

EXERCISE 8-3 Active verbs Before working this exercise, read section 8 in *Rules for Writers*, Fifth Edition.

Half of the following sentences contain passive verbs or verbs that are a form of *be*. Find them and change them to active verbs. You may need to invent a subject for some verbs, and you may need to make major revisions in some sentences. If a sentence already contains only active verbs, mark it “active.” Example:

~~Frederick Douglass was annoyed by~~ ^P people who spoke openly of helping on the underground railroad/
annoyed Frederick Douglass. [^]

1. Douglass said that by talking openly about it, these people had turned the “underground railroad” into an “upperground railroad.”
2. Although these people were deserving of praise, their open talk endangered escaping slaves.
3. Such talk alerted slave owners to possible escape routes.
4. Escaping slaves would often be caught by professional slave hunters at the houses of those who talked openly.
5. All slaves were threatened by any information that increased the slave owners’ knowledge.
6. Whenever slave owners suspected some of the escape routes, the courage of the slaves was lost.
7. Frederick Douglass understood the slaves’ fears very well; his first attempt to escape had failed.
8. Professional slave breakers beat and tortured runaway slaves until the slaves submitted or died.
9. His own treatment at the hands of slave breakers left Douglass with severe, disfiguring scars all over his back.
10. Years later, northerners were convinced by those scars that Douglass spoke the truth about slavery.