



It is often said that Christopher Columbus was the first European to visit the continent of America. However, the Vikings are now known to have been the first – some 500 years earlier. The story begins in the 10th century with a Viking called Erik the Red. Erik the Red is reported to have murdered two men and then escaped by sailing west from Iceland to Greenland. Erik lived there and had a son called Leif. As an adult, Leif sailed further west across the sea and he discovered a new area of land with fresh water and food. Nowadays, this area is known to be part of modern-day Canada, because evidence of Viking houses has been found in this region.

Presentation

We often use the passive form of the verb to report information and opinions when we don't know or don't want to say who made the statement.

There are two patterns:

- *it + passive verb + that + subject:*

It is often said that Christopher Columbus was the first European to visit the continent.

It is known that this was part of modern day Canada.

- *subject + passive verb + infinitive*

This area is known to be part of modern-day Canada.

To report a past action in the present perfect or past simple with the second pattern, we use a perfect infinitive (an infinitive form with *have* + past participle).

Erik the Red is reported to have murdered two men.

To report an action in progress now with the second pattern, we use a continuous infinitive (*be* + -ing form).

Historians are said to be looking for more evidence.

We commonly use the following verbs with both patterns: *believe, confirm, expect, know, report, say, think* and *understand*.

Exercises**1 Write the words in the correct order to make sentences.**

- 1 that / he / discovered / America / it is / said
- 2 known / in Greeland / Erik / is / to have / lived
- 3 the two men / have been / are / believed / murdered / to
- 4 the police / looking / said to / be / for the murderer / are
- 5 Leif / to / is / thought / in Canada / have / landed
- 6 in the Caribbean / reported / that / it is / Columbus / stopped

2 Match 1–6 with A–F.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 In the past, it was believed that | A review their education policy. |
| 2 It is commonly known that | B most students are in debt. |
| 3 It is claimed that there are | C the world was flat. |
| 4 A serious car crash is reported | D to have happened on the motorway this morning. |
| 5 Native American Indians are thought | E other life forms in the universe. |
| 6 The government has agreed to | F to have crossed over originally from Asia. |

3 ⓠ Rewrite the reporter's sentences starting with the words in 1–5. Then listen and check.

Robbery notes:

1 We know the robbery happened at three in the morning.
 2 We think the robbers dug a tunnel underneath the road.
 3 Some people claim it goes right into the bank vault.
 4 Someone says they saw a blue van.
 5 We heard a rumour that they stole up to a million pounds, but that's unconfirmed.

- 1 It is known that
- 2 It is
- 3 It is
- 4 A blue van is said to have
- 5 The robbers are

4 Complete these sentences with the passive form, using the words in brackets.

- 1 It is thought that the crime happened at midnight. (it / think)
- 2 that the Chinese invented printing. (it / say)
- 3 A man aged 65 the murderer. (report/be)
- 4 A couple in London are said (to / win) the lottery.
- 5 Currently, the police are said (to / look) for the missing car.
- 6 Louis Pasteur to have discovered penicillin. (knew)
- 7 that the Prime Minister will resign at midday today. (it / expect)
- 8 Two children are said from a fire in an upstairs room. (to / save)