

Catie D. (8 Years Old)  
Sept. 2008, black belt essay

When I was four years old before I started tae kwon do, I sat with my mom and dad while Carl was in class. I was so sad and lonely by myself. I wanted to be in tae kwon do, too. My mom put me in tae kwon do because I was really quiet. Now I am louder and more confident. In tae kwon do class, I have to ki ahp loudly in front of everyone. Master Jacob Park makes me practice flips and punches and speaking in front of the class. Because of tae kwon do, I am the hardest worker in my gymnastics, ballet, and tap classes. My mom says that ever since I started tae kwon do, I am never scared of doing anything new. In first grade, I changed schools. Because of tae kwon do, it was easy to do and easy to make new friends. Everyday when I go to tae kwon do, I get more confident.

I like tae kwon do because I can defend myself and others when in need. It is important to protect others from bullies that are attacking them. It is good to help other people. Tae kwon do helps me make friends and teaches me never to exclude people. I think if you exclude people, it means that you're not being kind. Tae kwon do has taught me to be kind and helpful.

Tae kwon do helps me get better physically. I learned to keep my balance instead of falling down. Balance is important in tae kwon do because we should not stumble and fall. Balance helped me in my gymnastics and dance classes. Tae kwon do is also good for running. In class we run to get warmed up. Running is good for you because it keeps you in shape. It has made me fast and healthy. We do running in soccer and gymnastics and at recess at school. I practice running around a track in Seattle. I am a lot faster at

running because of running around the tae kwon do room. Strength is important for your body, too. I learned that push ups and sit ups build muscles for your body. I need my muscles to do other sports and activities like gymnastics, swimming, and soccer. Tae kwon do has been good for flexibility, too. When everybody gets to class, we start warming up with stretching all parts of our body. Tae kwon do has made me more flexible for other stuff like doing splits in gymnastics. I think tae kwon do is the best sport I'm doing because it trains your body to do any kind of sport you want.

A black belt means I am a more responsible kid and a hard worker. I will be more aware of my actions and how they affect others. I will help with more chores because I want to be more helpful to my family. In tae kwon do we work together to improve our skills. I will work to improve all my communities, such as family, school, and all kinds of sports teams. I will also work harder in all my activities. I will play my piano twenty minutes a day. I will practice my sports at home, too. In second grade, I am going to be very happy because I get to work harder at homework and schoolwork. I will also help the first graders in my class with anything they need.

I am so happy and grateful that my mom put me in tae kwon do. There are many things that you can learn in tae kwon do. It helps you with everything in your life. Thank you, Master Jacob Park and Joanna, and everybody in tae kwon do class for making tae kwon do fun and challenging. Master Jacob Park, thank you for teaching me tae kwon do and working so hard with me. I hope I get my black belt today.