

ACTIVE

We use the active when the subject of the sentence does the action:

- ✦ *They are building new houses in the town.*
- ✦ *Jenny is reading a newspaper.*
- ✦ *The fire killed a lot of animals.*
- ✦ *George Orwell wrote a lot of books.*

PASSIVE

We use the passive when the person who does something is not known or not important.

- ✦ *New houses are being built.*
 - ✦ *Animals are killed every year by fires.*
- If the person is interesting or important we use *by + the person* after the passive verb.
- ✦ *The book was written by George Orwell.*

Put the verbs in brackets into the active or passive.

1. William Shakespeare _____ (baptize) on 26th April 1564. He was an English poet and playwright who _____ (regard) as the greatest writer in the English language. He _____ (often/call) England's national poet. His surviving works _____ (consist) of about 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems and several other poems. His plays _____ (translate) into every major living language and _____ (perform) more often than those of any other playwright.

Shakespeare was born and raised in Stratford-upon-Avon. At the age of 18 he _____ (marry) Anne Hathaway and they _____ (have) three children: Susanna, Hamnet and Judith who _____ (be) twins. Between 1585 and 1592, he _____ (begin) a successful career in London as an actor, writer and part owner of a playing company which _____ (call) the Lord Chamberlain's Men and which _____ (later/know) as the King's Men. He _____ (retire) to Stratford around 1613 where he _____ (die) three years later.
2. "Jack the Ripper" is the name which _____ (give) to an unidentified serial killer who was active in the largely impoverished areas in and around the Whitechapel district of London in 1888. The name _____ (originate) in a letter which _____ (write) by someone claiming to be the murderer. The letter _____ (believe) to be a hoax and may _____ (write) by a journalist in an attempt to heighten interest in the story. The "Ripper" _____ (attack) female prostitutes from the slums whose throats _____ (cut) prior to abdominal mutilations. Rumours that the murders _____ (connect) intensified in September and October 1888 and letters from people purporting to be the murderer _____ (receive) by media outlets and Scotland Yard. There are now over one hundred theories about the Ripper's identity and the murders _____ (inspire) multiple works of fiction.
3. John Lennon was born on the 9th October 1940. He _____ (be) an English musician and singer-songwriter who _____ (rise) to worldwide fame as one of the founding members of The Beatles. With Paul McCartney he _____ (form) one of the most successful songwriting partnerships of the 20th century. John Lennon was born and raised in Liverpool and he _____ (become) involved as a teenager in the Skiffle Craze; his first band. The group "The Beatles" _____ (create) in 1960. Towards the end of the decade Lennon _____ (embark) on a solo career and then in 1975 _____ (disengage) himself from the music business to devote time to his family, but _____ (come) back in 1980 with a new album. He _____ (murder) three weeks after its release.