StoneSong — Flashcards

A Spark & Anvil printable flashcard deck. Quiz yourself on the StoneSong cast's curriculum — one card at a time.

How to use these cards

Fold each sheet down the middle line so the answers are hidden. Read the **question** on the left, say your answer out loud, then **unfold** to check the right side. Testing yourself — then checking — is one of the most powerful ways to remember. Get one wrong? That's the best kind of practice: try it again tomorrow.

Want real flashcards? Cut along the fold line and the rows into cards — question on one side, answer on the other.

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1. The Board & Basics

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
Corners are the easiest place to make territory because —	**the board edges help enclose space with fewer stones** — In a corner, two edges already help surround space, so you enclose territory with the fewest stones.
Go is sometimes called a game of —	**surrounding — you win space by enclosing it** — Go is a game of surrounding: you build walls of stones to enclose territory (the word 'Go'/'weiqi' means 'surrounding game').
The goal of Go is to —	**surround more territory (empty points) than your opponent** — You win by controlling more territory — empty points surrounded by your stones — than your opponent.
Master Snail (the mentor) says Go is 'a conversation in stones.' This captures —	**that each move responds to the last, building meaning together** — Each Go move answers the opponent's, so the game unfolds like a conversation built move by move in stones.
The 'archetypes' in StoneSong (Patient Bamboo, Hungry Crane...) represent —	**different Go playing styles and ideas** — The character archetypes embody different Go styles and ideas (patience, aggression, shape, fighting) to teach concepts.
In Go, stones are placed on —	**the intersections where lines cross** — Go stones are placed on the intersections of the board's lines, not inside the squares.
A 9×9 board is often used to —	**teach beginners (faster, simpler games)** — The 9×9 board uses the same rules but plays faster, making it ideal for learning.
A key idea from the very start is that —	**empty space you surround is worth points** — The central idea of Go is that surrounded empty space (territory) is what scores — not just captured stones.
Go has been played for —	**thousands of years (one of the oldest board games)** — Go is one of the world's oldest board games, played for thousands of years with a deep strategic tradition.
Go can also be played on smaller boards such as —	**9×9 or 13×13** — Besides the full 19×19 board, Go is often played on 9×9 or 13×13 boards, especially for learning.
An 'empty point' next to a stone is important because —	**it can become a liberty or territory** — Empty points matter enormously: adjacent ones are 'liberties' (life), and surrounded ones become territory.
What are the two colors of stones?	**Black and white** — Go is played with black and white stones; black plays first.
Compared to chess, Go pieces are —	**all identical (every stone is the same)** — Every Go stone is identical; unlike chess, there are no piece types — position and pattern are everything.
Once placed, a stone —	**stays where it is (it never moves), unless captured** — Unlike many games, a Go stone doesn't move after placement — it stays put unless it's captured and removed.
Because stones don't move, Go strategy is about —	**WHERE you place each new stone** — Since stones stay put, all the strategy is in choosing where to place each new stone.
	reference points, often used for handicap stones — The marked star points

The board's star points (marked dots) are —	(hoshi) are reference spots and where handicap stones are placed for a weaker player.
The simplicity of Go's rules combined with its depth means —	**easy to learn, a lifetime to master** — Go's few simple rules produce enormous depth — it's famously easy to learn but takes a lifetime to master.
The edges and corners of the board —	**help you enclose territory more easily than the center** — Edges and corners give you 'free walls,' so territory is easiest in the corners, then sides, then center.
A full-size Go board is —	**19 lines by 19 lines** — A standard Go board is 19×19 lines; beginners often use smaller 9×9 or 13×13 boards.
Players place stones —	**alternately, one at a time** — Players alternate, each placing one stone per turn, starting with black.
Learning the board and basics FIRST matters because —	**liberties, capture, and territory all build on them** — Every later idea — liberties, capturing, life, territory — is defined on the board, so the basics come first.
Who plays first in Go?	**Black** — Black plays first; white is compensated with 'komi' points for moving second.
Passing (making no move) is allowed and is used to —	**end the game when neither player wants to play on** — You may pass; when both players pass in a row, the game ends and territory is counted.
On your turn you —	**place ONE stone on any empty intersection (or pass)** — Each turn you place one stone on an empty intersection; placed stones don't move (they may be captured).
Go rewards —	**strategy and pattern recognition, not luck** — Go has no dice or hidden info; it's a pure game of strategy and pattern recognition.

2. Liberties & Capture

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
Why is having MORE liberties safer?	**It takes the opponent more moves to capture the group** — More liberties means the opponent needs more moves to fill them all, so the group is harder to capture.
Capturing removes the enemy stones and —	**gives you those points as empty space (and captures for scoring)** — Captured stones are removed, opening those points; captures also count toward your score in many rule sets.
You generally may NOT play a stone that would have —	**zero liberties (this 'suicide' is illegal) — unless it captures** — Playing a stone with no liberties (suicide) is illegal — unless that move captures an enemy group, freeing up liberties.
Master Snail says 'a stone breathes through its liberties.' This captures —	**that a group lives as long as it has liberties** — A group 'breathes' through its liberties; when they're all filled, it can no longer breathe and is captured.
A 'liberty' is —	**an empty point directly next to a stone (up, down, left, or right)** — A liberty is an empty point orthogonally adjacent to a stone — its 'breathing space.'
To capture an enemy stone, you must —	**fill its last liberty** — You capture by placing a stone on the enemy group's final liberty, reducing it to zero and removing it.
A stone in the CORNER has how many liberties?	**Two** — A corner stone has just two liberties, since two edges remove two of its adjacent points.
A group in atari can be SAVED by —	**adding a stone to gain more liberties (or capturing the attacker)** — You can save a group in atari by connecting/extending to add liberties, or by capturing the threatening stones.
A single stone in the middle of the board has how many liberties?	**Four** — A lone stone in the center has four liberties — the four orthogonally adjacent empty points.
The concept of liberties is the FOUNDATION of Go tactics because —	**capturing, life, and death all depend on liberties** — Liberties underlie everything: capturing removes liberties, and living groups are those that can't have all their liberties taken.
Reducing an enemy group's liberties one by one is called —	**putting pressure on / attacking the group** — Steadily filling an enemy group's liberties pressures it — an attack that threatens capture.
Hungry Crane (an archetype) loves to capture. The lesson to balance this is —	**capturing isn't the only goal — territory matters more** — Capturing is fun, but Go is won by territory; the balanced lesson is to capture when it helps your territory, not for its own sake.
The single most basic Go skill is —	**seeing liberties and knowing when a group can be captured** — The foundational Go skill is reading liberties — spotting atari, captures, and capturing races.
A stone (or group) is CAPTURED when it has —	**zero liberties** — When a stone or connected group is surrounded so it has zero liberties, it is captured and removed from the board.
If you place a stone that fills an enemy group's last liberty, you —	**capture that group immediately** — Filling an enemy group's final liberty captures it immediately — the stones are removed on your move.

Corner and edge stones are easier to capture because —	**they start with fewer liberties** — Corner (2) and edge (3) stones have fewer liberties than center stones (4), so they're easier to surround and capture.
If two enemy groups are each in atari and you can only save one, you must —	**choose which to save (a real decision)** — You can only add one stone per turn, so if two of your groups are in atari you must choose the more important to save.
A stone on the EDGE of the board has how many liberties?	**Three** — An edge stone has only three liberties, because the board edge removes one adjacent point.
Counting liberties accurately is a skill because —	**it tells you who wins a capturing race** — In a capturing race, the group whose liberties run out first is captured — so counting liberties decides the outcome.
Connected stones (touching orthogonally) —	**share their liberties as one group** — Stones connected orthogonally form a group and share all their liberties; the whole group lives or dies together.
A long connected group and a lone stone with the same shape — which is usually safer?	**The larger connected group (more shared liberties)** — A larger connected group generally has more liberties and is harder to capture than scattered lone stones.
Filling in your OWN group's last liberty would be —	**illegal (self-capture / suicide)** — Playing your own group's last liberty (self-capture) is illegal — you never fill your own group to death.
A 'capturing race' (semeai) is won by —	**the side that fills the opponent's last liberty first** — In a capturing race, whoever fills the opponent's final liberty first wins — a matter of counting and tempo.
A group completely surrounded but with internal empty points may still —	**live if those internal points form two eyes (see later kits)** — Surrounded groups can still live if their internal empty points form two separate eyes — the key idea of life.
A group with exactly ONE liberty is said to be in —	**atari (one move from capture)** — A group with a single remaining liberty is in 'atari' — one move away from being captured.

