

Using Active (Not Passive) Voice

The ACT English test will see if you can recognize that sentences in active voice are stylistically better than those written in passive voice. **In active voice, the subject does the action. Look to see if the sentence is worded with the subject before the verb:**

Ex: **Shirley** masterfully **played** the piano.

Passive voice is weaker and less direct, often omitting the subject doing the action. Notice how the subject of the sentence changes with passive voice, putting the focus elsewhere.

Ex: **The piano** was masterfully played. The piano was masterfully played by Shirley.

Practice: Decide whether the following sentences are written in active or passive voice. Underline the doer of the action on the line. Write on the line whether the sentence is active or passive voice.

- _____ 1. Thomas feeds his dog every morning and night.
- _____ 2. The beach was chosen by the family for their vacation.
- _____ 3. An angry letter was received by the senator from a constituent.
- _____ 4. The home team won the soccer match against their rivals.
- _____ 5. There are many students who struggle with math.
- _____ 6. The leftover food from the picnic was taken home by Jane.
- _____ 7. There were many drivers who were ticketed by police for speeding.

Practice: Reword these passive voice sentences in active voice (Start with the "doer"):

8. The house will be built by the construction crew in five months.
9. The question on the science test was quickly answered by Shirley.
10. The horse was saddled by Ralph before he went riding.