

Boost Free Lessons - Year 8 English

Lesson 3: Active vs Passive Voice

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Worked Example 1

Convert this sentence to the passive voice: *The council closed the pool.*

1. In the **active** voice the subject does the action. Here the council does the closing.
2. In the **passive** voice the thing acted upon comes first, and the doer may disappear.
3. Move *the pool* to the front, change the verb using a form of *to be*, and add *by*.
4. *The pool was closed by the council.* Dropping *by the council* hides who was responsible.

The pool was closed by the council, or simply The pool was closed.

Worked Example 2

Why might a writer choose the passive voice here?

Mistakes were made in the handling of the funds.

1. Identify the doer. The sentence never says who made the mistakes.
2. The passive voice allows the writer to leave the responsible person out entirely.
3. That can be useful in science, where the process matters more than the researcher.
4. It can also be used to avoid blame, which is why you should notice it in official statements.

The passive removes the doer, so nobody is named as responsible for the mistakes.

Remember: In the **active** voice the subject does the action. In the **passive** the action is done to the subject, and the doer can be left out entirely. Always ask who has disappeared.



Question 1: Write whether each sentence is in the **active** or the **passive** voice.

1. The dog chased the ball.

2. The letter was written by Maya.

3. Scientists collected the samples.

4. The window was broken.

5. The committee approved the plan.

6. The results were announced yesterday.

7. A storm damaged the roof.

8. The bill was passed by parliament.



Question 2: Read the passage below, then answer the questions.

The decision was taken in March. Residents were not consulted, and the notices were posted only after the contracts had been signed. It is now understood that no alternative sites were considered.

1. Find one passive sentence in the passage and write it out.

2. Who or what is missing from that sentence?

3. Rewrite it in the active voice, inventing a doer if you need to.

4. Why might the writer have chosen the passive voice here?

5. What is the effect on the reader of using the passive throughout?



Question 3: Answer the following questions.

1. Write an active sentence about a sporting result.

2. Rewrite it in the passive voice.

3. Explain when the passive voice is genuinely useful.

4. Explain why a reader should be alert to passive voice in an official statement.





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Answers and Model Responses: Active vs Passive Voice**Question 1**

1. Active
2. Passive
3. Active
4. Passive
5. Active
6. Passive
7. Active
8. Passive

Question 2

1. Model: *The decision was taken in March.*
2. Whoever took the decision. The doer is never named.
3. Model: The board took the decision in March.
4. Model: To avoid naming who was responsible, which makes the decision seem to have happened by itself.
5. The events seem to occur without anyone causing them, so no one appears accountable.

Question 3

1. Model response: Our team won the final by six points.
2. Model response: The final was won by our team by six points.
3. It is useful when the doer is unknown, unimportant, or obvious, and in scientific writing where the process matters more than the person.
4. The passive can hide who is responsible, so a reader should ask who actually did the thing being described.

