

## Aggie Grammar Guide: Passive vs. Active Voice (Style)

### Answer Key

#### Intermediate Practice

What follows are possible revisions to alleviate passive construction in order to clarify ideas or make the sentence more precise.

- 1) Japan's **earthquakes are** the most damaging in the world.
- 2) The **first paragraph** of the short story **reveals** this when Montresor says: "I must not only punish, but punish with impunity" (Mays 108).
- 3) **Pesticides are annihilating** the honey bee.
- 4) The **meaning** of the food used in Catholicism **connects** these two countries.
- 5) The **desire** to determine Montresor's motives **compels** the reader to "decipher the circumstances in the story" (Baraban 48).

#### Advanced Practice

What follows are possible revisions that alleviate passive constructions while clarifying meaning.

- 1) The second **experiment revealed** that teenagers' perception of sexual activity depended on whether they were exposed to sexual behavior, sexual plans, or the risks of sexual activity at a young age.
- 2) **Historians argue** that this kept Russia going for as long as it did before World War 1.
- 3) When **people comment** that I have a so-called accent, **it troubles** my conscience **because of what that might mean** about my race and ethnicity.
- 4) In addition, new transportation has been developed. (NECESSARY PASSIVE: We don't know, nor does it matter, who developed it; what matters is it was developed).
- 5) Once **designers learned** more about bicycles, **they created** a chain that linked the two wheels. (OR: A better **understanding** of how a bicycle functions **necessitated** the creation of a chain that linked the two wheels.)
- 6) As one university that offers online education, Humboldt State's **conclusions merit** attention.