

JMW Turner (1775-1851): The Painter of Light

Passive voice **Answers**

Here are some examples of the **passive** voice from the text. Convert them into **active** sentences.

Past simple passive

1. She *was committed* to a mental hospital by Turner and his father.
Turner and his father **committed** her to a mental hospital.
2. There *was* a lot of shame and guilt *attached* to mental illness at the time.
People **attached** a lot of shame and guilt to mental illness at the time.
3. He *was sent* away from home to live with an uncle in Brentford.
His parents **sent** him away to live with an uncle in Brentford.
4. Britain *was transformed* by the Industrial Revolution.
The Industrial Revolution **transformed** Britain.
5. He *was deeply inspired* by the light and colours of Venice and Rome.
The colours of Venice and Rome **inspired** him.

Present simple passive

6. Turner *is best known* for his dramatic seascapes and landscapes.
People **know** Turner for his dramatic seascapes and landscapes.
7. He *is remembered* not only as a master of landscape painting, but also as an artist who captured the spirit of a rapidly changing Britain.
People **remember** him not only as a master of landscape painting, but also as an artist who captured the spirit of a rapidly changing Britain.

Present continuous passive

8. "The Fighting Temeraire" shows an old warship (which *is*) *being pulled* by a steam tugboat on its way to be dismantled.
A Steam tugboat **is pulling** an old warship, "The Fighting Temeraire".

The passive with a modal verb

9. A large collection of his works *can be seen* at Tate Britain in London.
People **can see** a large collection of his works at Tate Britain in London.

Passive infinitive

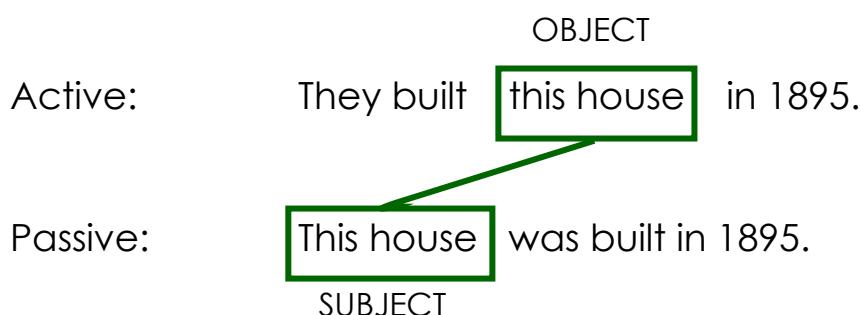
10. He *was keen to be accepted* as a gentleman within this privileged environment.
He was keen for people **to accept** him as a gentleman within this privileged environment.

11. He wanted his art *to be seen* by the public.
He wanted the public **to see** his art.

When and why do we use the passive voice?

When we say what people and things **do**, we use **active** verb forms like *sent*, *transformed*, *is pulling*, *can see*. When we say what **happens** to people and things – what *is done* to them – we often use passive verb forms like *was committed*, *is remembered*, *is being pulled*, *can be seen*.

The **object** of an **active** verb corresponds to the **subject** of a **passive** verb.



Passive sentences take emphasis away from the agent (the person or thing doing the action), and put it on the action itself, or the person or thing receiving the action. We use the passive when the agent is unknown or not important or when the result of the action is more important.