



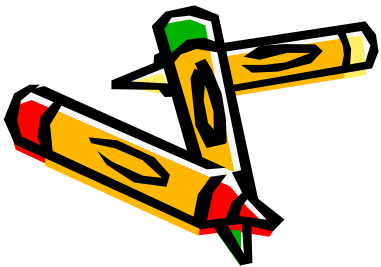
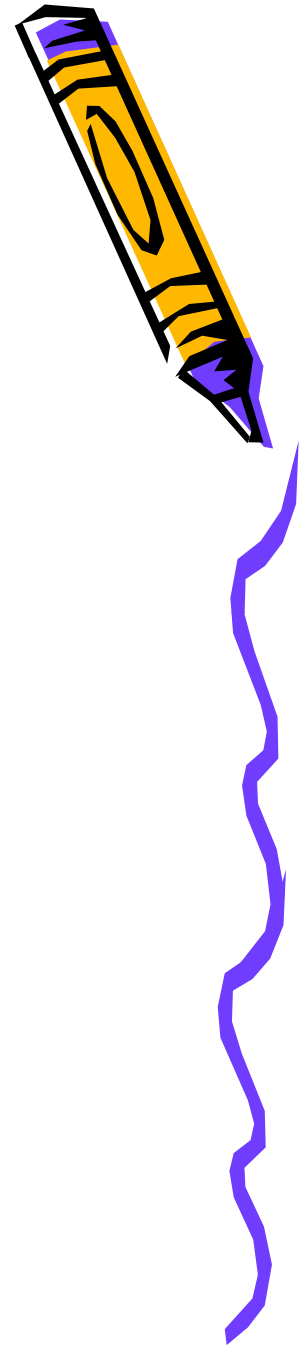
Active and Passive Voice

Sponsored by the Center for
Teaching and Learning



What is the difference?

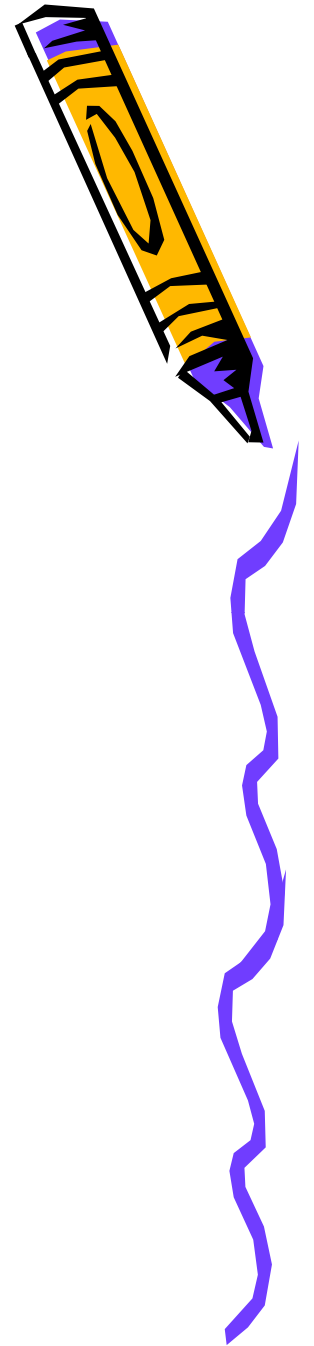
Difference is in the meaning



The Difference

Connected with the verb

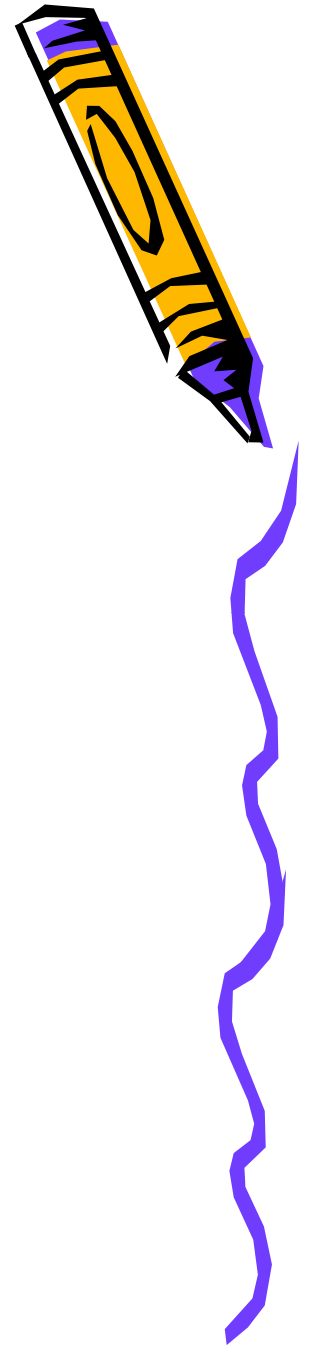
Does the subject act or
is the subject acted upon?