3. Connecting & Cutting

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
Patient Bamboo (an archetype) is named for the bamboo joint. Its lesson is —	**patient, solid connection makes a group unbreakable** — Patient Bamboo embodies solid, patient connection — the bamboo joint that can never be cut.
Two friendly stones one space apart (a 'one-space jump') are —	**loosely connected — usually safe but watch for cuts** — A one-space jump connects loosely and efficiently; it's usually safe but can occasionally be cut, so stay alert.
When your groups are all connected and strong, you can —	**focus on making territory** — Once your groups are safely connected, you can turn your attention to building and securing territory.
A good habit is to notice —	**your own cutting points AND the opponent's** — Strong players watch cutting points on both sides — defending their own and exploiting the opponent's.
A 'cut' is a move that —	**separates the opponent's stones into two groups** — A cut plays between enemy stones to split them into two separate, weaker groups.
Master Snail says 'a rope of many strands does not break.' This captures —	**that connected stones are far stronger than scattered ones** — Like a rope of many strands, connected stones resist capture far better than scattered single stones.
Whether to connect or leave a cut open depends on —	**whether the connection is worth the move (value + safety)** — Connecting isn't always urgent; you weigh whether the move is worth it versus playing a bigger point elsewhere.
A stone that cuts but then gets captured —	**was a failed cut (it didn't help)** — If your cutting stone is captured, the cut failed; successful cutting requires the cutter to survive.
A 'cutting point' is —	**a spot where the opponent could cut your stones apart** — A cutting point is a gap where the opponent could separate your stones; you often defend it by connecting.
Connected stones are stronger because —	**they share liberties and are harder to capture** — Connecting combines liberties into one group, making the stones much harder for the opponent to capture.
Keeping your groups connected is a form of —	**defense (strength through connection)** — Staying connected is defensive strength: a solid group is hard to attack or capture.
A 'bamboo joint' (two pairs of stones) is —	**a very solid connection that can't be cut** — The bamboo joint is a classic solid shape: even if the opponent plays between, you connect on the other side — uncuttable.
Cutting the opponent is good because —	**two separated groups are each weaker and easier to attack** — Splitting the opponent into two groups makes each weaker, giving you chances to attack or capture.
Defending a cutting point means —	**connecting so the opponent can't split your stones** — You defend a cutting point by connecting your stones, removing the opponent's chance to cut.
Cutting works best when —	**the cut stones become weak and attackable** — A cut is effective when it leaves the opponent with two weak, attackable groups — not when your own cutter dies.

Two stones are 'connected' when they —	**are orthogonally adjacent (touching along a line)** — Stones connect when orthogonally adjacent; connected stones of one color form a group sharing liberties.
The tension between connecting and cutting is a core Go —	**battle over strength and weakness** — Much of Go tactics is the fight to keep your stones connected (strong) while cutting the opponent (weak).
A stone placed between two friendly stones to link them is a —	**connection** — Playing between your own stones to link them is a connection, merging them into one stronger group.
The strongest connections (like bamboo joints) are valued because —	**the opponent simply cannot cut them** — Uncuttable connections like the bamboo joint give reliable strength — the opponent can't split them no matter what.
Connecting and cutting together teach the lesson that —	**strength comes from staying together; weakness from being split** — The core lesson: connected stones are strong, split stones are weak — so connect your own and cut the opponent's.
A cut that creates a capturing race means —	**you must count liberties to see who wins** — A cut often starts a capturing race; you must count both sides' liberties to know who comes out ahead.
Connected groups make it easier to —	**build territory and stay alive** — Well-connected groups are strong: they hold territory and are far more likely to live.
Cutting the opponent is a form of —	**attack (weakening their position)** — Cutting is an attacking idea: by splitting the opponent, you create weak groups to hunt.
Cutting is risky when —	**your cutting stone itself becomes weak and capturable** — A cut can backfire if the cutting stone is itself surrounded and captured, so read the sequence before cutting.
A 'diagonal' relationship between two friendly stones is —	**NOT a solid connection (it can sometimes be cut)** — Diagonal stones aren't directly connected; the point between them can sometimes be cut, so they need care.

4. Eyes & Life

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
The 'vital point' of an eye shape is —	**the key point that decides whether the group lives or dies** — Many eye shapes have a 'vital point'; whoever plays there first often decides whether the group makes two eyes.
Making two eyes is the goal of —	**keeping a group alive under attack** — When a group is threatened, the defender's goal is to make two eyes so the group is permanently alive.
The rule 'two eyes = life' is —	**one of the most important rules in all of Go** — Two-eyes-equals-life is a central Go principle; almost all life-and-death reading flows from it.
Two eyes work because the opponent —	**can never legally play in either eye to capture** — With two eyes, each is a liberty the opponent can't legally fill (it'd be suicide), so the group always has liberties.
Master Snail says 'a group with two eyes fears no siege.' This captures —	**that two real eyes make a group permanently safe** — A group with two real eyes fears no attack — it's permanently alive no matter how it's surrounded.
A big surrounded space can sometimes be reduced to —	**less than two eyes, killing the group** — A single large enclosed space isn't automatically alive; the attacker can sometimes play inside to prevent two eyes.
An 'eye' is —	**an empty point completely surrounded by one color's stones** — An eye is an empty point enclosed by a single color's stones — a protected internal liberty.
The most important life-and-death question is —	**'can this group make two eyes?'** — For any group under attack, the crucial question is whether it can make two eyes — that decides life or death.
Making life for your groups is important because —	**dead groups become the opponent's territory and captures** — A dead group is a double loss — the opponent captures the stones AND gets the territory, so keeping groups alive is vital.
Two eyes make a group safe because the opponent —	**can never legally fill both at once** — With two eyes, each is a liberty the opponent can't legally fill, so the group always keeps at least one liberty — it can't be captured.
A group that CANNOT make two eyes is —	**dead (it will eventually be captured)** — A group that can't form two eyes is dead; even if not yet removed, it will be captured, and its points go to the opponent.
A group is ALIVE (uncapturable) when it has —	**two separate eyes** — A group with two separate eyes is unconditionally alive — the opponent can never fill both at once.
Why does ONE eye not make a group alive?	**The opponent can fill all outside liberties, then the eye, and capture it** — With one eye, the opponent fills the outside liberties and finally the eye, capturing the group; two eyes can't both be filled.
If a group has two eyes, you should —	**not waste moves defending it — it's already alive** — A two-eyed group is settled; adding more stones wastes moves you should spend on bigger points elsewhere.
To be a REAL eye, the surrounding stones must —	**be solidly connected (and the diagonals controlled)** — A real eye needs solidly connected surrounding stones (and enough diagonal points controlled) so it can't be undermined.
Eyes are made from —	**internal empty points enclosed by your own stones** — Eyes come from empty points your own stones enclose; shaping a group to enclose two separate ones gives

	it life.
Sparring Tiger (an archetype) loves fighting. To fight well, it must —	**make sure its own groups have (or can make) two eyes** — Even an aggressive fighter must keep its own groups alive (two eyes); you can't attack from a dead group.
A group with a single BIG eye is —	**usually still dead (one space, however big, is one eye)** — One large enclosed space is still just one eye; life requires two SEPARATE eyes, so a big single eye can die.
A group with lots of liberties but no eye potential is —	**still in danger of eventually dying** — Outside liberties only delay capture; without eye potential a surrounded group can still be killed — eyes make life permanent.
A 'false eye' is —	**an eye-looking point that can actually be filled/captured (not a real eye)** — A false eye resembles a real eye but, because of a capturable diagonal, it can be filled — it doesn't count for life.
The concept of eyes explains how a surrounded group can —	**survive completely surrounded by enemy stones** — Eyes are why a fully surrounded group can still live: two internal eyes make it uncapturable even with no outside liberties.
Attacking a group's life means trying to —	**prevent it from making two eyes** — To kill a group you stop it from making a second eye, often by playing the 'vital point' inside its eye-space.
Why can't the opponent capture a group with two eyes?	**Playing into either eye would be self-capture (illegal) with no capture** — The opponent can never place in either eye (it'd be a suicide with no capture), so a two-eyed group can't be taken.
Recognizing eye shapes is a skill because —	**you can quickly judge if a group is alive or dead** — Knowing common eye shapes lets you judge life and death quickly — a core Go reading skill.
An eye on the edge or corner —	**still counts if it's a real (uncapturable) eye** — Eyes can be made anywhere, including edges and corners, as long as they're real (not false) eyes.

