

The passive in class dialogues – More exercises for beginners

1. “Who is it?”

Think of a person your classmates know: a famous person/ a musician/ a book hero/ an inventor/ a teacher/ ...

Describe a person in the passive voice and ask your partner “Who is it?”.

My person ...

- **is known** as a singer who ...
- **is said** to have invented ...
- **is celebrated** because he/ she ...
- **was born** in ...
- **was given**... prize
- **was nominated** ...
- **had been prosecuted** because of ...

Example

Partner A:	My person is believed to have superpowers. He was born in California and he is also known as “the Rock”. Who is it?
Partner B:	I know! He's my favourite actor: it's Dwayne Johnson!

2. Places

Think of a place or a city and its famous sights and attractions.

Describe the place or the city in the passive voice and ask your partner “Which place/ city is it?”.

My place/ my city ...

- **is known** as ...
- **is called** ...
- **was opened** in ...
- **was used** as ...
- **was built** in ...
- **has been built** as ...

Example

Partner A:	My city was established as a Roman military place. Boats can be rented on the river. Moreover, in my city a chocolate museum has been built . Which place is?
Partner B:	Well, I'm not sure, but is it Cologne?

3. Which one first?

Come up with two ideas/ two objects/ two buildings or places. You can be creative 😊!

Build sentences in the passive voice and ask your partner "What do *you* think?".

Language help:

- to build: is built/ was built/ had been built ...
- to open: will be opened/ was opened/ had been opened ...
- to invent: will be invented/ was invented/ had been invented ...
- to celebrate: for example Christmas – Easter – Halloween – Pentecost¹ ...
- to win: for example the Nobel Prize/ a contest ...
- to compose
- to make

Examples

Partner A:	I think of a computer and a smartphone. But which was invented first? What do you think?
Partner B:	That is easy! The computer was invented first.

Partner B:	I think of a bridge between Germany and Britain and a bridge between Scotland and Ireland. But which will be realised first? What do you think?
Partner A:	That is a tricky question. But as the beeline ² between Scotland and Ireland is shorter, I think this one will be realised first – if ever!

Partner A:	I think of Hadrian's Wall in Scotland and the Porta Nigra in Treves ³ . But which was built first? What do you think?
Partner B:	Thank goodness I learn Latin, because those two buildings were built in the same century. But I know that Hadrian's Wall had been built before the Porta Nigra was built . ⁴

Partner B:	I think of holidays and in which country Germans prefer to stay. Let's take the destinations Germany, Italy and Spain. Is Spain favoured over Germany? Is Spain favoured over Italy? What do you think?
Partner A:	Well, the answer to your first question is clear: No, actually Germany is favoured over all other countries. Your second question, well, let me think...I would say Spain is favoured over Italy.

1 Pentecost: Pfingsten

2 the beeline = the air line: die Luftlinie

3 Treves = the probably oldest German city: Trier

4 Hadrian's Wall after 122 AD and the Porta Nigra after 170 AD