

Grade 8 Playlist: Verb Voice and Mood Shifts

Aligns with *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.1.D*:

- Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.

Welcome

Maintaining consistency in verb mood and voice is essential for creating clear, well-written text that makes it easier for readers to read, understand, and relate to the author's meaning or intention. When a text contains inappropriate or unnecessary shifts in voice or mood, the text's meaning can become hidden and difficult for readers to comprehend.

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb mood and voice.
- understand how verb mood and voice operate within sentences.

Review

Key Terms

- **Active voice** is when the subject of the sentence performs the action expressed in the chosen verb: *Cindy ate all the bread.* **Passive voice** is when the subject is acted upon, where the subject receives the action expressed by the verb: *The bread was eaten by Cindy.* Active voice is considered stronger than passive voice because it helps avoid wordiness and complication. It is more straightforward and clear, while passive voice can cloud meaning.
- If sentences use a **shift in voice**, or use both voices, then the action/subject connection becomes confusing for readers. To revise, writers need to make sure sentences use both a subject, which is the performer of the action, and a **direct object**, a noun, noun phrase, or pronoun that shows what or who receives the action of the verb.
- A verb's **mood** is the form of a verb that shows the mode or manner in which an action takes place or a thought is expressed. There are five moods in the English language:
 - The **indicative** mood states facts: *A bear feeds her cubs.*
 - The **imperative** mood states a command or asks for an action to take place. In most cases, the subject is an implied "you": *Go to the store. (You go to the store.)*
 - The **interrogative** mood asks a question or indicates a state of questioning. The root word of *interrogative* is *interrogate*, which means "to ask questions": *Is she having fun?*



- The **conditional** mood states that something else has to happen under certain conditions in order for the main action to take place, and often uses auxiliary verbs such as *could*, *would*, and *might*. Most writers use the conditional mood to express uncertainty: *The baby might cry if you pick him up.*
- The **subjunctive** mood indicates a hypothetical situation that is contrary to reality, or imaginary. The situation could be a wish, a desire, a preference, or indirect commands, suggestions or requests: *If I were President, I would strive for world peace.*
- A **shift in mood** indicates a sentence that uses more than one mood. For example: *Wash your hands if you want to sit down for dinner.* The sentence starts with an imperative phrase followed by a conditional mood.

Exploring the Standard

Once writers understand the purpose and meaning behind verb voice and mood, they must be sure to maintain consistency when writing sentences in order to avoid other grammatical errors in usage or mechanics and to avoid reader confusion or unclear meanings.

A Closer Look: Recognizing and Revising Voice Shifts

When a sentence contains two or more verbs, both verbs should maintain the same voice. The following examples show how inappropriate shifts can be revised to maintain consistency.

Example 1

Sentence	When the <i>children turned</i> on the TV, a buzzing sound <i>was heard</i> .
Explanation	The first part of the sentence is written in active voice: the subject, <i>children</i> , performed the action, <i>turned</i> . The second part of the sentence is in passive voice because the action of hearing a sound was performed upon the children. To revise the second part of the sentence, writers can make it match the structure of the first part of the sentence by (1) reestablishing the subject through a direct object, (2) inserting the verb, and (3) adding the effect or result of the action.
Revision	When the <i>children turned</i> on the TV, <i>they heard</i> a buzzing sound.