Passive Voice

The subject of the sentence
receives the action

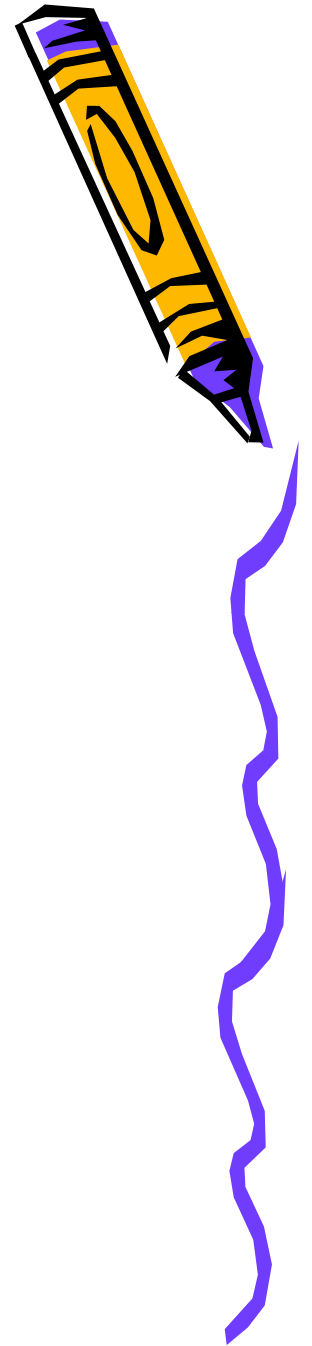
The essay is being written
by the student.



Active Voice

The subject of the sentence
performs the action

The student wrote the essay.



Passive Voice

Verbs such as be, am, is, was, were,
are, being, had been

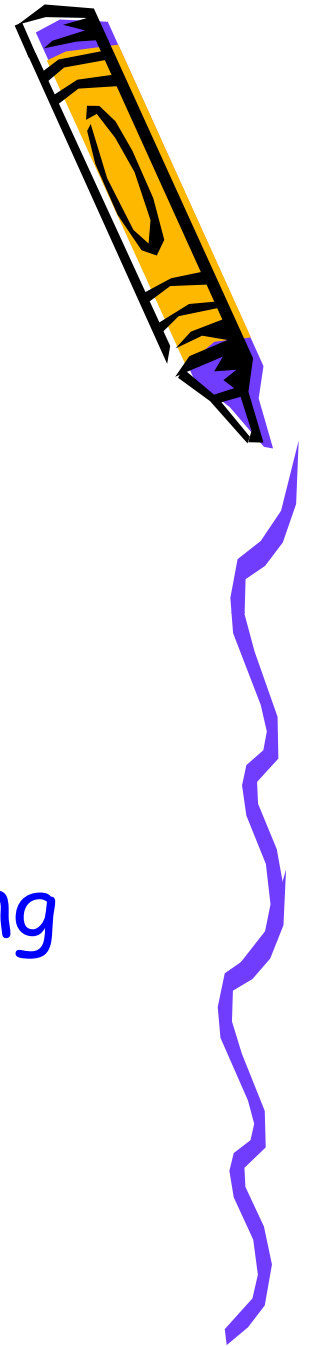
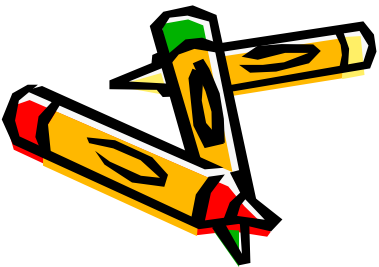
Verb followed with "by..."



Passive Voice

Indirect

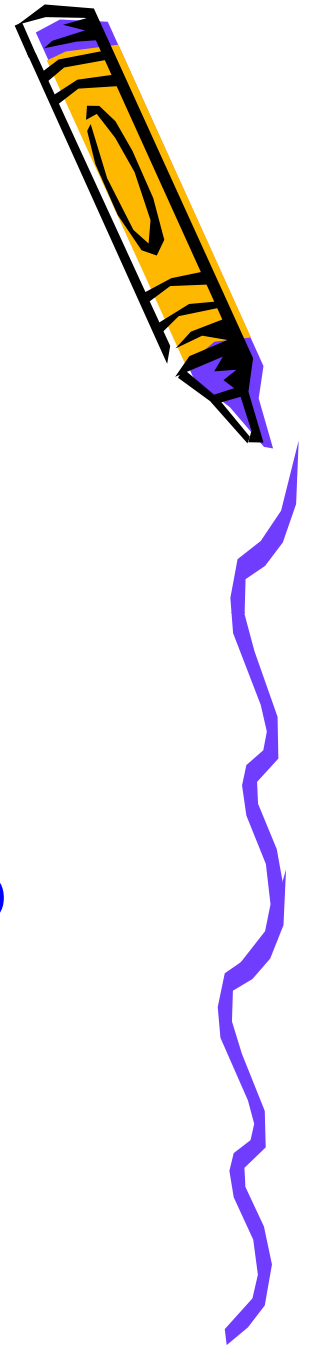
They are often taken to interesting places by their friends.



