



# Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills 8<sup>th</sup> Edition

Benchmark

Grade 5

Student Materials

## **Breathing**

Breathing in brings oxygen into our bodies. Oxygen is a colorless, odorless gas that makes up over twenty percent of the earth's atmosphere. It makes up over sixty percent of the human body. Oxygen helps the cells in our bodies make energy. When we inhale, we pull air through our noses or mouths into our lungs. Then it travels through a series of branching tubes to arrive at tiny air sacs. The sacs are covered in tiny blood vessels. The oxygen from the air we breathe passes into the blood stream through these tiny blood vessels. The blood, rich with oxygen, then travels to the heart. The heart pumps it to the rest of the body.

Not only does breathing bring something we need into our bodies, it also removes waste. When we exhale, we get rid of carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is a gas produced by cells when they change nutrients into energy. It leaves the body by the same route that oxygen comes in, but in reverse. From the blood, it goes to the tiny blood vessels around the air sacs in our lungs. From the sacs, it goes through the branching tubes in the lungs. From the lungs, it is pushed out of the mouth or nose into the air. In the air, carbon dioxide is available to plants, who need it the way humans and animals need oxygen.

Breathing is so important to our lives that we mostly do it without trying. We can learn to control our breathing to some extent. But we mostly breathe without even being aware that we are doing so. Just imagine if you had to think about breathing every time you took a breath!