

PASSIVE VOICE

V E R S U S

ACTIVE VOICE

HOW TO DISCUSS OPPRESSION: FOR EDUCATORS AND CARETAKERS

Avoid Passive Voice



Passive Voice implies the victims of oppression are in some way responsible for the abuse.

"Enslaved Black Americans were forced to work without pay by their masters"

"Civil Rights Activists like Fannie Lou Hamer were arrested for trying to vote."

"Indigenous People were forced to relocate to reservations"

Use Active Voice



Active Voice places the responsibility of the abuse on the oppressor not the oppressed.

"White people stole Black people held them hostage. They used violence to force them to work"

"White police officers arrested Fannie Lou Hamer for trying to vote."

"White colonizers used violence and lies to steal land from Indigenous people."