Using Active Voice vs. Passive Verse in Writing

Rule: When writing, your sentences should be **active**. That means the subject is “doing” the action.

Passive/No: The material was shipped to Japan.  **Active/Yes:** The company shipped the material to Japan.

**Directions:** Each of the following sentences is written in passive voice. Circle the “doer” in each sentence. Then, rewrite the sentence for active voice.

1. The computers were shipped early in September.
2. The letter was written by my grandmother.
3. The old car was driven by my brother for many years.
4. This man has been robbed.
5. My shoes were taken to the shoemaker for new soles.
6. Unfortunately, the trees were uprooted by the storm.
7. The bookcase was stained a dark walnut.
8. The flowers were planted in March by Allison.

**Directions:** Label each sentence as “A” for active or “P” for passive. Rewrite passive sentences to active voice. If there is no “doer,” add one.

1. The dirty dishes were washed by Jane when the dinner party was over.
2. After the game we bought hamburgers for everyone.
3. During the intermission, our band played several numbers.
4. My paper was read by Miss Jones.
5. Jean broke her arm during a volleyball game.
6. The money was found under the floor.
7. Michael loves The Beatles.
8. The first place trophy was won by John.
9. The cake was frosted and decorated by Kate.
10. My books were returned before class.
11. My window was broken by the storm.
12. That video was seen three times.
**Changing Passive Voice to Active Voice**

**Directions:** The verbs in the following sentences are in the passive voice. On your own paper, rewrite each sentence in the active voice. If the sentence doesn’t have a doer, supply one.

**Example:** The letter was sent earlier. *Jeannie sent the letter earlier.*

9. The trees were stripped last month.
10. The computers were shipped early in September.
11. The letter was written by my brother.
12. The old car was driven by my brother.
13. The school bell was repaired in September.
14. This man has been stabbed.
15. My shoes were taken to the shoemaker.
16. The trees were uprooted by the storm.
17. The bookcase was stained a dark walnut.
18. The flowers were planted in March.

**Now Write it Wrong: Changing Active Voice to Passive Voice**

**Directions:** The verbs in the following sentences are in the active voice. On your own paper, rewrite the sentences, changing the verbs to passive voice.

**Example:** My neighbor alerted the police. *The police were alerted by my neighbors.*

1. The janitor fixed the classroom door.
2. Mr. Smith took a photograph of me.
3. All the students passed the algebra test.
4. Our basketball team lost twenty percent of its games.
5. The contractor renovated our kitchen.
6. Jane Beard composed the school song.
7. She broke two keys on her typewriter.
8. My father took pictures at the picnic.
9. The zookeeper loves the animals.
10. The judge took Tom’s license.