

Name:

Date:

Active and Passive Voice Notes

The voice of a verb tells readers whether the subject is the one performing the action or receiving the action in a sentence.

When the performer of the action comes before the verb,

the sentence is in _____.

When the receiver of the action comes before the verb,

the verb is in _____.

Formula Key

_____ = who/what is performing the action

_____ = who/what is receiving the action

_____ = verb or verb phrase

Active Voice Formula

_____ + _____ + _____

PREVIEW

Passive Voice Formula

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Active voice is preferred for academic writing. It promotes clarity in writing. Active voice verbs are more concise and direct.

Reasons to use Active Voice:

1. to be more precise
2. to emphasize the performer of the action or the action

Reasons to use Passive Voice:

1. When the performer of the action is unknown
2. When the performer of the action is being kept a secret
3. When the performer of the action is obvious or unimportant
4. When the emphasis is on the receiver of the action

Hint for recognizing passive voice:
Passive voice verbs must have a form of
the verb be in the verb phrase!
Forms of to be: be, am, is, are, were, was, being, been

PREVIEW

Identify the verb in each sentence as either active or passive.

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1. I woke up with a fever.
2. My wallet was found in the store's fitting room.
3. The police were called to break up the fight.
4. Sunny was happy to be home.
5. The room was decorated for the party.
6. A tree knocked down a telephone pole.

Active or Passive Voice Practice

Rewrite each sentence using active voice.

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1. The graduation speech was given by our vice principal.
2. The house fire was put out within a couple of hours.
3. Garbage was left all over the cafeteria.
4. The lightbulb was invented by Thomas Edison.

PREVIEW

Shift of Voice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

For example: David cooked meatloaf, and the leftovers were saved for tomorrow.

Eliminate Shift of Voice Practice

Identify the verbs. Figure out if each verb is active or passive voice. Change all verbs to active voice.

Practice Example:

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Incorrect: I studied for the test, but school was cancelled.

Correct: I studied for the test, but they cancelled school.

Shift of Voice Practice

*Can you identify the ONE in a bunch?
Which sentence contains a shift in voice?*

1. I love the smell of coffee because it smells good.
2. Benji broke his arm, and he was taken to the hospital.
3. I heard you whispering earlier, and I know you were talking about me.
4. Joshua was loved by many and hated by few.

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Which sentence contains a shift in voice?

1. She walked out of the building and noticed someone stole her bike.
2. My brother plays video games a lot, and sometimes he forgets to sleep.
3. Janelle dyed her hair blue, and I loved it!
4. Jackson finished his chores, so he was given an allowance.

Rewrite the sentences correcting the shift in voice.

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1. Benji broke his arm, and he was taken to the hospital.
2. Jackson finished his chores, so he was given an allowance.

