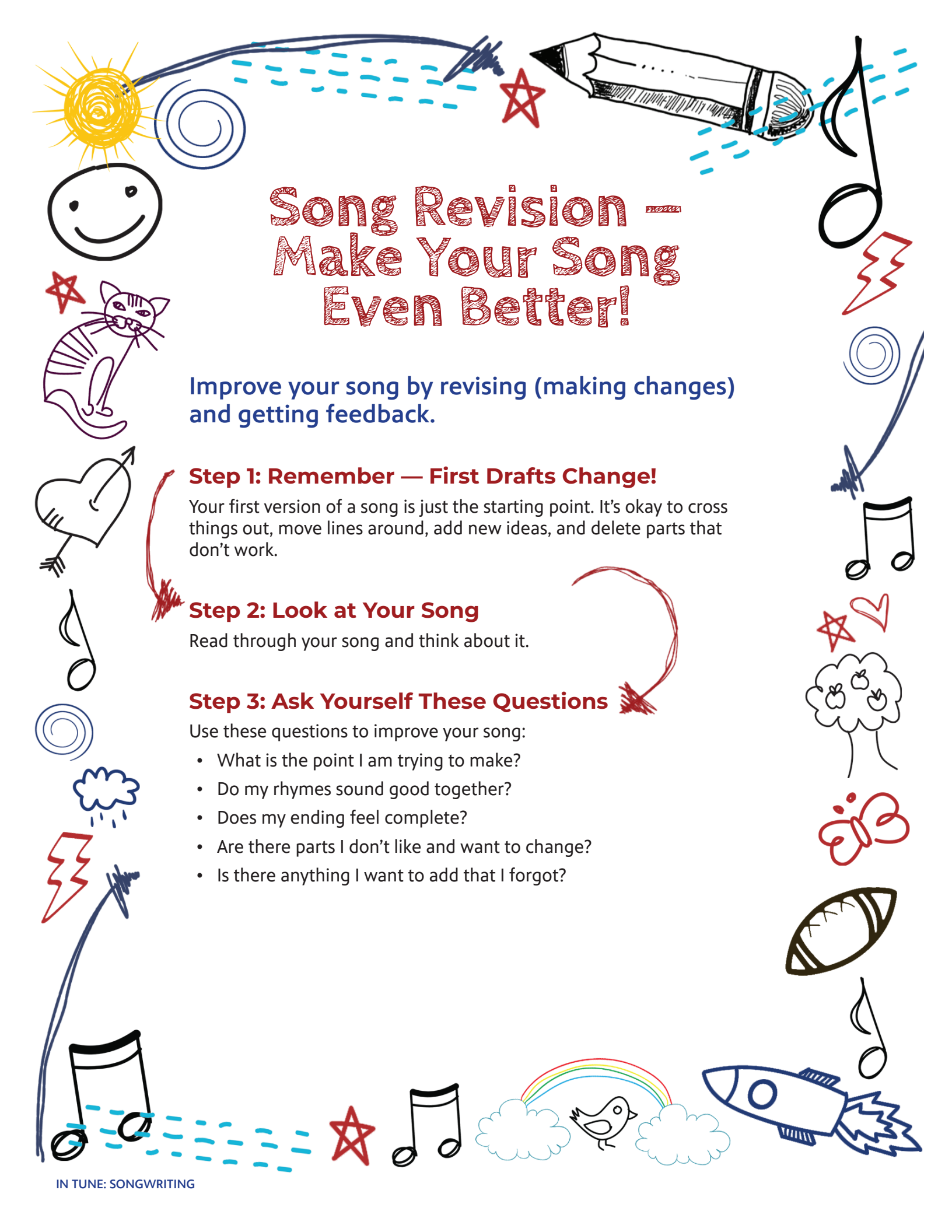
My expanded idea:



Figurative Language



My Song Lyrics



Song Revision – Make Your Song Even Better!

Improve your song by revising (making changes) and getting feedback.

Step 1: Remember — First Drafts Change!

Your first version of a song is just the starting point. It's okay to cross things out, move lines around, add new ideas, and delete parts that don't work.

