Name: _____

Active and Passive Voice

There are two different ways to describe action.

Active Voice

The subject of the sentence **performs** an action. The action is done **by** the subject.

Many active voice sentences follow a Subject + Verb + Direct Object pattern.

example: The **weeds strangled** the wilting **flowers**.

Subject verb direct object

Passive Voice

The subject of the sentence **receives** an action. The action is done **to** the subject.

Passive voice always uses the past participle of the verb + one or more auxiliary (helping) verb.

Many passive voice sentences follow a Subject + Verb + Prepositional Phrase (starting with by) pattern.

Both active and passive voice can be written in any tense.

		Past	Present	Future
Activ	/e	Mom tilled the soil.	Dad is planting new sprouts.	We will grow tulips.
Passi	ive	The soil was tilled by Mom.	New sprouts are being planted by Dad.	Tulips will be grown by us.

Active voice usually sounds more engaging to readers.

Most writing should avoid passive voice.