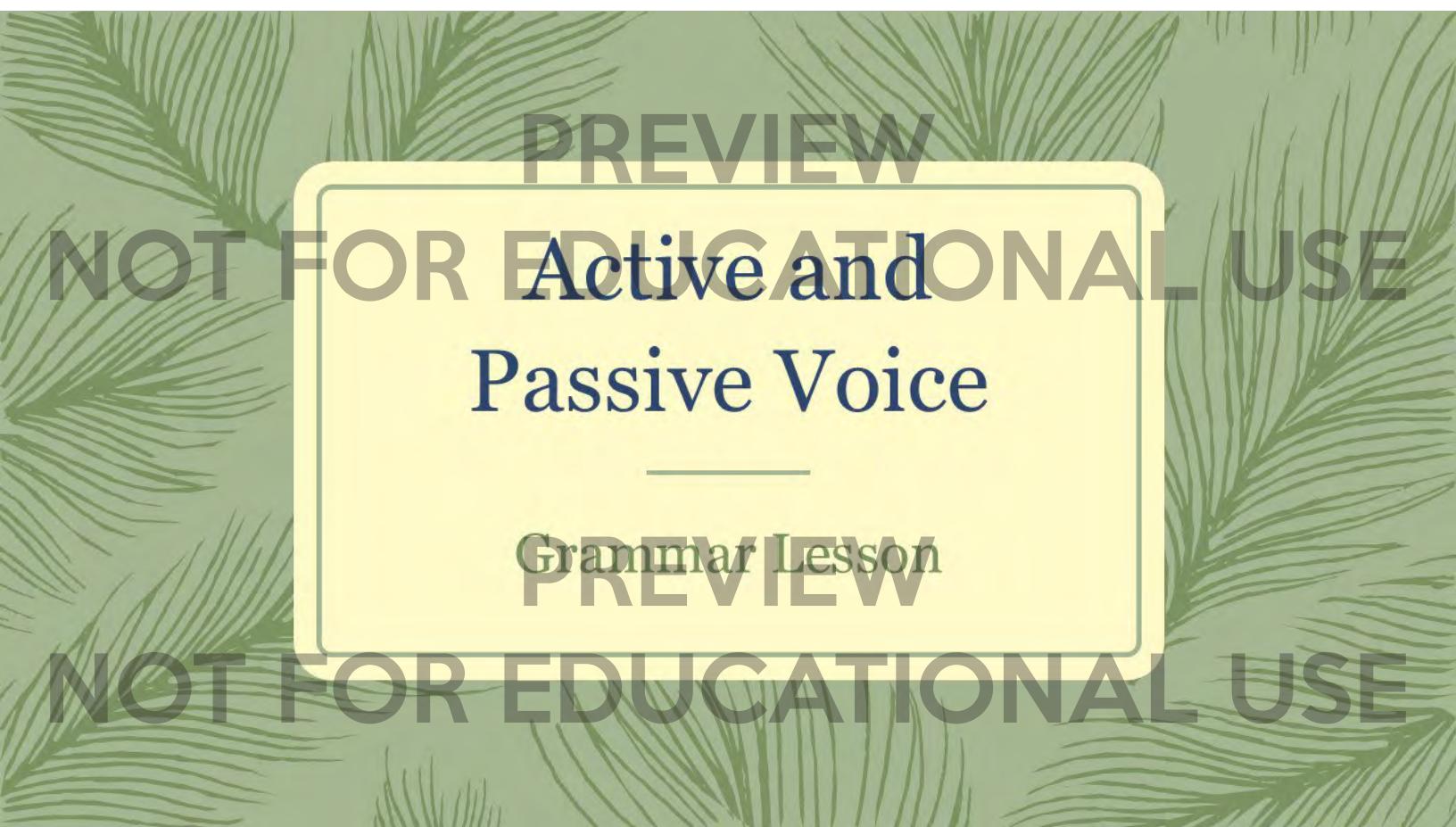
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PREVIEW

Active and Passive Voice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

The *voice* of a verb tells readers whether the subject is the one performing the action or receiving the action in a sentence.

When the performer of the action comes before the verb,
the sentence is in active voice.

When the receiver of the action comes before the verb,
the verb is in passive voice.

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PREVIEW

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PREVIEW

Take a Look

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

receiver

Active voice: The goalkeeper blocked the ball.
performer

Passive voice: The ball was blocked by the goalkeeper.

The word *blocked* is the action/verb for both sentences.
Who/what is doing the blocking? the goalkeeper = performer
Who/what is being blocked? the ball = receiver

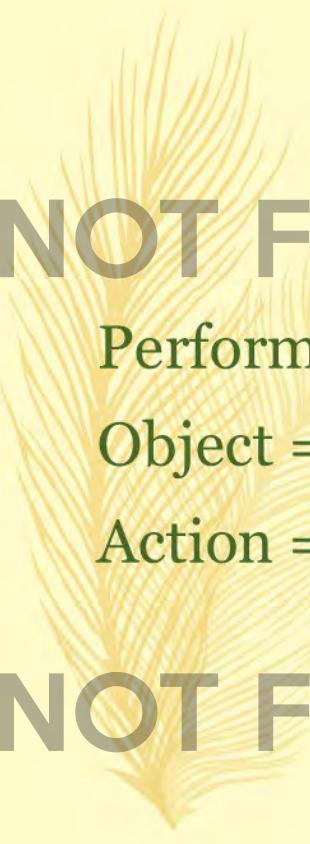
When the verb is changed to passive voice, the direct object *ball* becomes the subject.

