

APPENDIX - IV

Understanding Active and Passive Voice

Active Voice

- These examples show that the **subject** is *doing* the verb's action.
 - The dog jumped onto the boy.
 - The dog (**subject**) is doing the jumping (**verb**).
 - Rahul will give a book report to the class.
 - Rahul (**subject**) is doing the giving (**verb**).
 - The computer ate my paper.
 - The computer (**subject**) is doing the eating (**verb**).

Verbs and Voice

- ▶ Voice is the form a verb takes to indicate whether the subject of the verb performs or receives the action.
- ▶ There are two types of voice: active voice and passive voice.

Passive voice Activity

- ▶ **Race Game.** Divide the class into two teams. Each team forms a single file in front of the chalkboard with an active voice sentence written on a paper. Once the instructor says, "GO", each student must write their sentence on the board in the passive voice. The first team to go through each member wins. Once the game is over, look at a few sentences on the board to ensure that the class understands the passive voice.

Active Voice

- ▶ **Active Voice** – indicates that the subject of the verb is acting
- ▶ Because the subject does or "acts upon" the verb in such sentences, the sentences are said to be in the *active voice*.

- ▶ **Partner work.** Give students a picture and tell them to describe the picture to a classmate in the passive voice. Then, students stand up and describe his or her picture in the passive voice

- ▶ **Partner work.** Give each pair of student a newspaper or magazine article and ask them to find passive voice sentence and explain to the class why the writer used the passive voice instead of the active voice.

- ▶ **Group work.** Put students in groups of three. Ask students to provide collectively examples of passive voice sentences when the subject is unknown, general, and obvious, and when the write wants to emphasize the object. Then, students exchange answers with classmates.

A

I like apples.

She completed her work.

He is teaching English.

We sang songs.

B

Apples are liked by me.

Her work was completed by her.

English is being taught By him.

Songs were sung by us.

Passive Voice

- ▶ In a passive voice sentence, the subject and object flip-flop. The subject becomes the passive recipient of the action.
- ▶ Because the subject is being "acted upon" (or is *passive*), such sentences are said to be in the passive voice.



You stole the Cookie from the Cookie jar.



The Cookie was stolen from the Cookie jar.

Passive Voice

- ▶ These examples show the **subject** being acted upon by the verb.
- ▶ The boy was jumped on by the dog.
 - Boy (*subject*) was being jumped on (*verb*)
- ▶ A book report will be given by Kristy to the class.
 - Report (*subject*) will be given (*verb*).
- ▶ My paper was eaten by the computer.
 - Paper (*subject*) was being eaten (*verb*).



You must not leave the door open.

The door must not be left open.



I am reading a book.

A book is being read by me.



You played hockey.

Hockey was played by you.

When to Use Passive Voice

- ▶ In general, the passive voice is less direct, less forceful, and less concise than the active voice.
- ▶ Use the passive voice in the following situations:
 - Use passive voice when you do not know or do not want to reveal the performer of an action.
 - Use passive voice when you want to emphasize the receiver of an action.

Reasons to Use the Active Voice

- ▶ Most writers prefer to use active voice because it is more direct.
- ▶ Compare
 - **Active:** The waiter dropped the tray of food.
 - **Passive:** The tray of food was dropped by the waiter.

Examples

- ▶ **Awkward Passive:** My bicycle was repainted by John.
- ▶ **Deliberate Passive:** My bicycle was repainted. (The performer is not mentioned and the emphasis is on the bicycle.)

Reasons to Use the Active Voice

- The active voice is less awkward and clearly states relationship between subject and action.
- Compare
 - **Passive:** Your request for funding has been denied by the review committee.
 - **Active:** The review committee denied your request for funding.
- The active voice sentence pattern propels the reader forward through your writing thus avoiding weak prose.

Form of Passive Voice Verbs

- The passive voice requires a "double verb" and will always consist of a form of the verb "to be" and the past participle (usually the "en/ed/t" form) of another verb.
- Example:
 - Active:** John baked the bread.
 - Passive:** The bread **was baked** by John. (*Was is a form of the verb "be".*)

Form of Passive Voice Verbs

- Writers should be familiar with the forms of "to be" , often called linking verbs, so that they can easily identify the passive voice in their work.
- Review the forms of "to be":
 - *am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been*

Form of Passive Voice Verbs

- Often passive voice sentences will contain a "by" phrase indicating who or what performed the action.
- Passive sentences can be easily transformed into active sentences when the object of the preposition "by" is moved to the subject position in the sentence.