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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

by the grading deadline. Include the following information:

- Name
- Dojo
- Rank applied for

The following formats are acceptable:

- Plain text (.txt)
- Rich text (.rtf)
- Word (.doc or .docx)
- PDF (.pdf)

Do not use Apple (.pages) or Open Office (.odt) formats. Include a copy of the document directly in your email, do not use links to cloud services.

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 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.

## SHODAN

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ANSWER ALL OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

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1. 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 explain three (3) benefits of ***kiai (kakegoe)***.
4. Describe the action of three (3) of the following types of kendo footwork. What is the purpose of each type of footwork?
  - Okuri-ashi
  - Ayumi-ashi
  - Tsugi-ashi
  - Hiraki-ashi
5. Describe the importance of ***zanshin***.

## 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 describe the five (5) basic ***kamae***.
2. List and describe the three (3) basic ***ma-ai***.
3. 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?
4. Name and describe four (4) prohibited acts (***hansoku***) in ***shiai***. What is the reason these acts are penalized?
5. List and 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 describe five (5) of the elements which constitute *yuko datotsu*.
2. Describe *fumikomi*. What is the purpose of fumikomi?
3. Describe *seme*. What is accomplished through seme?
4. 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?
5. List and 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*.

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## 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 izume** 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](#)
2. [Japanese-English Kendo Dictionary \(older version online\)](#)
3. [Kendo World Magazine](#)

### 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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7. Bushido, The Warrior's Code, Inazo Nitobe, Ohara Publications, 1969
8. Complete Kendo, John J.Donohue, Tuttle Publishing, 1999
9. Budo, The Martial Ways Of Japan, Nippon Budokan Foundation, 2009
10. The Kendo Grading Book, Yoshiyama Mitsuru, Alex Bennett Ed., 2009
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16. The Kendo Grading Book, Yoshiyama Mitsuru, Kw Publications, 2006
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