

ACTIVE VS PASSIVE VOICE

1. READ THE NEWSPAPER HEADLINES POSTED BY *THE NEW YORK TIMES*.

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The New York Times
@nytimes

Minneapolis: A photographer was shot in the eye.

Washington, D.C.: Protesters struck a journalist with his own microphone.

Louisville: A reporter was hit by a pepper ball on live television by an officer who appeared to be aiming at her.

2. REFLECT ON THE USE OF PASSIVE AND ACTIVE VOICE IN THE HEADLINES ABOVE BY ANSWERING YES OR NO.

- A. DOES THE FIRST HEADLINE MENTION THE PERSON WHO SHOT THE PHOTOGRAPHER? YES NO
- B. DOES THE SECOND HEADLINE MENTION WHO "STRUCK THE JOURNALIST WITH HIS OWN MICROPHONE"? YES NO
- C. DOES THE THIRD HEADLINE MENTION THE PERSON WHO HIT THE REPORTER? YES NO

3. WHY DO YOU THINK THE "DOER" OF THE ACTIONS IN THE HEADLINES WAS OMITTED? BRAINSTORM AND TAKE NOTES OF POSSIBLE OPTIONS.

4. READ THE GRAMMAR BOX

HEADLINES (BOTH NEWSPAPER HEADLINES AND TV / RADIO HEADLINES) TEND TO USE PASSIVE VOICE STRUCTURES. WHY? BECAUSE ...

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- a. you can make the relevant information the focus of the headline, by placing it at the beginning of the sentence: "Paul McCartney is considered the "most successful songwriter in history".
 - b. you can be more impersonal in your statements: "Cybercrime is estimated to cost global economy \$445 billion a year."
 - c. sometimes writers/journalists do not know *who* did the action they are describing: "A body was found in the park."
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- After reading, summarize the Grammar box by completing the sentence below with ACTIVE or PASSIVE.

Headlines in the _____ voice mention the doer of the action.

Headlines in the _____ voice DO NOT mention the doer of the action.

NEWSPAPER HEADLINES - ACTIVE OR PASSIVE?

1. Decide if the headlines are active or passive. PS: think about the doer or subject: is it mentioned?
 - A. New York named 'most modern' city in the world. ACTIVE PASSIVE
 - B. Taylor Swift wins top prize at American Music Awards ACTIVE PASSIVE
 - C. World's Biggest Bookstore sold to developer ACTIVE PASSIVE
 - D. Scottish government reveals independence plan ACTIVE PASSIVE