Identifying Passive and Active Voice

PASSIVE VOICE – The subject RECEIVES the action.
Example: The treasure was guarded by the fire-breathing dragon.

ACTIVE VOICE – The subject PERFORMS the action.
Example: The fire-breathing dragon guarded the treasure.

- PASSIVE VOICE always uses the past participle of the verb + auxiliary (helping) verbs.
- PASSIVE VOICE usually includes a prepositional phrase starting with by.
- ACTIVE VOICE usually follows a Subject + Verb + Direct Object pattern.
- PASSIVE and ACTIVE VOICE both use ACTION verbs.
- PASSIVE and ACTIVE VOICE can be written in any tense.

Can you tell the difference between active and passive voice? Read each sentence below. Write an A if it is ACTIVE and a P if it is PASSIVE.

1. _______ Carlos can play the trombone.
2. _______ The trombone can be played by Carlos.
3. _______ Chinese folk music will be sung by Li Ming.
4. _______ Li Ming will sing a Chinese folk song.
5. _______ Sam played an Australian instrument called the didgeridoo.
6. _______ An Australian instrument, called the didgeridoo, was played by Sam.
7. _______ The program has been designed by the art club.
8. _______ The art club has designed the program.
10. _______ African music is enjoyed by my friends.
PASSIVE VOICE – The subject RECEIVES the action.
Example: The treasure was guarded by the fire-breathing dragon.

ACTIVE VOICE – The subject PERFORMS the action.
Example: The fire-breathing dragon guarded the treasure.

- PASSIVE VOICE always uses the past participle of the verb + auxiliary (helping) verbs.
- PASSIVE VOICE usually includes a prepositional phrase starting with by.
- ACTIVE VOICE usually follows a Subject + Verb + Direct Object pattern.

Can you tell the difference between active and passive voice? Read each sentence below. Write an A if it is ACTIVE and a P if it is PASSIVE.

1. A Carlos can play the trombone.
2. P The trombone can be played by Carlos.
3. P Chinese folk music will be sung by Li Ming.
4. A Li Ming will sing a Chinese folk song.
5. A Sam played an Australian instrument called the didgeridoo.
6. P An Australian instrument, called the didgeridoo, was played by Sam.
7. P The program has been designed by the art club.
8. A The art club has designed the program.

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