5. Life & Death

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
Practicing life-and-death puzzles ('tsumego') improves —	**your reading and your whole game** — Tsumego (life-and-death puzzles) sharpen your reading, which improves every part of your play.
The safest response when your group can make two eyes is to —	**make them and move on (don't over-defend)** — Once you can secure two eyes, make life efficiently and turn to bigger points — don't waste moves over-defending.
Before invading or attacking, you should ask —	**can my group live, and can I kill theirs?** — Before a fight, judge whether your group can live and whether you can kill the opponent's — life and death drives the decision.
Practicing life-and-death puzzles (tsumego) improves —	**your reading and your whole game** — Tsumego trains your reading of shapes and sequences, which strengthens every part of your play.
The 'vital point' of an eye-space is the spot that —	**decides whether the group makes two eyes** — The vital point is decisive: whoever plays it first — attacker to kill or defender to live — usually decides the group's fate.
Reading life and death means —	**calculating the sequence of moves to see if two eyes result** — Life-and-death reading is calculating the move sequence to determine whether the group can secure two eyes.
The attacker often kills by playing —	**INSIDE the eye-space at the vital point** — To kill, the attacker frequently plays inside the group's eye-space at the vital point, denying a second eye.
Common life-and-death shapes are worth memorizing because —	**they let you judge life instantly in real games** — Standard life-and-death shapes recur constantly; knowing them lets you judge groups instantly instead of reading from scratch.
Life and death is often described as —	**the heart of Go tactics** — Life and death is the heart of Go tactics — most decisive fights come down to whether a group lives or dies.
The defender often lives by —	**playing the vital point first to secure two eyes** — The defender often lives by occupying the vital point first, ensuring the eye-space splits into two eyes.
Killing a big enemy group is valuable because —	**you gain its stones AND its territory** — Killing a large group is often game-deciding: you capture the stones and take the surrounding territory.
To LIVE, the defender plays to —	**make two separate eyes (or enough eye-space for them)** — The defender lives by making two eyes, or by enlarging the eye-space until two eyes are guaranteed.
A large enough eye-space is —	**alive because it can make two eyes** — A sufficiently large eye-space can always form two separate eyes, so the group lives.
A group that is DEAD but not yet captured —	**counts as captures/territory for the opponent at the end** — A dead group need not be captured move-by-move; at the game's end it's removed and counts for the opponent.
A group with plenty of outside liberties but NO eye potential is —	**still ultimately in danger (it needs eyes to live)** — Outside liberties help temporarily, but without eye potential a surrounded group can still be killed — eyes are what make life permanent.

A 'ko' (repeated capture) can affect life and death by —	**letting a group's life hang on winning a ko fight** — Sometimes a group lives or dies depending on who wins a ko fight — life and death can hinge on a ko.
Master Snail says 'know life and death, and the board holds no fear.' This captures —	**that reading life and death well removes uncertainty from fights** — When you can read life and death clearly, fights lose their mystery — you know which groups live, so the board holds no fear.
Improving at life and death mostly comes from —	**practice recognizing and reading common shapes** — You improve at life and death by practicing — reading puzzles and learning the recurring shapes until they're instant.
Sparring Tiger and Hungry Crane both need to master life and death because —	**you can't win a fight if your own group dies** — Every fighter must master life and death: you can't attack from a dead group, and killing the opponent's group wins the fight.
Whether a group lives can depend on —	**whose turn it is (who plays the vital point first)** — Many groups are 'alive if I move, dead if you move' — so who gets to play the vital point first is decisive.
The 'vital point' of a group's eye-space is —	**the key point that decides life or death** — The vital point is the decisive spot; whoever plays it first (attacker to kill, defender to live) usually decides the result.
To KILL a group, the attacker plays to —	**prevent it from making two eyes (often the vital point)** — Killing means stopping the defender from making two eyes, frequently by occupying the eye-space's vital point.
A small eye-space (like a 3-in-a-row) is often —	**killable if the attacker plays the vital point first** — Small enclosed shapes often can't make two eyes if the attacker takes the vital point first — they die.
'Life and death' in Go refers to —	**whether a group can make two eyes (live) or not (die)** — Life and death is the study of whether a group can secure two eyes and live, or be prevented and die.
StoneSong's primary primitive is 'life-and-death pattern recognition,' which means —	**learning to instantly recognize whether shapes live or die** — The app centers on life-and-death pattern recognition — training you to instantly judge whether a shape lives or dies.

6. Territory

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
'Territory' is —	**empty points surrounded by only your stones** — Territory is the empty points enclosed by your stones alone — the main way to score in Go.
Solid territory in the corner is valuable because it is —	**secure and hard for the opponent to take away** — Corner territory is solid and hard to invade, making it a reliable source of points.
Territory is easiest to make in the —	**corners, then the sides, then the center** — Edges help you enclose space, so territory is easiest in the corners, then the sides, then hardest in the open center.
The balance between TERRITORY (secure points) and INFLUENCE (facing power) is —	**a central strategic choice in Go** — Choosing between immediate territory and outward influence is a central Go decision — and StoneSong's core theme.
Influence (a wall facing the center) is valuable because it —	**can help you attack or build a big framework later** — Influence isn't points yet, but it powers attacks and can be converted into large territory as the game develops.
Territory only counts at the END if the surrounding group is —	**alive (dead groups' territory belongs to the opponent)** — Only living groups' surrounded space counts as your territory; if the group dies, that area becomes the opponent's.
The word 'Go' (weiqi) itself means —	**'surrounding game' — territory is the essence** — The name means 'surrounding game,' reflecting that enclosing territory is the essence of Go.
Deciding whether to take territory or build influence depends on —	**the whole-board position and your plan** — Whether to grab territory or build influence depends on the whole-board situation and your overall plan — it's a judgment.
The relationship between capturing and territory is that —	**captures help, but surrounding territory is how you win** — Capturing supports your game, but the win comes from territory — so you capture in service of controlling more space.
Invading the opponent's framework aims to —	**reduce their territory by living or reducing inside** — Invading a big framework tries to shrink the opponent's would-be territory by living inside it or reducing it.
A player far ahead in territory should —	**play safely and protect the lead** — When ahead in territory, play solidly to protect the lead rather than risking it with unnecessary complications.
A common beginner mistake is to —	**chase captures while ignoring territory** — Beginners often chase captures and forget that Go is won by territory — captures help only if they build points.
A player behind in territory should —	**invade, reduce, or fight to catch up** — Behind in territory, you must take chances — invade, reduce, or start fights — to catch up.
Endgame moves that grab a few points of territory are —	**still important (small points add up)** — Even small endgame territory moves matter — a game is often decided by a handful of points that accumulate.
Trying to make territory EVERYWHERE at once usually —	**leaves you overextended and weak** — Grabbing at territory everywhere spreads you thin; balancing solid territory with strength wins more games.
	reduce their territory (by living or reducing inside) — Invading a big

Invading the opponent's framework tries to —	framework aims to reduce the opponent's would-be territory by living inside or shrinking it.
You win a game of Go by —	**having more territory (plus captures/komi) than your opponent** — The winner is whoever controls more points — territory plus captures (and komi for white) — at the end.
Master Snail (patience) and Hungry Crane (capturing) balance because —	**patient territory-building beats greedy capturing alone** — The archetypes balance: patient territory-building (Snail) usually outscores greedy capturing (Crane) — territory is what wins.
Master Snail says 'the wise player counts the empty spaces.' This captures —	**that territory (empty surrounded points) is what wins Go** — In Go the empty spaces you surround are the points — so the wise player counts territory, not just stones.
Why is the center the HARDEST place to make territory?	**It has no edges to help enclose it, so it needs many stones** — Center territory has no board edges to help, so surrounding it takes many stones — it's the least efficient place.
Territory only counts at the end if the surrounding group is —	**alive** — Only a living group's enclosed space counts as your territory; if that group dies, the area becomes the opponent's.
A wall of stones facing the center gives you —	**'influence' (power over a large area), which can become territory** — A wall facing open space gives influence — potential power that can be turned into territory or used in fights.
Territory and captures both —	**count toward your score** — Your score combines your territory and your captures (with komi added to white), and the higher total wins.
A large loosely-outlined area you aim to make into territory is a —	**framework (moyo)** — A moyo is a large, loosely-surrounded area you plan to convert into territory as the game develops.
A 'framework' (moyo) is —	**a large area you're loosely surrounding, aiming to turn into territory** — A moyo is a large, loosely-outlined area you hope to convert into territory — a big-picture strategy.

