

Passive voice

Task 1:

Which sentence in each pair is most appropriate for academic writing? Why?

a)

1. The growth of bacteria was studied. Bacteria were grown in the presence of varying concentrations of penicillin. It was learned that bacterial growth is inhibited by penicillin.
2. We wanted to understand how penicillin affects growth of bacteria. To do this, we grew bacteria in the presence of varying concentrations of penicillin. We learned that penicillin inhibits growth of bacteria.

b)

1. One sample was dissolved prior to thermal treatment. At 30 min. intervals, samples were withdrawn and dissolved in carrier solutions, and the temperature of the bath was increased by approx. 5 °C.
2. We dissolved one sample prior to thermal treatment. At 30 min. intervals, we withdrew samples and dissolved them in carrier solutions, and we increased the temperature of the bath by approx. 5 °C.

c)

1. It has been shown numerous times that seagrasses are very important to coastal productivity (Stohl, 1987, Rodel, 2004). It was decided to examine whether this was also the case in the Bay of Biscay.
2. Numerous studies have shown that seagrasses are very important to coastal productivity (Stohl, 1987, Rodel, 2004). We decided to examine whether this was also the case in the Bay of Biscay.

d)

1. Modal auxiliary verbs were chosen because they are integral to academic prose (in the sense that it is difficult to think of an academic text *without* modal auxiliary verbs), and because they can be used to perform a wide range of functions. By examining the range of functions that writers use modal auxiliaries to perform, it was hoped that a better understanding of the rhetorical functions common to thesis writing could be achieved.
2. We chose modal auxiliary verbs because they are integral to academic prose (in the sense that it is difficult to think of an academic text *without* modal auxiliary verbs), and because we can use them for a wide range of functions. We hoped that by examining the range of functions that modal auxiliaries perform when writers use them, we could achieve a better understanding of the rhetorical functions common to thesis writing.

Task 2:

Look at two versions of the same paragraph which explain how influenza vaccines are produced. Which version do you prefer? Why?

Version A

First, the virus strains most likely to cause disease are identified and three are selected for vaccine development. The virus samples of each selected strain are injected into separate batches of fertilized eggs to amplify the amount of virus. Each virus strain is grown separately inside the eggs over the course of several days, after which it is harvested, inactivated, and purified. The purified virus strains are then combined to create the vaccine, blended with a carrier fluid and dispensed into vials.

Version B

First, researchers identify the virus strains most likely to cause disease and select three for vaccine development. Technicians inject virus samples of each selected strain into separate batches of fertilized eggs to amplify the amount of virus. Technicians grow each virus strain separately inside the eggs over the course of several days, after which they harvest, inactivate, and purify it. The technicians then combine the purified virus strains to create the vaccine, blend it with a carrier fluid and dispense it into vials.

Task 3:

Choose the best sentence from each pair to construct a continuous text.

- 1 a. HOW BOOKS ARE MADE
b. HOW PEOPLE MAKE BOOKS
- 2 a. First of all, the printers print big sheets of paper.
b. First of all, big sheets of paper are printed.
- 3 a. Each sheet contains the text of a number of pages (e.g. 32).
b. The text of a number of pages (e.g. 32) is contained in each sheet.
- 4 a. People fold and cut the sheets to produce sections of the book.
b. The sheets are folded and cut to produce sections of the book.
- 5 a. These sections are called signatures.
b. We call these sections signatures.
- 6 a. The printers put all the signatures together in the correct order.
b. All the signatures are put together in the correct order.
- 7 a. Then they are bound together and their edges are trimmed.
b. Then they bind the signatures together and trim the edges.
- 8 a. Finally, the cover – which has been printed separately – is attached.
b. Finally, they attach the cover – which they have printed separately.
- 9 a. Now the publishers can publish the book.
b. Now the book can be published.