

Out of Breath: Scene 1

Alexis sat with a couple of her friends at the park, watching her boyfriend DeAndre and their friends play basketball. It was summertime in Decatur, and the late afternoon sun shone through the haze that lingered in the blazing hot air. Alexis gazed around at her neighborhood from where she sat in the shade. A few blocks up from the park, construction crews were busily cutting down a bunch of trees so they could build another row of apartment buildings, making the afternoon traffic even worse. Off in the distance, she heard the whistle of a freight train as it chugged its way across the city. She thought about how polluted the city had become over the years, how sad it made her. She turned her attention back to the court. The game was pretty exciting! Her friend Janice jogged over to the sidelines from where she'd been playing point guard and grabbed her water bottle.

“Alexis, why aren't you playing today? We need your three-point shot out there!” Janice said between big gulps of water.

Alexis replied, “I don't know, my asthma has been acting up every time I go outside to play basketball, so I figured I'd sit this one out.” In fact, she was feeling short of breath right now. Alexis had had asthma for a few years now. Her family had been really surprised when she was diagnosed, since she had no family history. However, she was the first member of her family to grow up in a city; her parents had moved to Decatur from southern Georgia when she was a baby.

Janice shrugged and said, “Okay. Feel better soon!”

As Janice turned to go back to the game, Alexis grabbed her arm. Janice saw that Alexis was gasping for breath and was starting to turn red. “Alexis, what's wrong?”

“I can't... can't breathe... I think I need a doctor.”

Janice turned around and yelled, “DeAndre! Get over here, Alexis is having an asthma attack, and I think it's serious!”

Out of Breath: Scene 2

Alexis sat in her doctor's office, relieved to be breathing normally again. Her new inhaler was stronger and worked much faster than the old one, which was great.

"Thanks for the new inhaler, I feel much better," she said to Dr. Harris. "So when can I play basketball again?"

Dr. Harris sighed. "Well, Alexis, I'm afraid you might not be able to play basketball anymore, at least not outside."

"No more basketball?!" Alexis cried. "But my friends and I love to play at the park; it's our favorite thing to do all summer long!"

"Unfortunately," Dr. Harris replied, "the smog is really bad during this time of year. People who are very sensitive to air pollutants like ground-level ozone, nitrous oxides, sulfates and nitrates, should avoid strenuous activity outside. This is especially the case with people who have asthma or allergies. In fact, some studies are suggesting that air pollution is what causes asthma in some people. I know you love to play basketball in the park, but you could adversely affect your health. Furthermore, since you have such bad asthma, you should check the AQI every time you go outside for any sort of physical activity."

Alexis hung her head, devastated. She'd had no idea that the traffic, construction, even the summer weather were so unhealthy!

Out of Breath: Scene 3

Janice gave Alexis a hug and said, “You can’t play basketball with us anymore? Aww Alexis, that’s awful!”

DeAndre agreed. “This totally stinks. And it’s the smog that might be doing it? That’s ridiculous. Can’t we do something about this?”

Alexis said, “I don’t know. Anyway, it’s not your problem, I’ll just have to sit on the sidelines, I guess.” Just then a diesel MARTA bus roared by, leaving a cloud of stinky exhaust behind it.

Janice shook her head. “It *is* our problem. If the air pollution caused your asthma, it could happen to lots of other kids, like my baby brother or even one of us. And it’s pollutants like that bus exhaust and other nasty stuff in the air that’s the problem. We need to get people in our neighborhoods to get involved with this so we can help improve our air quality.”

DeAndre nodded. “She’s right. Let’s do this!”

Self-Evaluation Worksheet

Date: _____

Your Name: _____ Group #: _____

Instructions: Please circle the response with which you agree the most. This evaluation will only be read by your teacher and will **not** be shown to other students.

1. How would you rate *your* participation in group discussion and group work?

5 Excellent 4 Very Good 3 Good 2 Fair 1 Poor

2. How would you rate *your* effort in completing the case?

5 Excellent 4 Very Good 3 Good 2 Fair 1 Poor

3. Did *you* complete the assigned homework? **Yes** **No**

If No, explain why:

4. How well did *you* work with everyone in your group?

5 Excellent 4 Very Good 3 Good 2 Fair 1 Poor

5. Overall, how would you rate *your* performance in this case?

5 Excellent 4 Very Good 3 Good 2 Fair 1 Poor

6. What praise or criticism do you have for other group members? What are your thoughts about the case?
