

## Active and passive voice

### Reasons for using the passive voice

In Standard English, it is more common to use the **active voice** because forming the passive makes the information longer and it can seem awkward. Sometimes though, writers choose to use the **passive voice** for the following reasons:

- To make the tone more formal. *Example:* Any unauthorised people entering the building will be detained.
- Because the subject is not known. *Example:* Graffiti has been sprayed all over the school gates!
- To take the emphasis away from the subject because it is not as important as the object. *Example:* A million pounds will be given to the lucky winner.
- To make a narrative more exciting. *Example:* He was being watched by someone ... or something!

**A** 1 Say which sentence in each pair is in the passive voice.

**a** Heavy rain flattened all the plants.

All the plants were flattened by heavy rain. **Passive**

**b** The missing parrot has been found by Anton. **Passive**

Anton has found the missing parrot.

**c** The front of the school is hidden by trees. **Passive**

Trees hide the front of the school.

**d** Sandhya will bring the children home.

The children will be brought home by Sandhya. **Passive**

2 What are the rules for turning an active sentence into a passive one?

**B**

Decide whether the following sentences are in the active or passive voice. Then change them into the opposite voice.

**Active 1** The headmaster closed the school for the summer yesterday.

**Passive 2** The back door is left open by me so the cat can come in and out.

**Passive 3** We'll be called by my mum for dinner soon.

**Active 4** Dad is making us a delicious spicy curry.

**Passive 5** Pavol's grandmother was visited by friends yesterday.

1. The school was closed for the summer yesterday. (by the headmaster)

4. A delicious spicy curry is being made for us (by dad).

**C**

**1** Copy and complete the sentences by writing the passive form of the verb in brackets.

**a** Li Wei and Li Jing were taken (take) to school this morning by their big brother.

**b** The new sports centre will be (open) next month by Cristiano Ronaldo. opened

**c** At this moment, I can hear a violin being (play) in the music room. played

**d** The horses are fed (feed) twice a day, every day.

**e** He was finally able to buy the new game because he had been given (give) some money for his birthday.

**2** Write three more passive sentences which each have a different verb form.