

Active or Passive: What's your choice?

Work with a partner and look at these examples. What do you notice?

Both texts are about Potato chips. In text 1 many **passive** constructions are used. In text 2 the writer has only used **active** voice. What's the reason?

What is the main focus of text 1 and what does text 2 focus on?

Text 1: The Story of Potato Chips

Potato chips are thin sliced potatoes, fried quickly in oil and then salted.

The potato chip **was invented** in 1853 by a chef named George Crum in New York. When a customer returned his French fried potatoes to the kitchen because they were too thick George Crum got so angry that he sarcastically cut them paper thin and sent the plate back out. The customer and others around him, loved the thin potatoes.

The chips **were** usually **prepared** in someone's kitchen and then **delivered** immediately to stores and restaurants, or **sold** on the street. They **had to be eaten** immediately.

Two innovations paved the way for mass production. In 1925, the automatic potato-peeling machine **was invented**. The chips **were hand-packed** into the bags, which **were then ironed shut**. In these air-tight bags the chips **could be kept** fresh and **stored** for a longer time.

Today, potato chips are the most popular snack in the United States.

Text 2: George Crum: The Inventor of Potato Chips

George Crum was a chef in a little restaurant in New York. He was a very creative man and liked to try out new recipes. One day, a customer returned his French fried potatoes to the kitchen because they were too thick. George Crum got so angry that he sarcastically cut them paper thin and sent the plate back out. The customer and others around him, loved the thin potatoes.

From that day on, George Crum fried paper-thin potatoes every day in his restaurant. His potato chips soon became famous in the area and other restaurants and stores also wanted to sell them.

Many other cooks copied Crum's idea and prepared potato chips. They made them fresh every day and delivered them to local stores and restaurants.

Now we can buy potato chips in air-tight sealed bags. They stay fresh and crisp for a long time.

Today, potato chips are popular all over the world. We all love to eat them.

My rule:

We can use the active or passive voice to underline important parts of a sentence.



In text 1 **the passive is used** because ...

In text 2 the writer **has used active voice** because ...

How do we form the passive?

The subject (WHAT or WHO)	form of "be": is, are, was, were	3rd form of the verb	additional information
My shoes	are	made	of leather.
Potato chips	were	invented	in 1853.
The Mona Lisa	was	painted	by Leonardo da Vinci.
The Eiffel Tower	was	built	in 1889.
The Harry Potter books	were	written	by J.K. Rowling.
Ketchup	is	eaten	all over the world.
Kiwis	are	grown	in New Zealand
Mary	was	invited	to the party.
I	was	praised	by my teacher.

Now it's your turn

Scan the QR codes and do the following exercises online.

<p style="text-align: center;">Passive Bricks</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Drag and drop the bricks to form meaningful sentences. Then check your answers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Process</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>was invented</td> <td>cannot be opened</td> <td>should be worn</td> <td>is made</td> </tr> <tr> <td>was built</td> <td>was stolen</td> <td>was arrested</td> <td>are made</td> </tr> <tr> <td>are grown</td> <td>were planted</td> <td>was discovered</td> <td>were written</td> </tr> <tr> <td>has been cancelled</td> <td>will be sent</td> <td>is closed</td> <td>will be opened</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Additional Information</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>by the police.</td> <td>in greenhouses in Holland.</td> <td>100 years ago.</td> <td>in my browser.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>from the bank.</td> <td>of flower, water, yeast and salt.</td> <td>in China.</td> <td>to you by e-mail.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>due to bad weather.</td> <td>by all responsible bike riders.</td> <td>in the winter.</td> <td>by J.K. Rowling.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>by Thomas Edison.</td> <td>by Christoph Columbus.</td> <td>on Monday.</td> <td>in 1887.</td> </tr> </table>	was invented	cannot be opened	should be worn	is made	was built	was stolen	was arrested	are made	are grown	were planted	was discovered	were written	has been cancelled	will be sent	is closed	will be opened	by the police.	in greenhouses in Holland.	100 years ago.	in my browser.	from the bank.	of flower, water, yeast and salt.	in China.	to you by e-mail.	due to bad weather.	by all responsible bike riders.	in the winter.	by J.K. Rowling.	by Thomas Edison.	by Christoph Columbus.	on Monday.	in 1887.	
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