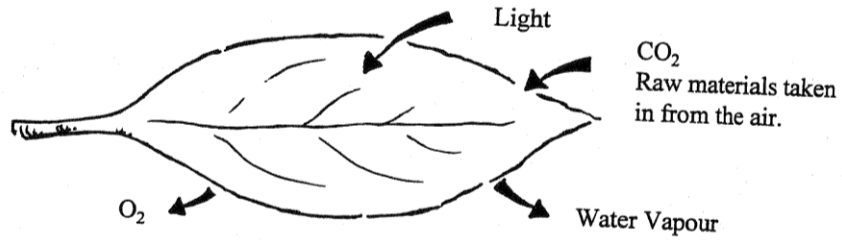


### 15. The Leaf: Our Oxygen Factory

The word *photosynthesis* comes from the word *photo*, which means *light*, and *synthesis*, which means *putting together*. Photosynthesis is the process by which plants produce their own food. Plants take carbon dioxide from the air and water and minerals from the ground. Energy from the sun is trapped by chlorophyll and this energy is then used to combine carbon dioxide and water to form sugars. The sugars are then converted into starches. This process provides plants with food, but also returns oxygen to the atmosphere for us to breathe.



Draw an illustration to show the oxygen cycle between a plant and an animal. Include the labels CO<sub>2</sub> and O<sub>2</sub> and arrows to show the exchange of gases.

What do you predict would happen if the majority of our trees were destroyed?

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