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# CANADIAN KENDO FEDERATION

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## KENDO WRITTEN EXAMINATION QUESTIONS (1 DAN TO 5 DAN ONLY)

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Please note that this exam **is not a grading application**. In addition to writing this exam, you **must** apply to grade through the CKF website with the approval of your sensei and CKF dojo administrator and you must pay all appropriate fees.

1<sup>st</sup> Dan through 5<sup>th</sup> Dan candidates must complete the appropriate written examination for the dan they are challenging.

Send your completed examination to:

[kendonationalwrittenexam@kendo-canada.com](mailto:kendonationalwrittenexam@kendo-canada.com)

by the grading deadline.

The objective of this exam is to encourage candidates to study kendo in all its dimensions thus allowing them to participate more fully in the cultural evolution of their dojo and the entire kendo community.

Candidates will not pass or fail on the basis of this test alone. However, candidates who make an inadequate submission will be requested to revise and re-submit their exam. To avoid delays, it is strongly recommended that you review your completed examination with your sensei before submitting it.

**1-3 dan candidates:** Please note that where the questions require you to list and briefly describe something, that you are expected to write a few sentences in your own words to show your understanding of the terminology or concept. For example, if asked to describe a shinai, “bamboo sword used for sparring” is an unacceptable answer even though it is accurate.

**4-5 dan candidates:** You should write full and thoughtful essay responses to each of the questions. Please limit each response to 300 words.

**All candidates:** Your answers should show a level of understanding appropriate to the dan you are challenging. The more senior the level, the

more we expect to see your own experience reflected in your answer. Your answers should be in your own words. **Any answer that is clearly a cut and paste response is unacceptable.** Please only answer the number of questions requested.

Answers to the following questions can be found by consulting the references provided in the bibliography, an internet search or asking your sempai or sensei.

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## SHODAN

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ANSWER ALL OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

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1. Briefly describe the concept of *ki ken tai ichi*.
2. What is the origin of meditation (*mokuso*) before practice: Shintoism, Confucianism or Zen Buddhism? What is the purpose of mokuso in modern kendo?
3. List and briefly explain three (3) benefits of *kiai* (*kakegoe*).
4. List and briefly describe three (3) types of kendo footwork. What is the purpose of each type of footwork?
5. Briefly describe the importance of *zanshin*.

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## NIDAN

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NOTE: **DO NOT** ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS  
ANSWER ANY THREE (3) OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

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1. List and briefly describe the five (5) basic *kamae*.
2. List and briefly describe the three (3) basic *ma-ai*.
3. List and briefly describe four (4) types of kendo footwork.
4. Which part of the *shinai* is used to hit: *datotsubu* or *datotsubui*? Why are we required to use this part of the shinai to score?
5. Name and briefly describe four (4) prohibited acts (*hansoku*) in *shiai*. What is the reason these acts are penalized?
6. List and briefly describe three (3) important safety considerations regarding *shinai* maintenance.

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## SANDAN

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NOTE: **DO NOT** ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS  
ANSWER ANY THREE (3) OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

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1. List and briefly describe five (5) of the elements which constitute **yuko datotsu**.
2. Briefly describe four (4) types of **suburi**.
3. Briefly describe **fumikomi**. What is the purpose of fumikomi?
4. Briefly describe **seme**. What is accomplished through seme?
5. What is the origin of **shinzen ni rei** before practice: Shintoism, Confucianism or Zen Buddhism? What is the purpose of shinzen ni rei in modern kendo?
6. List and briefly describe three (3) categories of counter-attack techniques (**ohji-waza**). Include a specific example of each category.

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## YONDAN

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NOTE: **DO NOT** ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS  
ANSWER ANY THREE (3) OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

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1. Describe the benefits of **kendo no kata** and its importance for **shinai keiko**.
2. What is it that distinguishes kendo from being a sport?
3. Why do you value **reigi** (good manners)?
4. Provide explanations of all of the following concepts and their value in kendo:
  - **sutemi**
  - **te no uchi**
  - **hasuji**
  - **enzan no metsuke**
  - **shugyo**
5. What is your understanding of **zanshin**?
6. List and explain five (5) important points when judging as **shinpan**.

## GODAN

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NOTE: THERE ARE THREE SECTIONS TO THIS EXAMINATION.  
PLEASE SELECT ONE QUESTION FROM EACH SECTION TO ANSWER.

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### 1. Kendo Pedagogy And Budo Concepts

*Answer one of the following six questions:*

- a. Explain five (5) important points when teaching kendo to beginners.
- b. Explain the concept of **senpai-kohai** and its importance in kendo.
- c. Explain the concept of **shu-ha-ri**.
- d. Describe how Budo can serve as a "modern ethical system".
- e. Describe how Kendo can serve as a means of self improvement.
- f. How can Kendo be an "instrument of Peace in the World" ( ref: Art. 1, Zen Nippon Kendo Renmei)?

### 2. Tournament Kendo

*Answer one of the following four questions:*

- a. Explain your ideas about the "best opportunity to strike".
- b. Explain the differences between: **sen-no-sen** and **go-no-sen**.
- c. Explain the responsibilities of Shushin during the following shiai conditions: **tsubazeriai**, **gogi** and **fusen-gachi**.
- d. Explain your ideas about Kendo as an Olympic sport.

### 3. Kendo No Kata And Kihon

*Answer one of the following four questions:*

- a. Explain briefly the three (3) concepts: **irimi**, **kurai zume** and **kigurai**
- b. Explain the motion of the blade in: **uke nagasu** and **surinagasu**
- c. Explain the important elements of **tenouchi**.
- d. List and explain five (5) elements that are common to all kendo kamae.

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## REFERENCES

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### INTERNET

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1. Study Guide For Promotional Examination, <http://www.kendo-usa.org/reference/studyguide.php>
2. Japanese-English Kendo Dictionary (older version online), [http://www.kendo-usa.org/reference/j\\_e\\_dictionary.php](http://www.kendo-usa.org/reference/j_e_dictionary.php)
3. Kendo World Magazine, <http://www.kendo-world.com/forum/content.php>

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

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  - a. Kendo Shiai and Shinpan Regulations
  - b. Nippon Kendo Kata Manual
  - c. The Official Guide for Kendo Instruction
  - d. Japanese-English Dictionary of Kendo
2. Kendo, The Definitive Guide, Hiroshi Ozawa, Kodansha International, 1997
3. Looking At A Far Mountain, A Study Of Kendo No Kata, Paul Budden, 2007
4. A Guide For Tournament Refereeing In Kendo, Translated In English By Mr B.T. Wakabayashi, C.K.F. Kendo Web Site , Section Information Page
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17. Budô, the martial ways of Japan (1st edition), Nippon Budokan Foundation. Shûsansha. 2009.

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