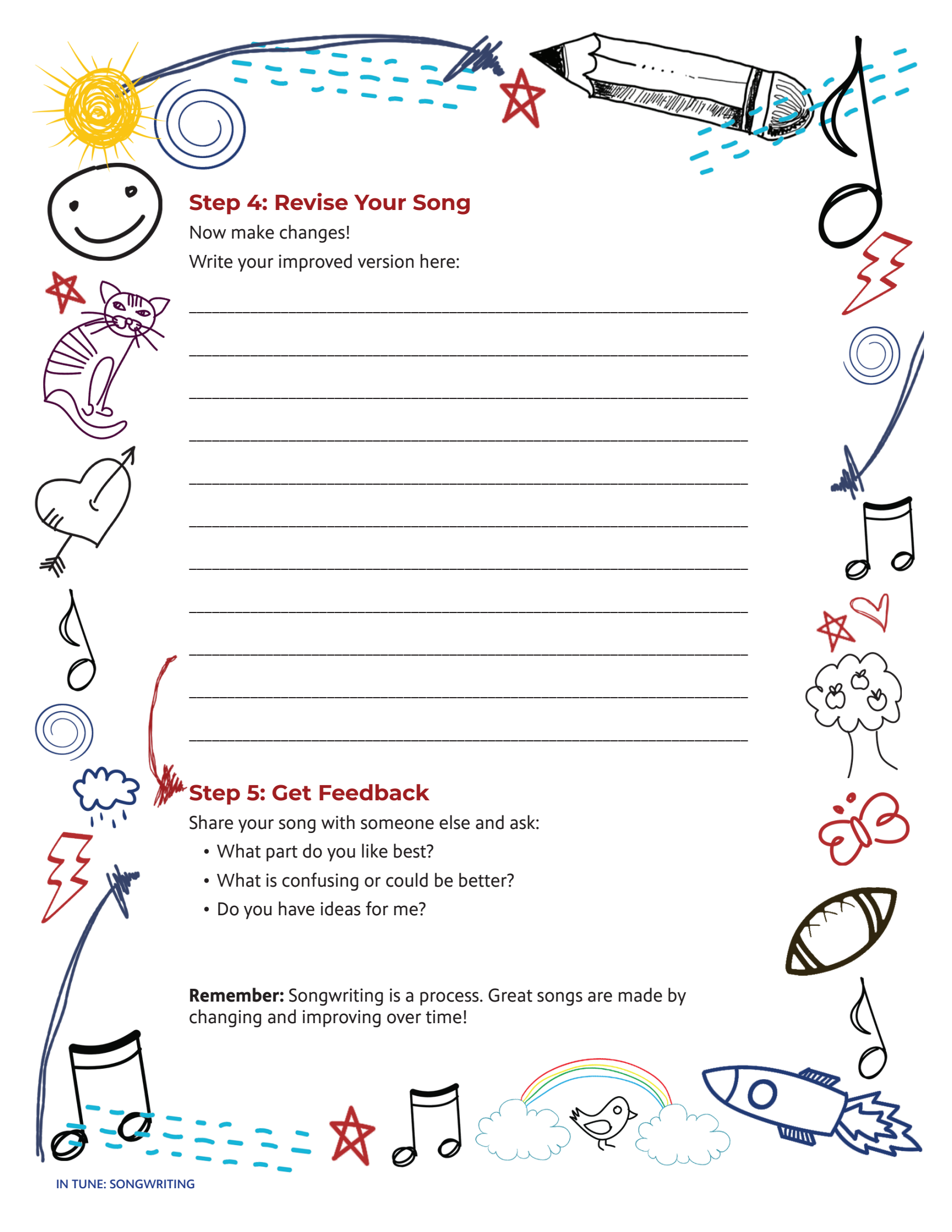
Step 2: Look at Your Song

Read through your song and think about it.

Step 3: Ask Yourself These Questions

Use these questions to improve your song:

- What is the point I am trying to make?
- Do my rhymes sound good together?
- Does my ending feel complete?
- Are there parts I don't like and want to change?
- Is there anything I want to add that I forgot?



Step 4: Revise Your Song

Now make changes!

Write your improved version here:

Step 5: Get Feedback

Share your song with someone else and ask:

- What part do you like best?
- What is confusing or could be better?
- Do you have ideas for me?

Remember: Songwriting is a process. Great songs are made by changing and improving over time!

Revise Your Song

