

Active and Passive Voice Exercises

Exercise 1: Active to Passive Voice

Directions- Change the sentences below to the passive voice and underline the passive voice.

EXAMPLE: Children cannot open these bottles easily. (The bottles cannot be opened by the children easily)

1. The government built a road right outside her front door.
2. Mr. Ross broke the antique vase as he walked through the store.
3. When she arrived, the changes amazed her.
4. The construction workers are making street repairs all month long.
5. The party will celebrate his retirement.
6. His professors were discussing his oral exam right in front of him.
7. My son ate all the homemade cookies.
8. Corrosion had damaged the hull of the ship.
9. Some children were visiting the old homestead while I was there.

Exercise 2: Passive to Active

Directions- Change the sentences below to the active voice and underline the active voice.

EXAMPLE: The statue is being visited by hundreds of tourists every year. (Hundreds of tourists visit the statue each year)

1. My books were stolen by someone yesterday.
2. These books had been left in the classroom by a careless student.
3. Coffee is raised in many parts of Hawaii by plantation workers.
4. The house had been broken into by someone while the owners were on vacation.
5. A woman was being carried downstairs by a very strong firefighter.
6. The streets around the fire had been blocked off by the police.
7. Have you seen the new movie that was directed by Ron Howard?
8. My car is in the garage being fixed by a dubious mechanic.
9. A great deal of our oil will have been exported to other countries by our government.

Exercise 3: Revision Practice: Avoiding Passive Voice Verbs

Directions- Read this essay carefully paying special attention to passive voice verbs. Revise the essay by changing the passive verbs into active verbs where appropriate.

Mistakes

1. Technological civilization has reached its
2. present "advanced" state by the trial-and-error behavior of
3. those who lived before us. Many of the most useful
4. discoveries and inventions were the result of mistakes when
5. people were looking for something else. The New World was
6. found by Columbus, who was really looking for India. The
7. discovery of penicillin was speeded by somebody who left a
8. loaf of bread out to get moldy. Think how far behind
9. ourselves we'd be now if mistakes were impossible for us to
10. make.
11. Our knowledge is also increased by our mistakes, if
12. only because once a mistake has been made, a way of
13. correcting it must be found. If the mistake had not been
14. made by us in the first place, we might have had no reason