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PREVIEW

Formula Key

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Performer = who/what is performing the action

Object = who/what is receiving the action

Action = verb or verb phrase

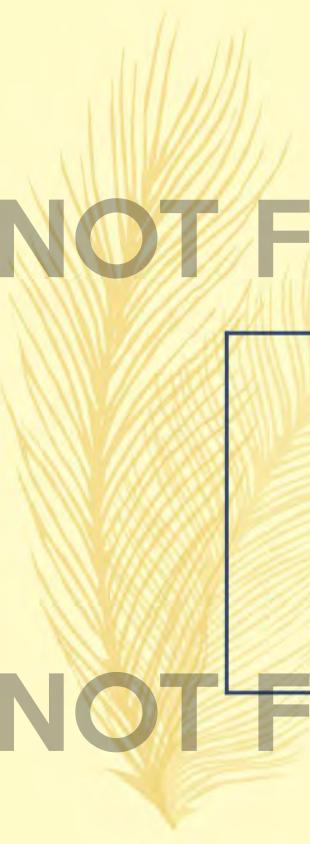
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PREVIEW
Active Voice
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Performer + Action + Object
(P) + (A) + (O)

Sophia baked cookies.

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PREVIEW
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PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

PREVIEW

Passive Voice

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Object + Action + Performer
(O) + (A) + (P)

Cookies were baked by Sophia.

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PREVIEW

Active and Passive Voice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Sometimes, there's no performer mentioned in the sentence!

Active voice: Jason paid for the concert tickets.

Passive Voice: The concert tickets were paid for.

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PREVIEW

Active Voice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Active voice is preferred for academic writing. It promotes clarity in writing. Active voice verbs are more concise and direct.

Reasons to use Active Voice:

1. to be more precise
2. to emphasize the performer of the action or the action

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PREVIEW

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PREVIEW

Passive Voice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Passive voice isn't inherently wrong and has its place in writing.

Reasons to use Passive Voice:

1. When the performer of the action is unknown
2. When the performer of the action is being kept a secret
3. When the performer of the action is obvious or unimportant
4. When the emphasis is on the receiver of the action

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PREVIEW

Examples of Passive Voice

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When the performer of the action is unknown:

Active: Someone clogged the toilet.

Passive: The toilet was clogged.

When the performer of the action is being kept a secret:

Active: Julia broke Mom's favorite vase.

Passive: Mom's favorite vase was broken.

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NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

PREVIEW

Examples of Passive Voice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

When the performer of the action is obvious:

Active: The United States citizens elected Barack Obama president in 2008 and in 2012.

Passive: Barack Obama was elected president in 2008 and 2012.

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When the emphasis is on the receiver of the action:

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Active: Joe and Oliver made mistakes.

Passive: Mistakes were made.

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PREVIEW

Passive Voice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Hint for recognizing passive voice:
Passive voice verbs must have a form of
the verb *be* in the verb phrase!

Forms of to be: **be, am, is, are, were, was, being, been**

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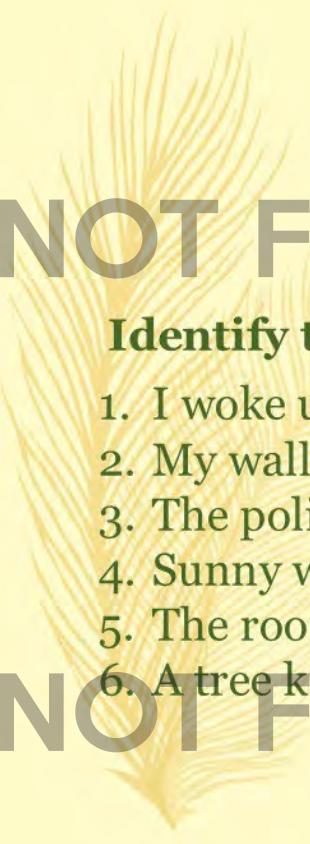
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PREVIEW

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PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE



PREVIEW

Active or Passive Voice Practice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Identify the verb in each sentence as either active or passive.

