VOICE

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE

Voice indicates the relationship between the action of the verb and the subject of the verb. Two kinds of relationships are possible: active and passive.

**ACTIVE VOICE** emphasizes the subject as the *Adoer* of the action. Therefore, a verb which acts upon a direct object is in the *active voice*.

*Priscilla chose John.* (The subject, Priscilla, does the action.)

**PASSIVE VOICE** emphasizes the subject as the *Areceiver* of the action. Therefore, when the direct object is converted into a subject, the verb is in the *passive voice*.

*John was chosen by Priscilla.* (The subject, John, does not act.)

A *passive verb* is always a verb phrase consisting of a form of the verb "be" ("was" in the sentence above).

MOST WRITERS CHOOSE THE ACTIVE VOICE BECAUSE IT IS CLEARER, MORE PRECISE AND MORE LIVELY THAN THE PASSIVE VOICE.

Examples of active and passive voice:

**Active:**  The tourists often throw pennies into the fountain.  
**Passive:**  Pennies are often thrown into the fountain by the tourists.

**Active:**  My brother manipulates other people.  
**Passive:**  Other people are manipulated by my brother.

**Active:**  Mary loves John.  
**Passive:**  John is loved by Mary.