

Planner

● Tuesday 10/17:

● Active and Passive Voice

● Friday 10/20:

● Pep Assembly – Bring your ID!!!

Passive Voice in Social Politics

"We talk about how many women were raped last year, not about how many men raped women. We talk about how many girls in a school district were harassed last year, not about how many boys harassed girls. We talk about how many teenage girls in the state of Vermont got pregnant last year, rather than how many men and boys impregnated teenage girls."

Passive Voice in Social Politics

“So you can see how the use of the passive voice has a political effect. [It] shifts the focus off of men and boys and onto girls and women. Even the term ‘violence against women’ is problematic. It’s a passive construction; there’s no active agent in the sentence. It’s a bad thing that happens to women, but when you look at that term ‘violence against women,’ nobody is doing it to them. It just happens to them...Men aren’t even a part of it!” **Jackson Katz**



Active and Passive Voice

Notes set #3



What is the difference between active and passive voice?

- In the active voice, the subject is doing something.
- In the passive voice, something is being done to the subject.

Examples:

Active Voice

- Jill kicked Jack.
- The boy hit the ball.

Passive Voice

- Jack was kicked by Jill.
- The ball was hit by the boy.



Why use the Active Voice?

- The active voice is shorter and more direct.
- The active voice sentence pattern increases fluency and helps your reader understand what you are trying to say.

Additionally, verbs in the passive voice always use more than one word. This will unnecessarily increase your word count!!!



How do I know a sentence is in the passive voice?

- Add *by zombies!!!*
- If you can add *by zombies* to your sentence, consider revising.
 - Desiree was being carried down the stairs.

OR...

- Desiree was being carried down the stairs
BY ZOMBIES!



When should I use passive voice?

1. The actor is unknown:

- The cave paintings of Lascaux were made in the Upper Old Stone Age. [**We don't know who made them.**]

2. The actor is irrelevant:

- An experimental solar power plant will be built in the Australian desert. [**We are not interested in who is building it.**]



When should I use passive voice?

3. You want to be vague about who is responsible:
 - Mistakes were made (by zombies).
[Common in bureaucratic writing!]
4. You are talking about a general truth:
 - Rules are made to be broken. **[By whomever, whenever, or by zombies]**



When should I use passive voice?

5. You want to emphasize the person or thing acted on. For example, it may be your main topic:
 - Insulin was first discovered in 1921 by researchers at the University of Toronto.
 - **DO NOT DO THIS THROUGHOUT YOUR ENTIRE PAPER!!!**

6. You are writing in a scientific genre that traditionally relies on passive voice. (Passive voice is often preferred in lab reports and scientific research papers).
 - The sodium hydroxide was dissolved in water. This solution was then titrated with hydrochloric acid.



Example #2 (complete on your own)

Active Voice

1. Hundreds of tourists visit the statue every year.
2. Someone stole my books yesterday.

Passive Voice

1. The statue is being visited by hundreds of tourists every year.
2. My books were stolen by someone yesterday.

With a partner:

Directions: Rewrite each sentence and change the verb to the active voice. **One of the sentences is already in the active voice, so write no change.**

1. The streets around the fire had been blocked off by the police.
2. Have you seen the new movie that was directed by Ron Howard?
3. Mr. Ross broke the antique vase as he walked through the store.

Answers:

Directions: Rewrite each sentence and change the verb to the active voice. **One of the sentences is already in the active voice, so write no change.**

1. The police blocked off the streets around the fire.
2. Have you seen the new movie that Ron Howard directed?
3. Mr. Ross broke the antique vase as he walked through the store. [no change]

Active vs. Passive Voice

Directions: Rewrite each sentence and change the verb to the active voice. If the sentence is already in the active voice, write no change.

1. Manny ate all the homemade cookies.
2. Desiree was being carried downstairs by a very strong firefighter.
3. Dena's car is in the garage being fixed by a dubious mechanic.
4. The tray of food was dropped by Jeremy.
5. The review committee denied Juan's request for funding.

Active vs. Passive Voice

ANSWERS:

1. Manny ate all the homemade cookies.
[NO CHANGE]
2. A very strong firefighter carried Desiree down the stairs.
3. A dubious mechanic is fixing Dana's car in the garage.
4. Jeremy dropped the tray of food.
5. The review committee denied Juan's request for funding. **[NO CHANGE]**

Active vs. Passive Voice

Directions: Rewrite each sentence and change the verb to the active voice. If the sentence is already in the active voice, write no change.

6. Coffee is raised in many parts of Hawaii by plantation workers.
7. The house had been broken into by someone while the owners were on vacation.
8. Five hamburgers must have been eaten by the man.
9. Colorful parrots live in the rainforest.
10. The letter was mailed by Marilyn.

Active vs. Passive Voice

ANSWERS:

6. Plantation workers raise coffee in many parts of Hawaii.
7. Someone broke into the house while the owners were on vacation.
8. The man must have eaten five hamburgers.
9. Colorful parrots live in the rainforest.
[No Change]
10. Marilyn mailed the letter.