1. I woke up with a fever.
2. My wallet was found in the store's fitting room.
3. The police were called to break up the fight.
4. Sunny was happy to be home.
5. The room was decorated for the party.
6. A tree knocked down a telephone pole.

PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

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PREVIEW

Active or Passive Voice Practice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Identify the verb in each sentence as either active or passive.

1. I **woke** up with a fever. **active**
2. My wallet **was found** in the store's fitting room. **passive**
3. The police **were called** to break up the fight. **passive**
4. Sunny **was** happy to be home. **active**
5. The room **was decorated** for the party. **passive**
6. A tree **knocked** down a telephone pole. **active**

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NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

PREVIEW

Changing Passive to Active

Find the **Object**, **Performer**, and **Action**. It's easiest to start with the verb (action). Then ask yourself, who/what is performing the verb? Then who/what is receiving the verb? Change the formula accordingly. Lastly, fix any grammatical issues.

Passive: The novel is being read by the ninth grade class.

(O) (A) (P)

Active: The ninth grade class is reading the novel.

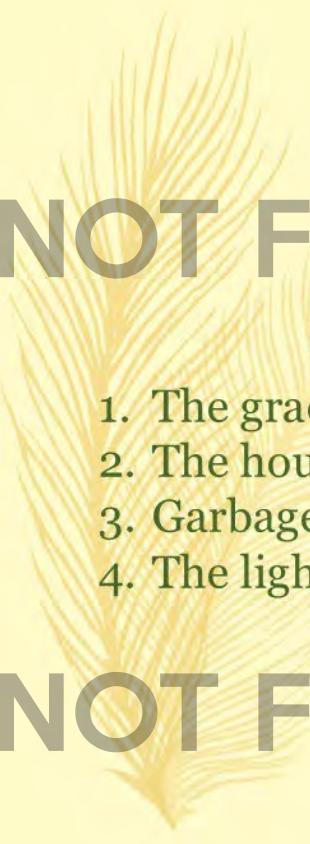
(P) (A) (O)

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PREVIEW

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PREVIEW

Active or Passive Voice Practice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Rewrite each sentence using active voice.

1. The graduation speech was given by our vice principal.
2. The house fire was put out within a couple of hours.
3. Garbage was left all over the cafeteria.
4. The lightbulb was invented by Thomas Edison.

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NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

PREVIEW

Active or Passive Voice Practice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

1. The graduation speech was given by our vice principal.
Our vice principal gave the graduation speech.

1. The house fire was put out within a couple of hours.
The firefighters put out the house fire within a couple of hours.

1. Garbage was left all over the cafeteria.
Someone left garbage all over the cafeteria.

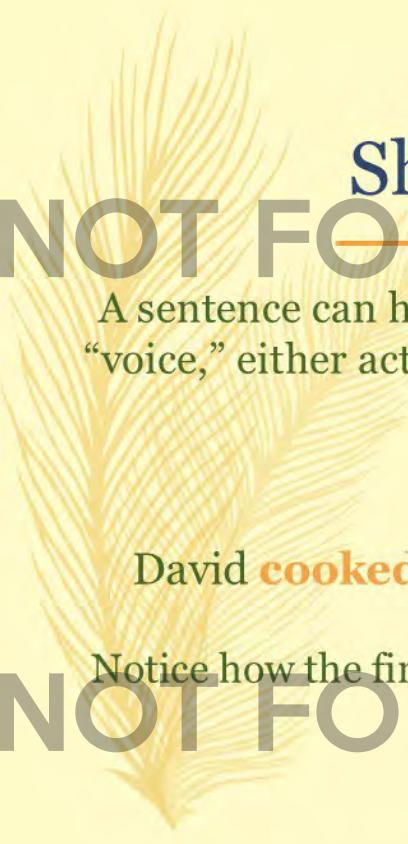
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Shift of Voice

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A sentence can have more than one verb. This means each verb has its own “voice,” either active or passive. Things can be confusing when a writer uses more than one voice in a sentence.

