

Activity One

On the line provided, write AV if the underlined verb in the sentence is in the active voice. Write PV if it is in the passive voice. Then, rewrite each sentence in the other voice, adding a subject of your own if necessary.

1. _____ As kittens, Spooky and several other cats were dumped nearby.

2. _____ The owner should not have left them to fend for themselves.

3. _____ They mostly stayed hungry until we found them.

4. _____ They were sick and skinny, and they were frightened by just about anything.

5. _____ We had been warned that they might be too skittish to come near us.

6. _____ Two of them were covered by thick black coats.

Activity Two

Read this excerpt from Lois Lowry's novel *The Giver*.

Then all of the citizens had been ordered to go into the nearest building and stay there. IMMEDIATELY, the rasping voice through the speakers had said. LEAVE YOUR BICYCLES WHERE THEY ARE . . .

Within minutes the speakers had crackled again, and the voice, reassuring now and less urgent, had explained that a Pilot-in-Training had misread his navigational instructions and made a wrong turn. Desperately the Pilot had been trying to make his way back before his error was notice.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, HE WILL BE RELEASED, the voice had said, followed by silence. There was an ironic tone to that finally message, as if the Speaker found it amusing; and Jonas had smiled a little, though he knew what a grim statement it had been. For a contributing citizen to be released from the community was a final decision, a terrible punishment, an overwhelming statement of failure.

1. Highlight the sentence in the first paragraph that is written in passive voice.

Is the subject of this sentence **performing the action** or **being acted upon**? _____

Who is the "actor" in this sentence? _____

Do we know his or her name? Explain. _____

Rewrite this sentence in active voice. _____

2. The first sentence in the third paragraph contains one clause written in passive voice. Write that clause here.

What is the verb in this clause? _____

What is the subject in this clause? _____

Who is performing the action in this clause? _____

Although you can rewrite this clause in active voice without knowing who is performing the action, the resulting clause seems awkward. Why? _____

3. Read the following sentences, also in passive voice, which appear in the early pages of the novel.

Most of the people on the night crew had not even been given spouses. . . .

It was written very clearly in the rules.

[Y]our comfort object will be taken away.

Why is it awkward to try to rewrite these sentences without knowing who is making the decisions, making the rules? _____

How does Lowry's use of passive voice in these early pages create a sense of mystery and tension?
