

KS3 English Quiz - Verbs (Active and Passive Voice) 01 (Questions)

In English, when the subject of the verb is performing the action, then the sentence is written in the active voice as in "The dog bit the cat". The sentence "The cat was bitten by the dog" uses the passive voice. Can you see the difference? In the first example, the dog is active. It is the one who bites. In the second sentence the dog is still active - it is still the one who bites. The subject of the second sentence, however, is the cat. The cat is passive because it is a recipient of the action.

We could change this, of course. If we wanted the cat to have a more active role in the sentence, we could write, "The cat hissed viciously when the dog bit it." Becoming a good writer involves thinking carefully about such details when you construct your sentence. If you want the audience to picture the scene focussing on the dog, then an active construction where the dog is the subject is best. Writing "the cat was bitten by the dog" takes the emphasis off the dog (which now comes at the end of the sentence), but also leaves the cat in a passive role.

One common problem with passive sentences is that they do not always make it clear WHO is acting. This can be useful for formal, impersonal instructions, however, as you will see in this quiz.

If you get top marks, you are doing really well!

1. Which sentence uses the passive voice?

- Cakes are made with flour and eggs
- Flour and eggs make cakes
- Gran uses flour and eggs to make cakes
- You use flour and eggs to make cakes

2. Which sentence uses the passive voice?

- Degrees measure temperature levels
- One type of temperature measurement is degrees C.
- Temperatures are measured in degrees
- Weather forecasters measure temperatures in degrees

3. Which sentence uses the passive voice?

- A form for the trip can be collected from the office
- The forms for the trip are in the office
- The office has the forms for the trip
- You can collect a form for the trip from the office

4. Which sentence uses the passive voice?

- A letter of permission is needed for the trip
- You can collect a letter of permission from me
- You need a letter of permission to take part in the trip
- Your parents must sign a letter of permission for the trip

5. Which sentence uses the passive voice?

- Bananas are eaten by the monkeys
- Monkeys eat bananas
- The monkeys eat what the zookeeper provides
- The zookeeper gives the monkeys bananas to eat

6. Which sentence uses the active voice?

- Spring months are followed by summer months
- Summer months are followed by autumn months
- Summer months follow spring months
- Winter months are followed by spring months

7. Which sentence uses the active voice?

- The gymnast vaults over the high box
- The high box is used for vaults by the gymnasts
- The high box is vaulted over by the gymnast
- The high boxes are vaulted over by the gymnasts

8. Which sentence uses the active voice?

- Dad carefully puts the icing on the cake
- The cake is carefully iced by dad
- The carefully iced cake is eaten at the party
- The icing is carefully put on the cake by dad

9. Which sentence uses the active voice?

- Mum takes the children to tennis
- The children are taken to tennis at midday
- The children are taken to tennis by car
- The children are taken to tennis by mum

10. Which sentence uses the active voice?

- The teacher tunes the violins
- The violins are already tuned
- The violins are tuned by the teacher
- The violins were tuned by the teacher

KS3 English Quiz - Verbs (Active and Passive Voice) 01 (Answers)

1. Which sentence uses the passive voice?

- Cakes are made with flour and eggs
- Flour and eggs make cakes
- Gran uses flour and eggs to make cakes
- You use flour and eggs to make cakes

"You use", "Gran uses" and "flour and eggs make" all use the active voice - we therefore call them active sentences

2. Which sentence uses the passive voice?

- Degrees measure temperature levels
- One type of temperature measurement is degrees C.
- Temperatures are measured in degrees
- Weather forecasters measure temperatures in degrees

Who is using degrees to measure the temperatures? Some passive constructions are ambivalent about who is carrying out the action

3. Which sentence uses the passive voice?

- A form for the trip can be collected from the office
- The forms for the trip are in the office
- The office has the forms for the trip
- You can collect a form for the trip from the office

Using the passive voice is an impersonal, more formal way of writing

4. Which sentence uses the passive voice?

- A letter of permission is needed for the trip
- You can collect a letter of permission from me
- You need a letter of permission to take part in the trip
- Your parents must sign a letter of permission for the trip

Here the passive voice makes this informative sentence more formal in tone

5. Which sentence uses the passive voice?

- Bananas are eaten by the monkeys
- Monkeys eat bananas
- The monkeys eat what the zookeeper provides
- The zookeeper gives the monkeys bananas to eat

Use passive voice carefully. Why would it be important to focus on the bananas rather than the monkeys? This construction might be well-chosen for a piece of non-fiction writing concerning bananas

6. Which sentence uses the active voice?

- Spring months are followed by summer months
- Summer months are followed by autumn months
- Summer months follow spring months
- Winter months are followed by spring months

If the sentence contains "is" or "are" and a past participle ("followed"), then it is probably written in the passive voice

7. Which sentence uses the active voice?

- The gymnast vaults over the high box
- The high box is used for vaults by the gymnasts
- The high box is vaulted over by the gymnast
- The high boxes are vaulted over by the gymnasts

Focus on what "the gymnast" does and you will see that this is active voice

8. Which sentence uses the active voice?

- Dad carefully puts the icing on the cake
- The cake is carefully iced by dad
- The carefully iced cake is eaten at the party
- The icing is carefully put on the cake by dad

It is "Dad" who does the verb and this again is active voice

9. Which sentence uses the active voice?

- Mum takes the children to tennis
- The children are taken to tennis at midday
- The children are taken to tennis by car
- The children are taken to tennis by mum

The construction "are taken" is passive

10. Which sentence uses the active voice?

- The teacher tunes the violins
- The violins are already tuned
- The violins are tuned by the teacher
- The violins were tuned by the teacher

If you have found this quiz difficult then don't worry. The great majority of adults have no idea whether a sentence is written in the active or passive voice!