

Background Information Unit 3, Lesson 4

Describing actions in which the subject is unknown – The Passive voice

Consider this sentence:

The leaves were blown by the wind.

The leaves receive the action of being blown. In the example, the agent is specified with the preposition by. However, the agent could have been left out of the sentence: *The leaves were blown.*

When is it proper to use the Passive voice?

- If you do not know who did the action; the agent is unknown.
My camera was stolen from my locker at school.
- If you prefer the attention to be on the action and not on the person doing it.
Many candles were lit at the memorial service by family and friends.
- You are expressing a general truth that is applicable to many.
Diets are made to be broken.

Form of the Passive voice

Subject + Form of to be + Past Participle (3rd column of irregular verbs)

The verb *to be* expresses the tense (Present, Past, Future, etc.) and forms the negative and interrogative forms.

Passive Voice

AFFIRMATIVE

Rewrite the sentences in the passive voice.

1. Teenagers read fashion magazines.
Fashion magazines -----
2. Girls watch Tyra Banks show.
Tyra Banks show -----
3. Susan follows fashion trends.

4. Most women appreciate shoes.

5. Fashion influences young teenagers.

6. Luke wears loose clothes.

7. Tess and Sandra wear tight clothes.

8. Fashion magazines sell dreams.

9. Professional models teach young models.

10. My cousin Lucy appreciates long dresses.

NEGATIVE

Now rewrite the sentences in the passive voice (negative form). Follow the example.

1. Most boys don't watch Tyra Banks show.
Tyra Banks show isn't watched by most boys.
2. Helen doesn't follow fashion trends.
Fashion trends -----
3. Some people do not accept fashion changes.

4. Paul doesn't buy fashion magazines.

5. My mother doesn't buy dresses.

6. Some designers don't use innovative materials.

7. Trendy girls don't wear unfashionable clothes.

8. Most models don't eat cakes.

INTERROGATIVE

Rewrite the sentences in the passive voice (interrogative form). Follow the example.

1. Do boys watch Tyra Banks show?
Is Tyra Banks show watched by boys?
2. Do teenagers read fashion magazines?
Are -----
3. Does fashion influence young teenagers?

4. Do you watch Portugal Fashion?

5. Do boys buy on-line clothes?

6. Do fashion magazines sell dreams?

7. Do designers make clothes with different materials?

8. Do most people accept fashion changes?