7. Ko & Repetition

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
The ko rule exists to —	**prevent an endless loop of recapturing the same stone** — Without the ko rule, players could recapture forever; the rule prevents that endless loop so games can finish.
Because ko can repeat, the ko rule makes each recapture require —	**a move elsewhere in between** — The ko rule forces a move elsewhere between recaptures, breaking the would-be endless repetition.
Ko fights reward players who —	**count and manage their ko threats carefully** — Ko fights are won by carefully counting and timing ko threats — knowing who has more and how big they are.
If you run out of ko threats, you usually —	**have to give up the ko** — Without ko threats you can't force a reply, so you generally have to let the opponent win the ko.
A player who understands ko can —	**use it to win close games and big fights** — Understanding ko is a powerful tool — well-timed ko fights can decide close games and major life-and-death battles.
Recognizing a ko shape early lets you —	**prepare ko threats before the fight starts** — Spotting a coming ko lets you prepare ko threats in advance, giving you the upper hand in the fight.
The ko rule is an example of a rule that —	**prevents infinite repetition so the game can end** — Like repetition rules in other games, the ko rule stops infinite loops so a Go game always terminates.
The ko rule keeps games —	**finite (they must end)** — By forbidding immediate repetition, the ko rule prevents endless loops so every Go game must eventually end.
A 'picnic ko' (low risk for you, high for the opponent) is —	**one you can fight cheaply while the opponent risks a lot** — A picnic ko is favorable: you risk little if you lose it, while the opponent risks a great deal — a great ko to fight.
When a ko is finally 'connected' (filled), it —	**becomes solid and can no longer be captured back** — Once you win and connect a ko (fill the point), it's solid — the recapture cycle ends for good.
You win a ko by —	**having more (or bigger) ko threats than your opponent, or by connecting it** — You win a ko by out-threatening the opponent (or when they run out of threats), then filling/connecting the ko.
The KO RULE says you may NOT —	**immediately recapture to repeat the previous board position** — The ko rule forbids immediately recapturing in a way that repeats the position; you must play elsewhere first.
A 'ko fight' is —	**the back-and-forth of ko threats and recaptures over a ko** — A ko fight is the exchange of ko threats and responses as both sides battle over who wins the ko.
Master Snail says 'in ko, patience and threats decide.' This captures —	**that winning a ko means having the right threats and timing** — Ko is won through patience and threat management — having the right ko threats and using them at the right time.
A ko fight can swing —	**the life of a group or a big chunk of territory** — The outcome of a ko fight can decide whether a group lives or who gets a large territory — the stakes can be huge.
Managing ko threats is a skill	**using them in the right order and saving big ones wins the ko** — Winning a ko often depends on threat management — playing threats in the right order and

because —	saving your biggest ones.
If you have NO ko threats left, you —	**usually must give up the ko (let the opponent win it)** — Without ko threats, you can't force the opponent to respond, so you generally have to concede the ko.
Ko is important enough that —	**whole games can turn on a single ko fight** — Ko is important enough that entire games sometimes hinge on the outcome of one big ko fight.
A 'ko threat' is —	**a move elsewhere the opponent must answer, so you can retake the ko** — A ko threat is a threatening move elsewhere; if the opponent answers it, you're free to retake the ko.
A favorable 'picnic ko' is one where —	**you risk little but the opponent risks a lot** — A picnic ko is one you can fight cheaply while the opponent has much more to lose — a great ko to fight.
When you can't immediately retake a ko, you must —	**play somewhere else (often a 'ko threat') first** — You play elsewhere before retaking; a 'ko threat' is a move big enough that the opponent must respond, letting you retake next turn.
A 'ko' is a situation where —	**a single stone could be captured back and forth, repeating the position** — A ko is a shape where players could keep recapturing a single stone, repeating the board position forever.
The ko rule shows that Go, despite simple rules, has —	**subtle situations requiring special rules** — Ko is a great example of how Go's simple rules produce subtle situations that need careful special rules.
A ko can be worth a lot when —	**the group or territory depending on it is large** — A ko's importance depends on what's at stake — a ko that decides a big group's life or lots of territory is very valuable.
A 'ko threat' is a move that —	**the opponent must answer, letting you retake the ko** — A ko threat is a move big enough that the opponent must respond; then you're free to retake the ko.

8. The Opening (Fuseki)

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
Master Snail says 'claim the corners, sketch the sides, and the center will follow.' This captures —	**the corner-side-center priority of the opening** — The opening priority is corners first (most efficient), then sides, with the center developing from the influence you build.
A 'big point' in the opening is —	**a move that claims or frames a large area** — A big point is an opening move that stakes out or frames a large area — a high priority early on.
A flexible opening lets you —	**adapt your plan to the opponent's moves** — A flexible opening keeps your options open so you can adapt to how the opponent develops.
An 'approach move' near the opponent's corner stone —	**prevents them from easily enclosing that corner** — Approaching the opponent's lone corner stone stops them from turning it into a solid enclosure — you contest the corner.
Star points (hoshi) are popular opening points because they —	**emphasize influence and flexibility** — Playing on the star points favors influence and flexibility, a common modern opening approach.
The 3-3 point in a corner emphasizes —	**immediate, solid territory** — The 3-3 point takes quick, solid corner territory, trading some influence for immediate points.
Playing tiny local moves while big areas are open is —	**a classic opening mistake** — A common opening error is small local play while huge areas remain open — grab the big points first.
A key opening principle is to play in the —	**corners first, then sides, then center** — Because corners enclose territory most efficiently, the opening priority is corners, then sides, then center.
The opening flows into the middlegame, where —	**fights and invasions develop the sketched frameworks** — The opening's frameworks become the battleground of the middlegame, where fights and invasions decide them.
An approach move near the opponent's corner stone —	**stops them from easily enclosing that corner** — Approaching the opponent's lone corner stone prevents an easy enclosure, so you contest the corner.
The opening is about —	**sketching the whole-board framework, not fighting immediately** — The opening sketches a whole-board plan — claiming big areas and frameworks — rather than diving into early fights.
Balancing your OWN framework against reducing the opponent's is —	**a key opening judgment** — Deciding when to extend your own framework versus reduce the opponent's is a central opening judgment.
Good opening play means thinking about —	**the whole board, not just local fights** — The opening rewards whole-board vision — balancing all areas rather than getting lost in one local fight.
The opening (fuseki) is mainly about —	**sketching a whole-board framework** — The opening sketches a whole-board framework rather than diving into early local fights.
Rushing into a fight in the opening can be a mistake because —	**you may neglect big open areas** — Diving into an early fight can cost you the big open areas — in the opening, taking big points usually comes first.
A common opening error is to play —	**small, local moves while big areas remain open** — Playing tiny local moves while huge areas are open is a classic opening error — grab the big points first.

Why play the corners first?	**They make territory with the fewest stones (edges help)** — Corners use the board's two edges to enclose space, so they make territory with the fewest stones — play them first.
Playing too many stones in one small area early is —	**usually inefficient (you're overconcentrated)** — Piling stones into one small area early is overconcentrated and inefficient — spread out to claim big areas.
A 'corner enclosure' (two stones securing a corner) —	**makes the corner nearly territory** — A corner enclosure with two stones secures the corner as near-territory — a solid opening achievement.
The opening phase of a Go game is called —	**fuseki** — The opening — the whole-board framework-building phase — is called the fuseki.
A corner enclosure (two stones) —	**nearly secures the corner as territory** — A two-stone corner enclosure secures the corner as near-territory — a solid opening achievement.
A good opening balances —	**taking territory with building influence** — A sound opening balances grabbing territory (corners/sides) with building influence for the middlegame.
The overall goal of the opening is to —	**build a strong, balanced whole-board position** — The opening aims for a strong, balanced whole-board position that gives you good chances in the middlegame.
The opening priority is —	**corners, then sides, then center** — Corners enclose territory most efficiently, so the opening order is corners first, then sides, then center.
Studying professional openings helps because —	**you learn efficient, balanced ways to start** — Studying strong openings teaches efficient, balanced ways to claim the board — a reliable head start.

