

Answer to Question # 6: Answer 3 is correct.

Answer: In English, we write “ON the paper,” so at first glance it might seem that “paper” is an object in this sentence. If that were true, the correct answer might be # 2. However, in English, as in Japanese, the only object of the VERB in this sentence is 名前 (namae) = “name.”

In the English phrase “on the paper,” “paper” is the object of the PREPOSITION “on.” Japanese can be said to have prepositions in the sense that it has synonyms for words like “on,” but Japanese prepositions don’t have objects. For example, 机の上 (tsukue no ue) means “on the desk,” but 上 (ue) has no object. Therefore answer #1 is incorrect, since 紙 (kami) is not an object.

In Japanese, one of the meanings of で (de) is “by means of.” So you could say ペンで書きます (pen de kakimasu) = “I write by means of a pen.” But you cannot say 紙で書きます (kami de kakimasu) = “I write by means of paper” in Japanese, even though you could get away with saying this in English. So answer # 2 is also incorrect.

It turns out that, in effect, we need to say something like, “I wrote my name TO the paper.”

In Japanese, most of the time you may use either へ (e) or に (ni) to mean “to.” へ (e) means “toward” and refers to the direction of movement, while に (ni) means “to” and refers to the destination itself. So, for example, if you want to say “she went to Tokyo,” you may say either 東京へ行きました (toukyou e ikimashita) or 東京に行きました (toukyou ni ikimashita). Both are correct in this case.

However, it cannot be right to say “I wrote my name TOWARD the paper.” Therefore answer # 4 is incorrect.

This leaves answer # 3 as the correct answer: 紙に名前を書きました (kami ni namae wo kakimashita).

.....  
Question # 6: "The particle to use when writing ON something"

You want to say “I wrote my name on the paper.”

Which of the following 4 Japanese sentences is correct?

1. 紙を名前を書きました。(kami wo namae wo kakimashita)
2. 紙で名前を書きました。(kami de namae wo kakimashita)
3. 紙に名前を書きました。(kami ni namae wo kakimashita)
4. 紙へ名前を書きました。(kami e namae wo kakimashita)