Active Voice

Direct

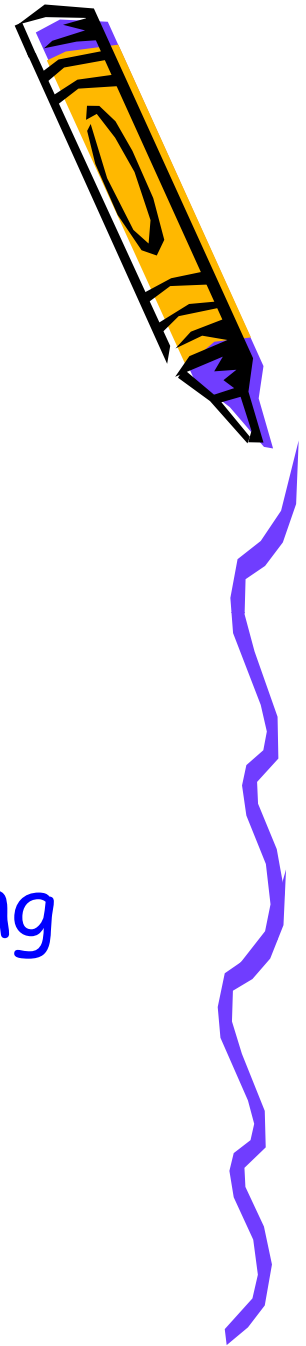
Their friends often take them to interesting places.



Passive Voice

More wordy sentences, less concise

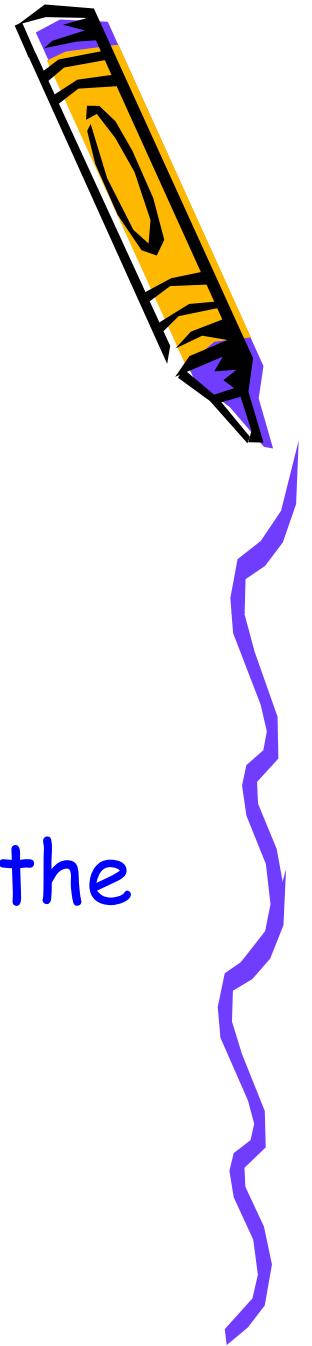
Topics for the next essay are being considered by the students.



Active Voice

Less wordy sentences, more concise

The students considered topics for the next essay.



Changing from Passive to Active



Find the subject

Change the verb accordingly



Change these

The essay was written by Shelia.

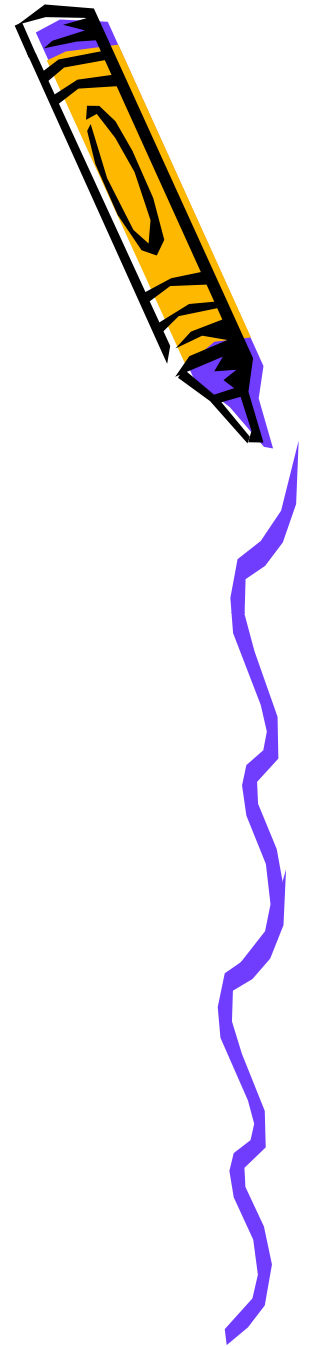
The big, green apples were left on the table by the professor.