9. Influence vs Territory

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
Stones played HIGH (toward the center) tend to make —	**influence** — High stones toward the center build outward influence rather than immediate points.
Patient Bamboo and Sparring Tiger might disagree on this balance because —	**different styles favor territory or influence/fighting differently** — Different playing styles weigh territory vs influence differently — the archetypes embody these varied approaches.
Taking secure territory is valuable because it is —	**concrete points that are hard to lose** — Territory is concrete, reliable points — hard for the opponent to take away, unlike mere potential.
Converting influence to territory usually happens —	**later in the game, as the board fills in** — Influence is converted to territory as the game develops and the open areas it faces get enclosed.
Learning to judge territory vs influence is —	**one of the deepest skills in Go** — Judging the balance between territory and influence is among the deepest, most rewarding skills in Go.
Overvaluing captures while ignoring the territory/influence balance is —	**a common way to lose** — Focusing on captures while neglecting the territory/influence balance is a frequent path to losing — the balance is what wins.
Influence is valuable because it can —	**power attacks and later become territory** — Influence isn't points yet, but it drives attacks (pushing enemies toward your wall) and can be converted to territory.
A wall (influence) works best when —	**there's open space for it to face and turn into territory or attacks** — A wall's influence is only valuable if it faces open space it can convert to territory or use to attack — a wall facing the edge is wasted.
Trading territory for influence (or vice versa) is —	**a common, legitimate strategic choice** — Players routinely trade — giving the opponent some territory to gain influence, or vice versa — as a strategic choice.
A wall's influence is valuable only when it —	**faces open space it can use or convert** — A wall's influence matters only if it faces open space to attack into or convert to territory — a wall facing the edge is wasted.
Low stones (near the edge) tend to make —	**territory** — Stones played low (near the edge) tend to secure territory directly along the side and corner.
Both territory and influence ultimately serve —	**the goal of controlling more points than the opponent** — Territory and influence are two paths to the same goal — controlling more of the board's points than your opponent.
High stones (toward the center) tend to make —	**influence** — Stones played high (toward the center) build influence — outward power rather than immediate points.
A key insight is that influence is 'potential' that —	**must be actively used or it's wasted** — Influence is potential energy: you must actively convert it (territory) or use it (attacks), or it goes to waste.
The balance of territory vs influence is —	**StoneSong's core strategic theme (and a central Go idea)** — Choosing between territory and influence is the central strategic balance of Go — and StoneSong's core theme.

The right choice between territory and influence depends on —	**the whole-board position and your opponent's strength** — Whether to take territory or influence depends on the whole-board situation — there's no fixed answer.
Influence helps you attack because —	**you can chase enemy groups toward your wall** — A wall lets you chase weak enemy groups toward it, often making territory or capturing as you attack.
Stones played LOW (near the edge) tend to make —	**territory** — Low stones near the edge tend to secure direct territory along the side and corner.
The best players —	**balance territory and influence based on the position** — Strong players read each position and balance territory and influence rather than always favoring one.
Influence is 'potential' that —	**must be used or converted, or it's wasted** — Influence is potential: you must convert it to territory or use it in attacks, or it goes to waste.
Influence helps you ATTACK because —	**you can chase enemy groups toward your wall** — A wall lets you attack by chasing enemy groups toward it, often making territory or capturing while you attack.
Master Snail says 'points in hand and power in reserve — the wise player weighs both.' This captures —	**that balancing territory and influence is the heart of Go strategy** — Balancing secure territory ('points in hand') with influence ('power in reserve') is the heart of Go strategy.
A player who takes ONLY territory and no influence risks —	**being surrounded by a strong opponent wall** — Grabbing only territory can let the opponent build overwhelming influence and dominate the rest of the board.
A player who builds ONLY influence and no territory risks —	**having lots of power but too few actual points** — Pure influence can leave you with power but few points if you never convert it — influence must eventually become territory.
'Territory' means secure points; 'influence' means —	**outward power over a large area (potential, not yet points)** — Territory is secure points now; influence is outward-facing power over a large area — potential you can convert later.

10. Good Shape

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
Good shape helps a group —	**make eyes and stay strong efficiently** — Good shape means a group is strong and makes eyes with fewer stones — efficiency that pays off all game.
A practical shape tip is —	**avoid the empty triangle unless you have a specific reason** — A handy rule of thumb: avoid the empty triangle unless a concrete reason demands it — usually there's a better, efficient move.
Bad shape (like the empty triangle) —	**wastes stones and gives fewer liberties** — Bad shape wastes stones and reduces liberties, making your group slower and weaker than it should be.
Avoiding overconcentration (too many stones in one spot) is —	**part of playing good shape** — Overconcentrated stones are inefficient; good shape spreads stones so each does meaningful work.
Master Snail says 'let each stone do the work of two.' This captures —	**that good shape makes every stone efficient** — Good shape makes each stone efficient — 'doing the work of two' — which is the essence of strong Go.
A 'one-space jump' between friendly stones is —	**a light, efficient connection** — The one-space jump is a light, efficient way to extend and connect loosely — good shape that develops quickly.
Good shape and life-and-death are related because —	**good shape makes eyes and strength more easily** — Good shape and life are linked: efficient shapes make eyes and strength more easily, helping groups live.
Playing good shape is a hallmark of —	**strong, experienced players** — Consistently good shape is a hallmark of strong players — it reflects efficient, well-read play.
'Good shape' means stones that are —	**efficient and strong (working well together)** — Good shape is an efficient, strong formation where stones support each other and make eyes easily.
Recognizing good and bad shape lets you —	**play more efficiently and avoid weak formations** — Knowing shapes lets you instinctively play efficient, strong formations and avoid weak ones — a big practical edge.
Shape is ultimately about —	**getting the most strength and eye-potential from your stones** — Shape is about efficiency — extracting the most strength and eye-potential from each stone you play.
Good shape makes making TWO EYES —	**easier** — Efficient shapes create eye-space more easily, so good shape directly helps a group make two eyes and live.
Efficient shape means each stone —	**does meaningful work rather than being wasted** — Efficient shape ensures every stone contributes — none is wasted — which is the essence of strong play.
Shape ideas are 'rules of thumb' that —	**usually guide you toward efficient play** — Shape principles are practical guides toward efficient play, though exceptions exist — they steer you right most of the time.
A practical shape tip is to —	**avoid the empty triangle unless there's a specific reason** — A useful rule of thumb: avoid the empty triangle unless a concrete reason demands it — usually a more efficient move exists.
The 'bamboo joint' is good	**uncuttable (a very solid connection)** — The bamboo joint is a strong shape that

shape because it is —	simply cannot be cut — reliable, solid connection.
Learning shape improves your play because —	**you make strong, efficient formations without deep reading every time** — Shape knowledge builds intuition for strong moves, so you play efficiently without reading every position from scratch.
The 'tiger's mouth' is —	**a good shape that's hard to cut and helps make eyes** — The tiger's mouth (three stones around an empty point in a V) is a strong shape that resists cutting and helps make eyes.
A 'hane' is a move that —	**reaches around the opponent's stone (a diagonal contact play)** — A hane 'reaches around' an opponent's stone diagonally — an aggressive, efficient contact move.
The empty triangle is inefficient because —	**it uses three stones but has fewer liberties than a better shape** — The empty triangle spends three stones yet has fewer liberties than a more spread-out shape — poor efficiency.
A 'ponnuki' (four stones around a captured point) is —	**very strong shape (worth a lot of influence)** — The ponnuki (a diamond of four stones from a capture) is famously strong, radiating influence — 'a ponnuki is worth 30 points.'
Even 'bad' shape can be correct when —	**the specific situation requires it (shape rules have exceptions)** — Occasionally a 'bad' shape like the empty triangle is the right move for a specific tactical reason — shape rules aren't absolute.
A 'ponnuki' (diamond from a capture) is valued for its —	**strong influence** — A ponnuki — the diamond of four stones left after a capture — radiates strong influence ('a ponnuki is worth 30 points').
A 'thick' position (strong, no weaknesses) is valuable because —	**it can't be attacked, so it supports the rest of your board** — Thickness (a strong, weakness-free position) can't be attacked and lends power to fights and frameworks across the board.
The 'empty triangle' is famous as —	**a BAD shape (inefficient)** — The empty triangle (three stones in an L around an empty point) is the classic BAD shape — inefficient and slow.

