3 Past passive

Language focus

Use a **passive sentence** to show interest in who or what is affected by an action, not who or what does the action.

*This tower **was built** hundreds of years ago.*

Also use the passive when it isn't known who did an action.

*The books **were stolen** yesterday afternoon.*

Form the **past passive** with **was** / **were** / **wasn't** / **weren't** + **past participle**. Use the preposition **by** to say who or what did an action when using a passive sentence.

*The Internet **was created** in the 20th century.*

*The first text message **was sent by** a software engineer called Neil Pepworth in 1992.*

Don Quixote ***wasn't written** by William Shakespeare but **by** Miguel de Cervantes.*

*Pyramids **weren't built** in England but they **were built** in Mexico.*

1 **Complete the sentences with *was* or *were*.**

1 The first email ___was___ sent in 1971.
2 The first telephone call _____ made in 1876.
3 My laptop and smartphone _____ made in China.
4 The rulers of Ancient Egypt _____ called pharaohs.
5 The Eiffel Tower _____ built in Paris.
6 The museum in our town _____ visited by 10,000 people last year.

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2 Circle the correct verbs to complete the dialogue.

Henry Would you like to do this quiz?

Catherine Go on, then.

Henry All right. Don't look at the screen or you'll see the answers. First one.
True or false: the modern Olympic Games (1) *was* / *were* started by Pierre de Coubertin.

Catherine I know that one. It's true.

Henry Correct! OK, next one – the pyramids were (2) *built* / *build* by aliens.

Catherine Oh, come on! That's not a real question. That's false!

Henry Yes, you're right. Let's move on. Number three – the worldwide web was
(3) *created* / *creates* by an American.

Catherine Yes, I think that's true.

Henry No, that's false. It was (4) *invent* / *invented* by an Englishman. OK.
The Surrealist painter René Magritte *was* / *were* born in France.

Catherine That's false. Magritte was from Belgium.

Henry That's right! OK. This is the last one. The 2014 Australian Open tennis tournament
was (5) *won* / *win* by Li Na.

Catherine Oh, I've got no idea. I don't follow tennis. I'll say … true.

Henry Yes! Well done, Catherine. You got four out of five.

3 Complete the sentences with the verbs from the box in the correct form.

win build open hold ~~use~~ give

1 Paper money was first ___used___ in China.
2 The 2016 Olympic Games were _____ in Brazil.
3 The Blue Mosque in Istanbul was _____ in the 16th century.
4 The Prado Museum in Madrid was _____ to the public in 1819.
5 The 2014 football World Cup was _____ by Germany.
6 The Statue of Liberty was _____ to the USA by France.

4 Last night there was a break-in at the New Academy School. Make the sentences passive to describe what happened.

1 Someone broke the windows. The windows were broken.
2 Someone stole the computers. _____
3 Someone painted the walls yellow. _____
4 Someone took all the sports equipment. _____
5 Someone moved all the desks. _____
6 Someone threw rubbish in the playground. _____

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