



## Yoga Teacher Written Exam

1. Explain the meaning of the word “yoga” and the underlying purpose of yoga.
2. When did the first yoga writings appear? In what work did these writings appear?
3. What was the first work of literature that defined yoga? Who wrote this piece of work?
4. Name at least three well-known modern day yogis and explain the contributions each one made to yoga.
5. List and describe the eight limbs of classical yoga.
6. Define and compare the different major styles (or historical branches) of yoga.
7. Define and compare three of the main forms of Hatha Yoga.
8. List 10 teaching strategies you can use to improve the overall experience for you and your students.
9. Name at least 9 ethical principles by which yoga teachers should abide.
10. What do the letters “A LIFE” stand for (represent) in the Yoga for A LIFE Method? Pick one part (one letter) of the method and explain how you can incorporate that idea into your own teaching and practice.
11. List two special groups of people who may need to attend a modified or specialized yoga class.
12. Name and describe five techniques you can use to keep your students motivated. Give an example of how you would use one of the techniques.
13. List the overall sequence you should follow when teaching or planning a yoga class.

14. Why is it important to include counter poses after practicing certain postures? Give an example of a pose and its counter pose.
15. What does it mean to “practice at your edge” in a posture.
16. Why do you think it’s important as a yoga teacher to have your own daily yoga practice?
17. How does our breath change when we are emotionally upset?
18. What are some reasons someone may develop poor breathing habits?
19. What does it mean to “breathe diaphragmatically?” How do you do it? Explain the benefits of diaphragmatic breathing.
20. Why is breathing through the nose helpful?
21. What are the primary purposes of the respiratory system?
22. What are the primary functions of the nasal passages?
23. Name the organs of respiration. Name the muscles of respiration.
24. Explain the process of gas exchange in the respiratory system.
25. How many breaths per minute do people take during normal resting respiration?
26. Name the accessory muscles of respiration. When are they recruited for support?
27. Which muscle is the primary driver of inhalation?
28. What is the equation to find total lung capacity?
29. Name the functions of the cardiovascular system and the organs of circulation.
30. How does cardiac muscle differ from skeletal muscle?
31. What does the word “pranayama” mean?
32. When selecting a sitting position for pranayama, what is an important consideration?

33. Name 7 of the benefits of practicing pranayama (breathing exercises).
34. Select three of the breathing exercises presented. Give the teaching steps and benefits for those three yoga breathing exercises (pranayama).
35. Why is it important to do warm-ups before beginning the practice of yoga asanas? What is the main purpose of warm-ups?
36. What is the difference between warm-ups and stretching? At what point in a yoga practice should deep stretching yoga postures be practiced?
37. Name a series of warm-ups (7-10 warm ups) you could have your class do to warm up most of the body (legs, hips, torso, spine, shoulders, arms)? Explain the parts of the body that is warmed up by each exercise.
38. Why is it important that students do not roll their neck around in full circles?
39. What is a common mistake students make when practicing the spinal balance warm-up?
40. Where should students be looking when practicing “down dog” in warm-ups? Is it okay for students to bend their knees in down dog? Why?
41. What are the benefits of practicing tadasana (mountain pose) before starting your yoga practice?
42. Explain what “sun salutations” are. What are the benefits of practicing sun salutations?
43. Practice Sun Salutation A. What is the most challenging part of Sun Salutation A for you personally?
44. Explain proper body alignment in Down Dog pose (i.e. how far apart hands and feet should be, etc).
45. List five standing postures that strengthen muscles in the thighs.
46. List four standing postures that stretch the hamstrings.
47. How can students modify Standing Hand to Foot Posture (Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana)?
48. Name the benefits of Dancer (Natarajasana) Pose.

49. What are the benefits of Side Plank (Vasisthasana)? How can you modify this posture?
50. How can students modify Camel (Ustrasana) Pose? Name a posture that you can do as a counter pose to Camel.
51. Pick five standing postures and list their sanskrit and english names.
52. What are the benefits of seated twisting postures?
53. Who should not practice inversions and why?
54. What are the benefits of Locust (Salabhasana) Pose? How can you avoid straining the low back in Locust Pose?
55. What are some mistakes that students often make when practicing Up Dog (Urdhva Mukha Svanasana)?
56. How can you modify Child's Pose (Balasana) if student's find it difficult to breathe in this position?
57. If students find it difficult to hold their ankles in Bow Pose (Dhanurasana), what posture could they do instead?
58. Name three seated or prone postures that help to open or stretch the chest and shoulders.
59. List the benefits of Boat Pose (Navasana). What is one mistake students tend to make in this posture? What is the counter pose to Boat Pose and why?
60. Create a flowing sequence of 6-9 prone, seated and reclined postures (including counter poses).
61. Why is it important for students to bend forward from the pelvis (hips) in Seated Straddle/Open Angle (Upavistha Konasana), as well as in other forward bends, and not round forward from the lower back?
62. How does turning the knee caps towards the ceiling in Seated Straddle (Upavistha Konasana) help students maintain proper alignment?
63. What is the counter pose for Bridge (Setu Bandhasana) or Upward Bow?
64. What are the differences between relaxation and meditation?

65. When frightened or alarmed, which two stress hormones are released? What happens to your body when these hormones are released?
66. Which system in your body manages the “fight or flight” process? What area of the body controls this system?
67. What is the difference between the sympathetic and parasympathetic branches of the autonomic nervous system?
68. What is the problem of the “fight or flight” response when there is no physical danger?
69. According to Herbert Benson, MD, author of the Relaxation Response, what are the benefits of relaxation and meditation?
70. Besides the physical benefits of yoga, how does yoga relieve the mental components of stress?
71. List five verbal cues you could give your students to help them relax more completely in savasana.
72. Name three other relaxing (restorative) yoga postures (besides savasana).
73. List 4 general practices that can help students prepare for the practice of relaxation and meditation.
74. What are three ways to practice breath awareness during daily activities?
75. Define “meditation” as practiced in yoga.
76. What are the benefits of meditation?
77. List 5 ways students can prepare for meditation practice.
78. List 5 different sitting postures that can be used for meditation practice.
79. Explain all the steps in one of the meditations described in the training manual.
80. What does the term “contralateral” mean? What does the term ipsilateral mean?
81. Explain how the arm is moving in “horizontal abduction.”
82. Explain how the forearm is moving in “pronation.”

83. Explain what the term “dorsal” means in terms of location in the body.
84. List the muscles that make up the erector spinae muscles. Explain the action of each and yoga postures you could do to stretch or strengthen these muscles.
85. Explain the action of the trapezius (upper, lower and middle) muscles and a yoga pose you could use to strengthen the trapezius, as well as a pose you could use to stretch the trapezius.
86. List the rotator cuff muscles and the actions of each.
87. Name the hamstring muscles. Explain the actions of the hamstring muscles. Name a yoga pose you could practice to strengthen the hamstrings and a yoga pose to stretch the hamstrings.
88. Explain the actions of the Triceps Brachii. Name some yoga postures that can strengthen and stretch the triceps brachii.
89. What would you do if a student who had a medical condition that required special attention (i.e. pregnant, high blood pressure) attended your regular hatha yoga class? What are a few things you could do to keep them safe while not neglecting your other students? Give examples of how you could modify postures for the student.
90. Prepare a sample yoga class.