11. Ladders & Nets

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
Nets are elegant because they capture —	**without needing the long, fragile ladder path** — A net captures cleanly without the ladder's long, breakable path — an elegant, reliable technique.
Mastering ladders and nets makes you —	**a much stronger fighter and reader** — Mastering these techniques dramatically improves your fighting and reading — core skills for strong Go.
A ladder chases a stone in a —	**zig-zag, keeping it in atari each move** — A ladder moves in a diagonal zig-zag, keeping the chased stone in atari (one liberty) on every move until the edge.
These capturing techniques reward players who —	**read sequences a few moves ahead** — Ladders, nets, and snapbacks reward reading — calculating the capturing sequence a few moves ahead.
Master Snail says 'the clever hunter builds a fence, not a chase.' This captures —	**that a net (fence) is often a cleaner capture than a ladder (chase)** — Like a fence versus a chase, a net is often the cleaner, safer way to capture than a long, breakable ladder.
A net is often SAFER than a ladder because —	**it doesn't depend on the whole diagonal path being clear** — A net doesn't require a clear diagonal all the way to the edge, so it's often a safer capture than a ladder.
Choosing a net over a ladder is wise when —	**the ladder doesn't work (or is too risky to read)** — When a ladder is broken or hard to read, a net is often the safer, cleaner way to capture.
A 'snapback' is a technique where you —	**let a stone be captured, then recapture a larger group** — In a snapback you sacrifice a stone; when the opponent captures it, you recapture a larger group in return.
Starting a ladder that doesn't work is —	**a serious mistake that strengthens the opponent** — Playing a failing ladder feeds the opponent stones and strengthens them — a serious error, so always read it first.
A net is often safer than a ladder because —	**it doesn't depend on a long clear diagonal path** — A net doesn't require a clear diagonal to the edge, so it's usually a safer capture than a ladder.
A 'net' (geta) captures by —	**loosely trapping a stone so it can't escape (no chase)** — A net captures by loosely surrounding a stone so it can't escape, without the ladder's running chase.
Before capturing with a technique, always confirm —	**the captured stones can't escape or counterattack** — Before committing to a ladder or net, confirm by reading that the stones truly can't escape or turn the tables.
Before starting a ladder, you must —	**READ it out to the edge to be sure it works** — You must read a ladder all the way to the edge before starting it — a single ladder-breaker makes it a disaster.
A 'net' (geta) is a capturing technique that —	**traps a stone loosely so it can't escape (without a chase)** — A net (geta) captures by loosely surrounding a stone so it can't escape, without the ladder's running chase.
The key skill for ladders is —	**reading — following the zig-zag to see if it works** — Ladders are pure reading: you trace the zig-zag to the edge to confirm capture — no guessing allowed.
	chases a stone in a zig-zag, keeping it in atari until it's captured — A ladder

A 'ladder' (shicho) is a capturing technique that —	chases a stone diagonally in a zig-zag, keeping it in atari each move until it hits the edge and is captured.
A ladder FAILS if —	**there's a friendly 'ladder-breaker' stone in its path** — If a stone of the chased side sits in the ladder's path (a ladder-breaker), the ladder fails and the chase collapses.
Ladders and nets are both ways to —	**capture stones that couldn't be caught by a simple atari** — Ladders and nets are tactical capturing techniques for stones that would otherwise escape a plain atari.
A famous saying is 'if you don't know ladders, don't play Go.' This stresses —	**how fundamental reading ladders is** — The saying highlights that reading ladders is so fundamental that mastering them is essential to playing Go well.
A ladder that works ends with the chased stones —	**captured near a board edge** — A working ladder chases the stones in a zig-zag until they run into a board edge with no liberties and are captured.
Starting a ladder that DOESN'T work is —	**a serious mistake (you strengthen the opponent and lose stones)** — Playing a ladder that fails is a serious error — you feed the opponent stones and strengthen them; always read it first.
The difference between a ladder and a net is that a ladder —	**chases in a zig-zag while a net traps in place** — A ladder runs a zig-zag chase keeping the stone in atari; a net loosely traps it in place with no chase.
A stone in atari can sometimes escape a ladder by —	**reaching a friendly ladder-breaker** — The chased stone escapes if the ladder runs into a friendly ladder-breaker, which turns the tables on the chaser.
Practicing capturing techniques improves —	**your reading and your fighting strength** — Drilling ladders, nets, and snapbacks sharpens your reading and makes you far stronger in fights.
A 'ladder-breaker' is a stone that —	**sits in a ladder's path and rescues the chased stones** — A ladder-breaker is a friendly stone in the ladder's future path; when the chase reaches it, the chased group escapes.

12. The Endgame (Yose)

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
A 'double sente' point (sente for both) is —	**urgent — grab it first** — A double-sente point profits while keeping sente for whoever plays it, so it's urgent — take it first.
Endgame points seem small but —	**add up and often decide close games** — Endgame moves are small individually but accumulate; close games are frequently decided by a few endgame points.
Endgame points may seem small, but —	**they add up and often decide close games** — Endgame moves are small individually but accumulate — many games are decided by a few endgame points.
A 'sente' move —	**keeps the initiative (the opponent must respond)** — A sente move forces a reply, so you keep the initiative to play the next big move — very valuable in the endgame.
Sente moves are valuable because —	**you profit AND keep the initiative to play again** — Sente moves gain points while keeping the initiative, so you should generally play your sente endgame moves first.
Endgame is often underestimated by beginners, who —	**lose points by playing small or gote moves too early** — Beginners often undervalue the endgame, losing points by playing small or gote moves before the big/sente ones.
In the endgame you should play —	**the BIGGEST points first** — Endgame skill is about order: play the biggest boundary moves first, since points are limited and add up.
Playing gote when a sente move is available is —	**usually a mistake (play sente first)** — Playing a gote move while a sente one is available wastes the initiative — play your sente moves first.
A move worth few points but played in SENTE is —	**often still worth playing (it profits and keeps the lead)** — Even a small point is worth taking in sente, since it profits while keeping the initiative for your next move.
A player ahead going into the endgame should —	**play solidly and not blunder away the lead** — Ahead in the endgame, play solidly and precisely — many won games are thrown away by careless endgame moves.
A player behind going into the endgame should —	**find the biggest points and any sente to catch up** — Behind in the endgame, squeeze every point — play the biggest moves and use sente to close the gap.
The endgame of a Go game is called —	**yose** — The endgame — settling boundaries and grabbing the last points — is called the yose.
Counting the score during the endgame helps you —	**know how many points you need and how to play** — Counting the score in the endgame tells you the margin, so you know whether to play safe (ahead) or push (behind).
The order of endgame moves matters because —	**playing big/sente moves first captures more total points** — Because moves have different values and sente lets you play again, the order (big/sente first) maximizes your total points.
A 'sente' move is one that —	**keeps the initiative (the opponent must respond)** — A sente move forces the opponent to respond, so you keep the initiative to play again elsewhere — very valuable in the endgame.

A 'gote' move is one that —	**loses the initiative (the opponent gets to play next elsewhere)** — A gote move doesn't force a reply, so the opponent gets the next big move — you've lost the initiative.
The endgame is the LAST chance to —	**gain (or lose) the points that decide a close game** — The endgame is your last chance to gain points; in close games it's exactly where the result is decided.
A 'double sente' move (sente for both sides) is —	**extremely urgent — whoever plays it keeps sente and gains** — A double-sente point is urgent: whoever plays it profits while keeping sente, so it should be taken immediately.
Good endgame technique can swing a game by —	**several points — enough to change the winner** — Skilled endgame play can swing several points — often enough to flip a close game from a loss to a win.
Estimating the VALUE (in points) of each endgame move lets you —	**choose the biggest one to play first** — Counting how many points each boundary move is worth lets you play them in the right (biggest-first) order.
Master Snail says 'the last stones can decide the game.' This captures —	**that precise endgame play often determines the winner** — The final endgame stones often decide close games, so precise, well-ordered endgame play is crucial.
Good endgame play is a mark of —	**a mature, complete player** — Strong, precise endgame play is a mark of a complete player — it's where careful counting pays off.
The endgame rewards —	**precise counting and playing moves in the right order** — The endgame rewards precise counting of move values and playing them in the correct big-to-small, sente-first order.
The best endgame habit is —	**count each move's value and play the biggest sente first** — The core endgame habit: evaluate each move's points, play sente moves first, then the biggest gote moves.
A 'gote' move —	**loses the initiative (the opponent plays next elsewhere)** — A gote move doesn't force a reply, so the opponent gets the next move — you've lost the initiative.

