

# Reporting with passives

We can use passive structures with infinitives in formal writing to report opinions and beliefs.

## Present and Future – use an infinitive (to be, to affect)

Many people think Messi is the best player ever.

Messi is thought to be the best player ever.

Scientists know that pollen allergy affects a lot of people.

Pollen allergies are known to affect a lot of people.

Journalists expect that the president will give a speech at 2pm.

The president is expected to give a speech at 2pm.

## Past – use a perfect infinitive (to have been, to have made, to have done)

Experts think that Van Gogh painted the painting in 1888.

Van Gogh is thought to have painted the painting in 1888.

The police think he killed his wife.

He is thought to have killed his wife.

Verbs used in this way included: **believe, consider, estimate, expect, know, report, say, think, understand and “to be rumoured”**.

*Practice:*

Change the second sentence using the passive structure.

1. Experts say that 8 hours sleep is the perfect amount.

8 hours sleep \_\_\_\_\_

2. They expect that 2000 people will attend the festival.

2000 people \_\_\_\_\_

3. Police think that the stolen money is buried in the garden.

The stolen money \_\_\_\_\_

4. There are rumours that Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez are dating again.

Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez \_\_\_\_\_

5. Experts estimate that 20 people died in the fire.

20 people \_\_\_\_\_.

6. Journalists report that Kanye West and Kim Kardashian have broken up.

Kanye West and Kim Kardashian \_\_\_\_\_.

7. Scientists believe that the big bang happened 13.7 billion years ago.

The big bang \_\_\_\_\_.