

Words That Camouflage Action

Principle: People may hide their actions by using present tense to describe past action, passive voice to distance themselves from their actions, or “uncompleted” action verbs when something interrupted the action.

What to Look For Does the writer go from past tense to present then back to past? “I woke up, got dressed, <i>meet</i> Stan, drove to work.” Does the writer use passive voice? “The pistol was fired by someone.” Does the writer use an “uncompleted” action verb? “I started to pack my bags.” Who or what interrupted?	Specific Probes Walk me through your morning. Tell me about meeting Stan. Tell me about the pistol being fired. Did you fire it? You said you “started to pack your bag.” Did you finish packing? Did something interrupt you?
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Words That Convey Conversation

(e.g., talked, spoke, chatted, discussed, e-mailed)

Principle: The conversation may be pertinent to the incident being investigated.

What to Look For What was the conversation about? When did the conversation occur in the relation to the crime? Who did the conversing? Were different words used to describe any conversation and, if so, why? Were different words used to describe any conversation with the same person or with another person?	What to Look For Tell me what you talked about. Was this talk cordial, emotional, angry? When did you two talk? What time was it? Who else was present when you talked? Who might have overheard you? What happened after you talked? Who initiated the talk? Who said what to whom? You said, “He and I talked.” Tell me about this. You said, “We chatted.” Tell me more about this chat.
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Words That Camouflage Conversation

(e.g., met for coffee, ate lunch, watched TV, and we laid in bed)

Principle: People typically engage in verbal interaction during social activities.

What to Look For What was discussed during the activity? (Pursue line of questioning as per above)	Specific Probes Tell me about your meeting for coffee. What did you talk about? When did you meet? Who else was there?
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Active Voice

One of the two voices that verbs are divided into, the other being passive voice.

In verbs in the active voice, commonly called active verbs, the subject of the verb performs the action described by the verb.

Example: “The boy threw the ball.” “Throw” is in the active voice since the subject of the verb, boy, is doing the throwing.

Example: “Her mother was driving the car.” “Driving” is in the active voice since it is the subject of the sentence that is doing the driving.

Passive Voice

The voice of a verb where the subject is the recipient of the action of the verb.

Example: “Mary was kicked by her brother.” The verb “kick” is in the passive voice. Mary is the recipient of the “kick” so “kick” is in the passive voice. Had it been in active voice it would have read, “Her brother kicked Mary.”