Active Voice

Shelia wrote the essay.

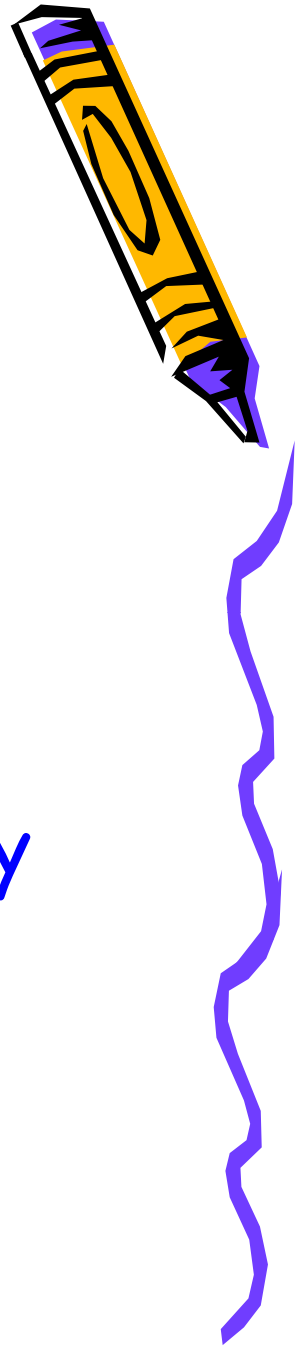
The professor left the big, green
apples on the table.



Change these

The apple was eaten by Charlene.

Clams are considered a delicacy by many people.



Active Voice

Charlene ate the apple.

Many people consider clams a delicacy.



Can you tell the difference?



Mistakes were made.

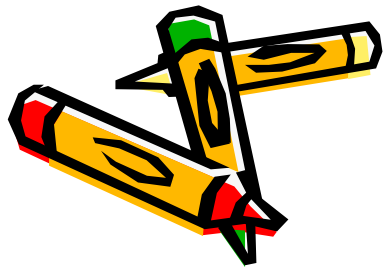
Most of the class read *The Bluest Eye*.



Can you tell the difference?



The potholes are being repaired by the workers. Hot, black, asphalt was poured into the potholes by the crew. Safe driving on the part of the public is appreciated by the road crew to insure their safety.



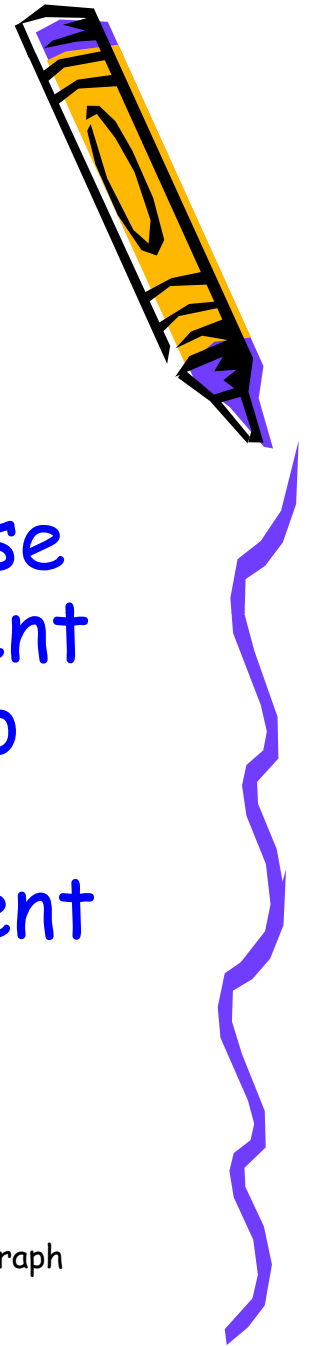
Passive sentences in paragraph. Active=The workers repaired the potholes. The crew poured hot, black asphalt into the potholes. To insure their safety, the crew appreciates safe driving by the public.

Can you tell the difference?

The professor graded the essays. Many students scored well because they used active voice. One student almost failed because he had too many passive sentences. The professor recommended the student to the Center for Teaching and Learning.



Active sentences in paragraph



Additional Resources



http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_activepass.html

<http://www.towson.edu/ows/activepass.htm>

http://www.grammarbook.com/english_rules.asp