13. Handicaps & Komi

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
The bigger the strength gap, the —	**more handicap stones the weaker player gets** — A larger strength difference means more handicap stones, scaling the head start to keep the game fair.
Handicap stones are usually placed on —	**the star points (hoshi)** — Handicap stones go on the star points, giving black influence-oriented positions across the board.
Komi exists because —	**moving first (black) is a real advantage that needs balancing** — Because playing first is a genuine advantage, komi balances the game by compensating white.
Handicap stones give black —	**influence and a strong starting framework** — Handicap stones on the star points give black immediate influence and a strong whole-board framework.
A typical komi is around —	**6.5 or 7.5 points** — Komi is commonly 6.5 or 7.5 points; the half-point ensures no drawn games.
Handicap stones are placed by the —	**weaker player, before white's first move** — In a handicap game the weaker player (black) places extra stones on the star points before white plays.
The komi and handicap systems both serve —	**fairness (balancing first-move and skill differences)** — Both komi and handicaps exist for fairness — balancing the first-move advantage and differences in skill.
In a handicap game, the WEAKER player —	**places extra stones on the board before white's first move** — The weaker player (black) places several handicap stones (on star points) before white plays, as a head start.
The star points where handicap stones are placed are called —	**hoshi** — The marked star points on the board are called 'hoshi'; handicap stones are placed on them.
In a handicap game, white usually gets —	**little or no komi (black already has the head start)** — In handicap games komi is usually reduced or zero, since black's extra stones already provide the advantage.
'Komi' is —	**extra points given to white to compensate for black moving first** — Komi is a fixed number of points added to white's score to offset black's first-move advantage.
A handicap game typically uses between —	**about 2 and 9 handicap stones, depending on the strength gap** — Handicap games commonly use from about 2 up to 9 stones, more stones for a larger strength difference.
A 'handicap' game is used when —	**the two players are of different strengths** — Handicaps make games between players of different strengths competitive and fun.
Master Snail says 'a fair start honors both players.' This captures —	**that komi and handicaps make games fair and enjoyable** — Komi and handicaps create a fair start that honors both players — the spirit of a good, competitive game.
Understanding komi matters for —	**judging who's winning (you must include komi in the count)** — When counting the score, you must add komi to white's total to judge who's actually ahead.
The stronger the strength difference, the —	**MORE handicap stones the weaker player gets** — A larger strength gap means more handicap stones, scaling the head start to keep the game fair.
If a weaker player improves,	**decrease over time** — As you get stronger, you need fewer handicap stones — the

their handicap should —	handicap shrinks to keep games balanced.
Why does the half-point in komi (like 6.5) matter?	**It prevents tie games (someone always wins by at least half a point)** — A half-point komi guarantees no ties — the final margin can't be exactly zero, so someone always wins.
When counting the score, komi is —	**added to white's total** — To judge who's ahead you add komi to white's territory-and-captures total before comparing.
Komi is added to the score at —	**the end of the game (to white's total)** — Komi is applied at scoring time, added to white's total territory and captures.
A typical komi value is around —	**6.5 or 7.5 points** — Komi is commonly 6.5 or 7.5 points; the half-point ensures there are no drawn games.
The fairness systems of Go reflect that the game values —	**balanced, competitive play for everyone** — Komi and handicaps show Go's value of fair, competitive play for players of every level.
Handicaps make Go special because —	**players of very different strengths can enjoy a real game together** — The handicap system lets a strong and a weak player have a genuinely competitive, enjoyable game — a strength of Go.
A handicap game teaches the weaker player by —	**letting them play a strong opponent on nearly even terms** — Handicaps let weaker players learn from stronger ones in a competitive game rather than a hopeless mismatch.
Without komi, black's first-move advantage would —	**make equal games slightly unfair to white** — Without komi, black's first-move edge would give black a persistent unfair advantage in even games.

14. Etiquette & the Spirit of Go

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
Reviewing a game with your opponent afterward —	**helps both players learn (a valued tradition)** — Reviewing the game together — discussing key moves — is a cherished tradition that helps both players improve.
At the START of a game, 'nigiri' (guessing stones) is used to —	**decide who plays black** — Nigiri — guessing whether a hidden number of stones is odd or even — is the traditional way to decide who plays black.
The deepest 'win' in Go is often —	**improving and enjoying the game with respect** — Beyond the scoreboard, the deepest reward in Go is growing as a player and enjoying the game with mutual respect.
Good Go etiquette includes —	**playing honestly and respecting your opponent** — Go has a strong tradition of etiquette — honest play and respect for your opponent are central.
Being a gracious WINNER means —	**respecting your opponent and not gloating** — Winning graciously — with humility and respect rather than gloating — is part of Go's spirit.
Resigning when clearly beaten is —	**an accepted, respectful part of Go** — Resigning a clearly lost game is respectful and traditional in Go — it acknowledges the opponent's win gracefully.
The spirit of Go emphasizes —	**learning, respect, and enjoying the game** — Go's spirit values respect, continual learning, and enjoyment — not just winning.
The custom of the stronger player teaching the weaker one reflects —	**Go's culture of mentorship and growth** — Stronger players teaching weaker ones (as with handicaps and reviews) reflects Go's culture of mentorship and shared growth.
A respectful attitude toward the GAME itself means —	**taking it seriously and playing your best** — Respecting the game means taking it seriously and giving your genuine best effort each time.
Etiquette makes Go —	**more enjoyable and meaningful for both players** — Etiquette and respect make each game more enjoyable and meaningful for both players.
Master Snail says 'the stones remember how you played, win or lose.' This captures —	**that HOW you play — with respect and grace — matters as much as the result** — How you play — with respect and grace, win or lose — matters as much as the result; that's the spirit of Go.
Go famously builds off-board qualities like —	**patience, focus, and grace** — Beyond the board, Go builds patience, focus, and the grace to handle both winning and losing.
Handling a loss well means —	**learning from it without shame or blame** — A healthy attitude treats losses as lessons — you learn from them without shame or blaming others.
Following etiquette even in a casual game is —	**good practice and shows respect** — Practicing good etiquette even in casual games builds respectful habits and honors the game and your opponent.
The lessons Go teaches OFF the board include —	**patience, humility, and resilience** — Go famously builds character off the board too — patience, humility, and resilience through its wins and losses.
The spirit of Go values —	**respect, learning, and enjoying the game** — Go's spirit centers on respect, continual learning, and genuine enjoyment — not winning at any cost.

Etiquette and the spirit of Go together make it —	**a game of both skill AND character** — Go is a game of skill and character — playing well AND playing with respect are both part of mastering it.
Respect for your opponent shows in —	**quiet, considerate play and gracious conduct** — Respect appears in quiet, considerate play and gracious conduct — win or lose.
The tradition of Go includes —	**a rich history of teachers, players, and lessons across cultures** — Go carries a rich, centuries-old tradition of teachers and players across many cultures — a heritage worth respecting.
Being a gracious LOSER means —	**congratulating the winner and looking to learn** — Losing graciously means acknowledging the winner and focusing on what you can learn — no excuses or sulking.
Not distracting your opponent while they think is —	**part of good Go etiquette** — Allowing your opponent to think undistracted is part of respectful Go etiquette.
At the end of the game, players —	**agree on which groups are dead and count the score together** — When both players pass, they agree which groups are dead and count the territory together to determine the winner.
Playing Go teaches life skills like —	**patience, focus, and handling wins and losses gracefully** — Beyond the board, Go builds patience, focus, and the grace to handle both winning and losing well.
Resigning a clearly lost game is —	**respectful and traditional in Go** — Resigning a hopeless game graciously is an accepted, respectful part of Go tradition.
Reviewing a game with your opponent afterward is —	**a valued tradition that helps both players learn** — Reviewing the game together afterward — discussing key moves — is a cherished Go tradition that helps both improve.