For example:

David **cooked** meatloaf, and the leftovers **were saved** for tomorrow.

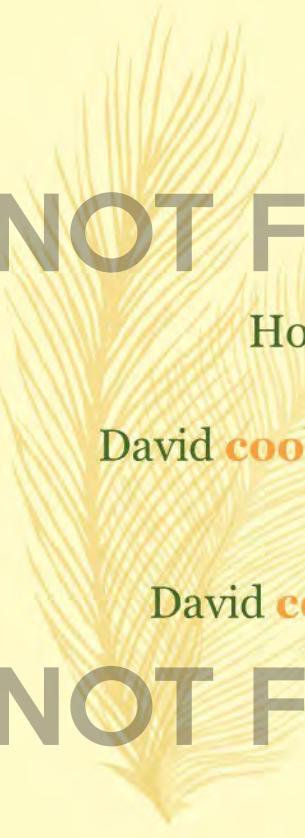
Notice how the first verb is in active voice, and second verb is in passive voice?
You do not want to do this!

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PREVIEW

Eliminate Shift of Voice

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How to fix it? Change all the verbs to **active voice**!

David **cooked** meatloaf, and the leftovers **were saved** for tomorrow.

change to
PREVIEW
David **cooked** meatloaf, and **saved** the leftovers for tomorrow.

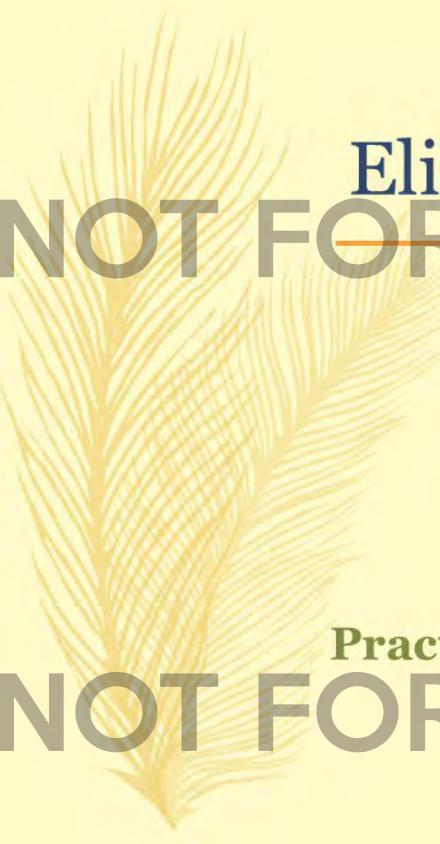
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Eliminate Shift of Voice Practice

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Identify the verbs.

Figure out if each verb is active or passive voice.

Change all verbs to active voice.

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Practice Example: I studied for the test, but school was cancelled.

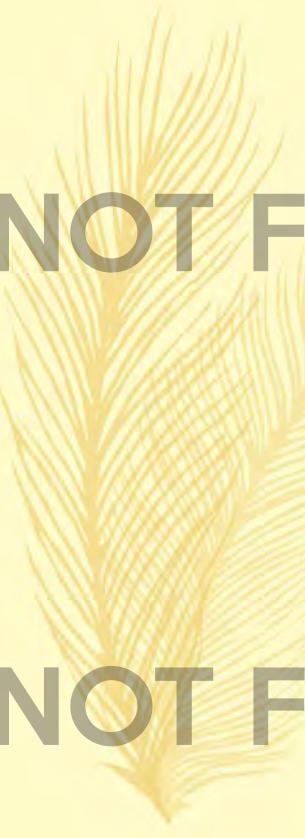
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PREVIEW

Eliminate Shift of Voice Practice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

I **studied** for the test, but school **was cancelled**.

I **studied** for the test, but school **was cancelled**.

(active)

(passive)

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I **studied** for the test, but they **cancelled** school.

(active)

(active)

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PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

PREVIEW

Shift of Voice Practice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Can you identify the **ONE** in a bunch?
Which sentence contains a **shift** in voice?

