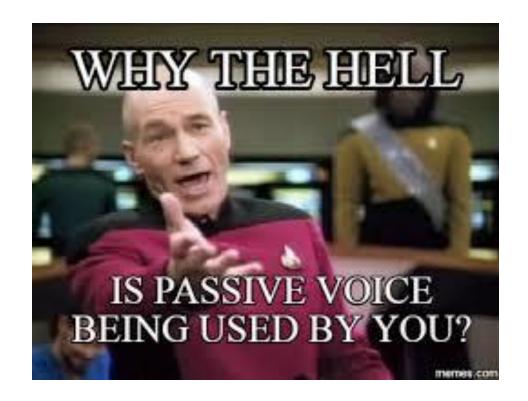
## ACTIVE vs. PASSIVE VOICE

BRIEF 102 [Writing]







## WHY WRITE IN THE ACTIVE VOICE?

- Omit needless words
- Be clear & concise: say what you mean
- Be considerate of your reader
- Take responsibility



#### **ACTIVE VOICE**

Matt kicks Josh. character action object

#### **PASSIVE VOICE**

Josh is kicked by Matt. object action character





#### **ACTIVE VOICE**

Josh punches Matt in the gut. character action object

#### **PASSIVE VOICE**

Matt gets punched in the gut. (By whom?) object action



# TOOL: ZOMBIES





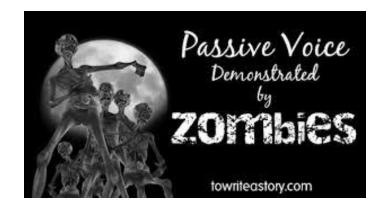
I finally learned how to teach my guys to ID the passive voice. If you can insert "by zombies" after the verb, you have passive voice.





#### **EXAMPLES**

- ► The road was crossed by zombies. (6)
- Zombies crossed the road. (4)



- The abandoned farmhouse is infested by zombies. (7)
- Zombies infested the abandoned farmhouse. (5)



## How does active voice help to convey responsibility?

When you omit the subject, or separate the subject and the action with extra words, it's difficult for a reader to quickly tell who or what is responsible for a particular action.

- The gun wasn't loaded properly and it jammed.
- The gate was left open overnight and all the cows escaped.



### LET'S PRACTICE



- The cow was destroyed by friendly fire.
   Friendly fire destroyed the cow.
- If you park there, your car will be towed.
   Acceptable use of passive voice.
- 3. The guns were carried by Andrew from the armory.

  Andrew carried guns from the armory.
- 4. The Green Beret was recognized by some of his fans.

  The fans recognized the Green Beret.
- The decorations for the disco were provided by B Squadron.
   B Squadron provided the disco decorations.
- 6. During the night the landscape was lit by the moon.

  The moon lit the landscape at night.
- New regulations were proposed.
   Acceptable use of passive voice.
- 3. The SITREP was poorly written.

Acceptable use of passive voice.

- 9. The Ranger's panties were ruined in the dryer.

  The dryer ruined the ranger's panties.
- 10. Incompetence was the reason the mission was a failure.

Answer 1: Incompetence caused the mission to fail

Answer 2: The mission failed because of incompetence.