15. Reading & Common Mistakes

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
A frequent error is answering every opponent move locally while —	**ignoring the big points elsewhere** — Replying locally to every move while big areas wait is a common mistake — think whole-board, not just local.
Chasing captures while ignoring territory is —	**a common way to lose** — Focusing on captures while forgetting territory is a frequent path to losing — Go is won by territory.
A good player checks BEFORE playing whether —	**the move leaves their own groups safe** — Before a move, strong players check it doesn't leave their own groups weak or cuttable — self-awareness prevents blunders.
Improving your reading mostly comes from —	**practice (especially life-and-death puzzles)** — Reading improves with practice — especially solving life-and-death puzzles (tsumego) that train calculation.
Another common mistake is —	**leaving your own group without two eyes when attacked** — Neglecting to make two eyes for a threatened group is a frequent, game-losing mistake — keep your groups alive.
Reading deeply and accurately is —	**the skill that most separates strong from weak players** — The depth and accuracy of your reading is what most separates strong players from weaker ones.
A mistake in the endgame is to —	**play small or gote moves before big/sente ones** — Playing small or gote endgame moves before the big and sente ones loses points — order is everything in the yose.
A frequent beginner error is to —	**respond to every opponent move locally, ignoring the big points** — Beginners often reply locally to every move, missing the big points elsewhere — think whole-board, not just local.
'Reading' in Go means —	**calculating sequences of moves ahead in your mind** — Reading is mentally calculating sequences of moves — 'if I play here, they play there…' — to see the outcome.
Reading a capturing race (semeai) means —	**counting both groups' liberties to see who wins** — In a capturing race you read by counting both groups' liberties to determine who fills the other's last liberty first.
Go has no dice, so blaming a loss on luck is —	**a mistake — losses come from your moves** — Go has no luck; blaming a loss on chance misses the real lesson in your own decisions.
'Reading' means —	**calculating sequences of moves ahead in your mind** — Reading is mentally calculating move sequences — 'if I play here, they play there…' — to foresee the outcome.
Playing too many stones in one area (overconcentration) is —	**inefficient — spread out for more value** — Overconcentrating stones in one area is inefficient; spreading out lets each stone do more work.
Blaming a loss on luck is —	**a mistake — Go has no luck; losses come from your moves** — Go has no dice or hidden info — there's no luck. Blaming luck for a loss misses the real lesson in your own moves.
Visualizing the board WITHOUT placing stones is —	**the essence of reading** — Reading is mental visualization — picturing the sequence of moves in your mind before playing — the core calculation skill.

A good habit before a big move is to —	**read a few moves ahead to check it works** — Reading a few moves ahead before an important move helps you confirm it does what you intend.
Reading helps you —	**avoid mistakes and find the best move** — Reading lets you foresee what will happen, so you avoid blunders and find stronger moves.
A good all-around habit is to ask —	**'is my group safe, and what's the biggest move?'** — Asking 'is my group safe, and what's the biggest point?' each turn keeps your play sound and whole-board.
Reading and pattern recognition together let you —	**judge positions quickly and accurately** — Combining calculation (reading) with known patterns lets you judge positions both quickly and accurately.
Improving at Go is mostly about —	**reducing your own mistakes through practice and review** — You improve by reducing your own mistakes — through steady practice, reading drills, and reviewing your games.
You improve at Go mostly by —	**reducing your own mistakes through practice and review** — Improvement comes from reducing your own mistakes — steady practice, reading drills, and reviewing your games.
A very common mistake is to —	**start a ladder that doesn't work** — Playing a ladder without reading it to the edge is a classic, costly mistake — always confirm it works first.
A common mistake is leaving your own group —	**without two eyes when it's under attack** — Neglecting to make two eyes for a threatened group is a frequent, game-losing error — keep your groups alive.
A good habit is to review your LOST games to —	**find the moves that went wrong and learn** — Reviewing lost games to find where you went wrong — without shame — is one of the best ways to improve.
Master Snail says 'see three moves before you play one.' This captures —	**that reading ahead is the key to strong play** — Reading ahead — seeing several moves before you play one — is the key skill behind strong, mistake-free Go.

16. Putting It Together

✂ Question (fold →)	Answer
Every part of Go — liberties, life, shape, territory — ultimately serves —	**controlling more of the board than your opponent** — Liberties, life, shape, and tactics all ultimately serve one goal: controlling more of the board's points than your opponent.
Good shape means —	**efficient, strong formations that make eyes easily** — Good shape is efficient and strong — formations where stones work together and make eyes easily.
A group lives permanently when it has —	**two separate eyes** — Two separate eyes make a group unconditionally alive — the central life-and-death principle.
The archetypes (Patient Bamboo, Hungry Crane, Master Snail, Sparring Tiger) teach that —	**different styles all have strengths — balance is the master lesson** — The archetypes embody different styles (patience, capturing, wisdom, fighting); the master lesson is to balance them.
Reading (calculating ahead) is —	**the skill that most separates strong from weak players** — The depth and accuracy of your reading — seeing sequences ahead — is what most separates strong players from weak ones.
StoneSong's core primitive combines —	**life-and-death pattern recognition with the territory-vs-influence balance** — StoneSong centers on two things: recognizing life-and-death patterns and balancing territory against influence.
The ko rule prevents —	**endless recapture of the same stone** — The ko rule stops players from recapturing the same stone forever, so games can finish.
Everything in Go — liberties, life, shape — ultimately serves —	**controlling more territory than your opponent** — Liberties, life, shape, and tactics all serve one goal: controlling more of the board's points than your opponent.
Komi and handicaps exist to —	**make games fair across first-move and skill differences** — Komi (for the first-move advantage) and handicaps (for skill gaps) keep Go games fair and competitive.
Go has no luck, which means —	**the result reflects your decisions, not chance** — With no dice or hidden info, Go's result reflects your decisions entirely — every game is a chance to learn from your play.
The game of Go ends when —	**both players pass in a row** — A Go game ends when both players pass consecutively; the players then agree on dead groups and count the territory.
A strong player balances —	**attack and defense, territory and influence, patience and aggression** — Strong Go balances attack and defense, territory and influence, patience and aggression — matched to the position.
Komi and handicaps both exist to —	**make games fair across first-move and skill differences** — Komi (for the first-move edge) and handicaps (for skill gaps) keep Go games fair and competitive across levels.
Ladders and nets are —	**capturing techniques you must read out carefully** — Ladders and nets are tactical capturing techniques that require careful reading to confirm they work.

Master Snail's final teaching: 'Read the stones, balance the board, and respect the game.' This captures —	**that skill (reading + balance) and spirit (respect) together make a Go master** — Mastering Go means both skill — reading and balancing the board — and spirit — respecting the game and your opponent.
Putting it all together, you win at Go by —	**keeping your groups alive, reading well, and controlling the most territory** — You win by keeping your groups alive (two eyes), reading accurately, and balancing your way to the most territory.
Improving at Go comes from —	**practice, reading drills, and reviewing your games without shame** — You improve at Go through steady practice, reading drills (tsumego), and reviewing games to learn from mistakes.
The most basic tactic is —	**liberties and capture (a group with no liberties is taken)** — The foundation of Go tactics is liberties: a group with no liberties is captured, and this underlies everything.
The word 'Go' (weiqi) means —	**'surrounding game'** — The name means 'surrounding game,' reflecting that enclosing territory is the essence of Go.
A good opening follows the priority —	**corners, then sides, then center** — Sound openings claim corners first (most efficient), then sides, developing the center from your influence.
The goal of Go is to —	**control more territory than your opponent** — Everything in Go serves one goal: controlling more of the board's points (territory) than your opponent.
Recognizing life-and-death PATTERNS lets a player —	**judge groups quickly without reading everything from scratch** — Pattern recognition lets you judge a group's life or death at a glance — StoneSong's core skill — saving reading effort.
The deepest lesson of StoneSong is that —	**reading life and death plus balancing territory and influence is the heart of Go** — StoneSong's core lesson: mastering life-and-death reading and the territory-vs-influence balance is the heart of playing Go well.
The endgame (yose) rewards —	**counting move values and playing sente/big moves first** — The endgame rewards precise counting and playing the biggest and sente moves first — small points still decide close games.
The central strategic balance of Go is —	**territory vs influence** — The heart of Go strategy — and StoneSong's core theme — is the balance between territory and influence.

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