

# Autumn Active and Passive Verbs

The subject of a sentence is usually the person or thing performing the main action (verb). Every sentence must contain a verb. If the subject of a sentence is doing the action, then the verb is active and the sentence is written in what we call the active voice.

**Daniel is kicking the leaves.**

In this example, Daniel is the subject of the sentence and he is kicking the leaves. The verb is active.

**The leaves are being kicked by Daniel.**

In this example, the leaves are being kicked. They are not doing the action; the verb is **passive**.



## Why do we need to know?

Often, we are encouraged to avoid using the passive voice in writing. Sentences written in the active voice are usually shorter, clearer and easier to understand. Sometimes though, it is the passive voice that is required.

For example, we may want to emphasise an action or its effects, we may not know who or what did the action, or it may not be important.

**The votes are being counted to find the winner of the scarecrow competition.**

In order to choose the correct voice to use when writing, we need to know the difference between the passive and active voice.



## Task 1

Read each sentence carefully.

In each box, write 'A' if the sentence is written in the active voice. If the sentence is written in the passive voice, write 'P' in the box.

- 1 Jack watched the Harvest Moon as it rose in the evening sky.
- 2 To create the autumn artwork, the colourful leaves were glued to the canvas by Zoe.
- 3 All the fallen conkers were collected by the eager children
- 4 Aisling is baking bread for the Harvest celebration.
- 5 Each autumn, the numbers of light-bellied brent geese on Strangford Lough are counted and recorded by rangers and volunteers.
- 6 In pre-Christian Ireland, 'Samhain' was a festival celebrated by the people on 31<sup>st</sup> October/1<sup>st</sup> November.

## Task 2

Look at the illustrations.

Write two sentences for each picture, one in the active voice and the other using the passive voice. Use some of the key words to help you.

1

- leaves
- children
- bark
- autumn
- artwork
- rubbings
- crayons
- display




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2



Halloween  
parade

people  
participating

spooky  
city

costumes

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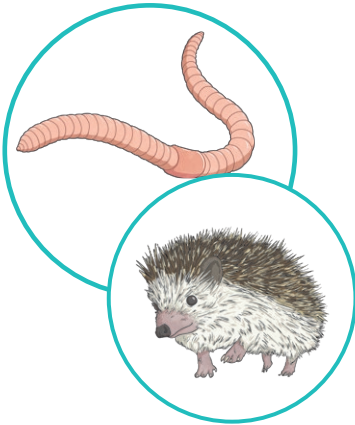
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3



hedgehog  
ate

eaten  
earthworm

preparing  
hibernation

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### Task 3

Look at the words in the box.

Some of these verbs are active and some are passive. Sort the verbs into the correct columns.

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| was picked     | had been raked  |
| threw          | hunts           |
| jumped         | are harvested   |
| were collected | hibernate       |
| migrate        | are being built |

Active	Passive

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## Answers

### Task 1

1. Jack watched the Harvest Moon as it rose in the evening sky. **A**
2. To create the autumn artwork, the colourful leaves were glued to the canvas by Zoe. **P**
3. All the fallen conkers were collected by the eager children. **P**
4. Aisling is baking bread for the Harvest celebration. **A**
5. Each autumn, the numbers of light-bellied brent geese on Strangford Lough are counted and recorded by rangers and volunteers. **P**
6. In pre-Christian Ireland, 'Samhain' was a festival celebrated by the people on 31<sup>st</sup> October/1<sup>st</sup> November. **P**

### Task 2

**For each example, pupils should have written one active and one passive sentence about the picture. Such as:**

1. **The children used crayons to make rubbings of the leaves and bark for the autumn artwork display.**  
**The crayons were used by the children to make rubbings of the leaves and bark for the autumn artwork display.**
2. **The people dressed in spooky costumes for the Halloween Parade through the city.**  
**Spooky costumes were worn by the people participating in the city's Halloween Parade.**
3. **The hedgehog preparing for hibernation ate the earthworm.**  
**The earthworm was eaten by the hedgehog that was preparing for hibernation.**

### Task 3

Active	Passive
<b>threw</b>	<b>was picked</b>
<b>jumped</b>	<b>were collected</b>
<b>migrate</b>	<b>had been raked</b>
<b>hunts</b>	<b>are being built</b>
<b>hibernate</b>	<b>are harvested</b>