

# An Essay Exercise (KEY)

**Directions:** Please read the definition essay on the following pages, and answer these questions.

- 1) see underlined text
- 2) The introduction begins to define the disease, and the rest of the essay describes it further.
- 3) Topic sentences 1, 2, and 4 have the name of the disease, while topic sentence 3 has the general class. Also, topic sentence 4 starts by summarizing the previous paragraph.
- 4) In thesis: "can be further defined according to"  
In restatement of thesis: "In conclusion, ..."  
"that can be understood in terms of"  
general class is mentioned
- 5) rare inflammatory disease / autoimmune disorder / condition / disease / autoimmune condition / inflammatory disease / autoimmune inflammatory disease
- 6) see highlighted text
- 7) This is a long body paragraph, so the reader needs to be reminded of the topic of the paragraph and name of the disease.
- 8) This is a short paragraph, so there is no need to do so.

## A Definition of Dermatomyositis (KEY)

Dermatomyositis is a rare inflammatory disease that is characterized by skin rashes and the degeneration of muscles throughout the body. It is an autoimmune disorder in which the body's immune cells mistakenly attack the cells of the muscles, leading to inflammation of the muscle fibers and the skin. Statistics show that this condition most commonly affects adults, especially women, between the ages of 50 and 60; in fact, two-thirds of patients with dermatomyositis are middle-aged women. Children between 5 and 15 years of age are also susceptible to this disease. About half of all patients with dermatomyositis recover fully within a few years. However, in 30% of patients, the disease persists, causing muscle weakness and extreme fatigue, and in the remaining 20%, the disease affects the lungs and other vital organs, which may be fatal. **Dermatomyositis can be further defined according to its causes, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment.**

**Dermatomyositis has several causes.** The most common cause of this autoimmune condition is a reaction to vaccines or certain drugs, including penicillamine, quinidine, and atorvastatin. In addition, dermatomyositis may result from bacterial or viral infections or from an inherited genetic defect. Less frequently, this disease is caused by cancer of an internal organ.

**Dermatomyositis is characterized by a variety of symptoms.** Early symptoms include a red rash on the bridge of the nose and cheeks and purple discoloration on the eyelids, which is known as "heliotrope" because it resembles the purple heliotrope flower. Reddish or purple patches may also appear on areas of the body that are exposed to the sun. Additionally, the patient experiences muscle weakness, which usually affects the shoulders and pelvis. The muscle weakness can lead to problems with walking and climbing stairs, and the patient may have difficulty raising his arms over his head. In later stages of the disease, the joints may become

24 painful and swollen, and carpal tunnel syndrome can occur. Other symptoms of advanced  
25 dermatomyositis may include difficulty swallowing, inflammation of the heart, and lung  
26 problems. In some cases, malignant tumors develop, although they rarely occur in children with  
27 this condition.

28 **Several methods are available to diagnose this inflammatory disease.** First, the  
29 patient's medical history is taken, and a complete physical examination is carried out. In  
30 addition, the doctor orders blood tests, which detect increased levels of muscle enzymes, such as  
31 creatine kinase, and autoantibodies, for example, ANA and anti-Mi-1. Besides these tests, the  
32 doctor also performs electromyography, or EMG, which involves inserting needle electrodes into  
33 the muscles to detect problems with their electrical activity. Another test that is sometimes used  
34 in the diagnosis of dermatomyositis is a muscle biopsy, in which a small piece of tissue is  
35 removed from a muscle for microscopic analysis.

36 **Once the patient is diagnosed with dermatomyositis, treatment is available to relieve**  
37 **the symptoms.** In order to reduce the inflammation, the doctor usually prescribes  
38 corticosteroids, and physical therapy is often necessary to prevent the muscles from scarring and  
39 shrinking as they heal. Immunosuppressant drugs may be taken as well. If tumors develop, they  
40 must be surgically removed or treated with chemotherapy.

41 **In conclusion, dermatomyositis is an autoimmune inflammatory disease that can be**  
42 **understood in terms of its causes, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment methods.** This  
43 condition can be caused by a reaction to drugs, an infection, or a genetic defect. Early  
44 symptoms include a rash on the face and muscle weakness, while in later stages, the heart and  
45 lungs may be affected, which can be life-threatening. Blood tests, EMG, and a muscle biopsy

46 are performed to diagnose dermatomyositis, which is treated with corticosteroids and physical  
47 therapy.