1. I love the smell of coffee because it smells good.
2. Benji broke his arm, and he was taken to the hospital.
3. I heard you whispering earlier, and I know you were talking about me.
4. Joshua was loved by many and hated by few.

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NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

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PREVIEW

Shift of Voice Practice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

1. I love the smell of coffee because it smells good.

2. Benji **broke** his arm, and he **was taken** to the hospital.

3. I heard you whispering earlier, and I know you were talking about me.

PREVIEW

Shift of Voice Practice

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Shift of Voice Practice

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Which sentence contains a *shift* in voice?

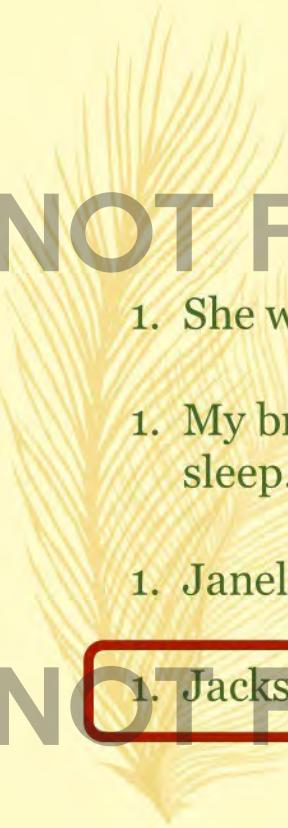
1. She walked out of the building and noticed someone stole her bike.
2. My brother plays video games a lot, and sometimes he forgets to sleep.
3. Janelle dyed her hair blue, and I loved it!
4. Jackson finished his chores, so he was given an allowance.

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PREVIEW

Shift of Voice Practice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

1. She walked out of the building and noticed someone stole her bike.
1. My brother plays video games a lot, and sometimes he forgets to sleep.
1. Janelle dyed her hair blue, and I loved it!

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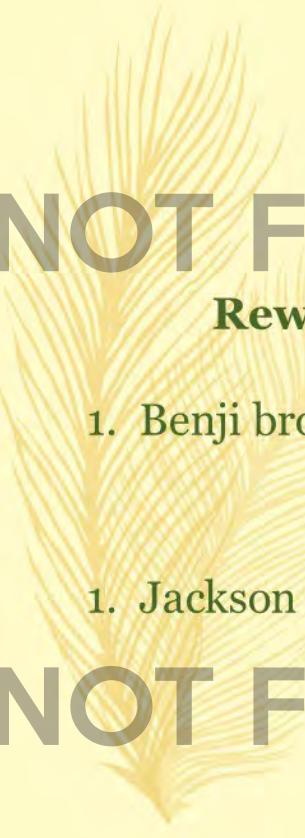
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Shift of Voice Practice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Rewrite the sentences correcting the shift in voice.

1. Benji broke his arm, and he was taken to the hospital.

1. Jackson finished his chores, so he was given an allowance.

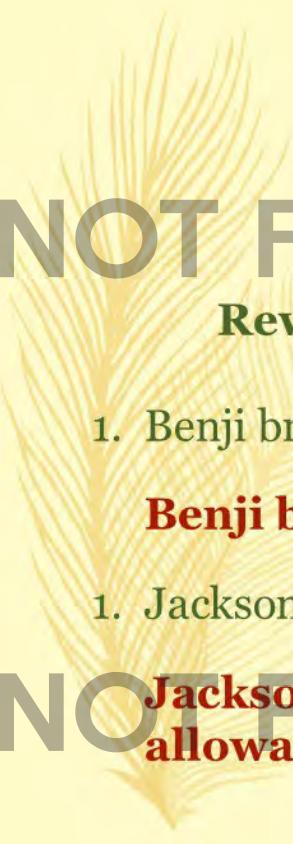
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PREVIEW

Shift of Voice Practice

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Rewrite the sentences correcting the shift in voice.

1. Benji broke his arm, and he was taken to the hospital.

Benji broke his arm, so his coach took him to the hospital.

1. Jackson finished his chores, so he was given an allowance.

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