Asthma

Pre-reading

Questions:

- What do you know about asthma?

Definitions:

- Labored – showing difficulty or stress

Reading

Ben loved sports, but sports did not always love him. He loved soccer. He and his friends liked to kick the ball around after school. They had fun taking turns as goalie.

He loved basketball. He often shot baskets for an hour or two after dinner. Actual games were less fun for Ben. Soccer games and basketball games required a lot of running. Running meant breathing was difficult for Ben. He had asthma.

Asthma causes breathing problems. These breathing problems are often called asthma attacks. During an attack the airways in the lungs get blocked. Blocked airways mean the lungs get less air than normal. Asthma can be life threatening if breathing stops completely.

When Ben had an asthma attack it was hard for him to breathe. He felt tightness in his chest. He coughed and wheezed. It sounded like there was a whistle in his chest. It would happen most often during or after a game, or at night when he was in bed.

Ben learned to control his asthma. He did warm up and cool down exercises before and after games. He also got asthma medicine and an inhaler from his doctor. He started using the inhaler before games. It helped his airways stay open and clear.

The doctor also helped him establish a plan for when his asthma was under control and when he had problems. Ben continued to see the doctor twice a year, even if he felt well.

Asthma is a chronic lung disease. Those who have it, live with it every day. It never really goes away. It cannot be cured, but it can be controlled.

Level 4.5
Understanding

1. Why is asthma life-threatening? ________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

2. What are some symptoms of asthma? _____________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

3. What does the word **chronic** mean? _____________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

4. How did Ben control his asthma? _________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

5. What does wheezing sound like? _________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

6. When did Ben have most of his attacks? __________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
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Writing

Choice A: Summarize the reading in your own words.

Choice B: Write about someone you know who has asthma. What is their experience, and how do they manage it?

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