

# Shifting Points of View

Both fiction and nonfiction can be written from various points of view. The author's **point of view** is the voice of the person telling the story.

## First Person Narration

When the story is being told from the point of view or perspective of a character who is in the story.

Pronouns such as **I, me, we, us, my, our, myself, ourselves** show first person narration.

Example: *I knew I was in trouble when I saw my mom's face.*

## Third Person Narration

When the story is being told from someone else's point of view or perspective.

Pronouns such as **he, she, her, him, it, they, them, their, themselves** show third person narration.

Example: *Shannon knew she was in trouble when she saw her mom's face.*

### Steps:

1. Read the excerpt with a partner.
2. Determine whether it is written in first or third person narration.
3. Restate the excerpt from a different point of view. For example, if the text is written in first person narration, restate it in third person narration.

**TEXT 1:** One fine morning, the curious baby elephant asked, "What does the crocodile have for dinner?" All together everybody yelled, "HUSH!" in a dreadful tone, and they shushed and shoed him away angrily. But the baby elephant did not understand why. He was still curious!

**TEXT 2:** When the earthquake hit, I was in my bedroom getting ready to sleep. My brother was downstairs in the kitchen. He screamed for me to come downstairs, "Rian, I think it's an earthquake! Run down now! We need to evacuate the house." My heart was racing as I noticed the ground rumbling and my books falling off the shelf. We made it out of the house safely and nothing major was damaged. I was so relieved.

**TEXT 3:** Marcela walked right past her sister. She had no plan to give her any of the candy that she had earned herself. If Janet wanted candy, she would have to use her own money. Marcela felt that was fair.

**TEXT 4:** Rosie wanted a kitten more than anything in the world. For months, she had dreamed of the day that she and her parents would adopt a new pet. But Rosie's mother insisted they wait until Rosie's birthday, which was still two months away. Rosie thought of kittens all day. She hoped hers would have blue eyes, fluffy fur, and a happy purr that Rosie would feel through her shirt when the kitten curled up on her chest.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Pronouns & Point of View

A **pronoun** is a word that replaces a noun or a noun phrase. They help our writing sound smooth and less repetitive. They also tell what point of view a story is written from.




<b>First Person Point of View</b> <i>A character is telling the story. The character is in the story and is experiencing the action.</i>	<b>Third Person Point of View</b> <i>A narrator is telling the story. The narrator is <u>not</u> in the story, but is telling what is happening.</i>																
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">I</td> <td style="width: 50%;">we</td> </tr> <tr> <td>me</td> <td>our</td> </tr> <tr> <td>my</td> <td>us</td> </tr> <tr> <td>myself</td> <td>ourselves</td> </tr> </table>	I	we	me	our	my	us	myself	ourselves	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">him/her</td> <td style="width: 50%;">they</td> </tr> <tr> <td>he/she</td> <td>their</td> </tr> <tr> <td>his/hers</td> <td>them</td> </tr> <tr> <td>it/its</td> <td>themselves</td> </tr> </table>	him/her	they	he/she	their	his/hers	them	it/its	themselves
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**Directions:** Circle the pronoun in each sentence. Then tell whether it is written in the first person or third person point of view.

Circle One

- |  |                     |                     |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Yesterday, Paul and I went to the park.   | <b>first person</b> | <b>third person</b> |
| 2. José is washing his car.                  | <b>first person</b> | <b>third person</b> |
| 3. It is our turn to jump on the trampoline. | <b>first person</b> | <b>third person</b> |
| 4. We are so excited to go to the zoo.       | <b>first person</b> | <b>third person</b> |
| 5. Ms. Turner is walking her dog.            | <b>first person</b> | <b>third person</b> |
| 6. Tina and Mai are helping their teacher.   | <b>first person</b> | <b>third person</b> |

**Directions:** Use first person or third person pronouns to complete each sentence.

	 <b>Zenon</b>	 <b>Jojo</b>	 <b>Fifth Graders</b>
<b>First Person</b>	_____ love to paint.	_____ soccer team is playing in the finals.	_____ can't agree which book to read.
<b>Third Person</b>	_____ is a great artist.	_____ helped the team win the game.	_____ are reading about vampires.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Practicing Point of View

A **pronoun** is a word that replaces a noun or noun phrase. These words help our writing sound smooth and less repetitive. They also tell what point of view a story is written from.

<b>First Person Point of View</b> <i>A character is telling the story. The character is in the story and is experiencing the action.</i>	<b>Third Person Point of View</b> <i>A narrator is telling the story. The narrator is <u>not</u> in the story, but is telling what is happening.</i>
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Below is one story, told from two different points of view.  
Read each version of the story and answer the questions that follow.

The Birthday Surprise	
<p>All day I have been waiting for my mom to come home. Today is her <u>birthday</u> and I have a surprise for her! She works at the restaurant in town and when she gets home, she is always very <u>tired</u>. So I decided I would cook a very special birthday dinner just for her. I made feijoada, which is a stew with black beans, sausage, and pork. My grandma used to make it when my mom was growing up in Brazil. I also made her a chocolate cake with strawberries on top. I didn't have enough money to buy my mom a present, so I made her a card instead. I hope she likes it!</p> <p>1. Who is telling this story?            a) a character            b) a narrator</p> <p>2. What is the speaker's point of view?            a) first person            b) third person</p> <p>3. What pronouns did you see in the story that helped you determine the point of view?            _____</p>	<p><u>Gabriela</u> taps her fingers on the table. She is waiting for her mother to return home from work. The warm smell of stew fills the house and a chocolate cake sits on the table. Gabriela looks out the window. Her mother should be home any minute. Gabriela is excited to surprise her mother with a home-cooked meal for her birthday. She knows how tired her mother is after work, so she hopes this special dinner will make her feel happy. Gabriela places a card on the table, next to the cake. It reads "Feliz Aniversário" and has a picture of a unicorn drawn in crayon on it.</p> <p>1. Who is telling this story?            a) a character            b) a narrator</p> <p>2. What is the speaker's point of view?            a) first person            b) third person</p> <p>3. What pronouns did you see in the story that helped you determine the point of view?            _____</p>

☆ **Think about it!** How would this story be different if it were told from the mom's perspective? Use the underlined words from the stories above to complete this version of the story. Then, circle the pronouns that show point of view.

Today is my \_\_\_\_\_. I am \_\_\_\_\_ from working all day. But I am excited to see my daughter, \_\_\_\_\_, when I get home.

# PERSON

Jesse was asked to write an article from the first person, second person, and third person perspectives. When he was done, he forgot which one was which.

**DIRECTIONS:** Please help Jesse by writing first, second, or third person by the correct version of each story.

**REMEMBER:** First person is when a character narrates the story with *I*, *me*, *my*, or *mine* in his or her speech.

Second person is when the author uses the words *you* and *your*. S/he is talking directly to the reader.

Third person is when the reader is an outsider that is able to see the thoughts of everyone in the book. Most writers choose this point of view.

1

As you walk up the hill, you realize that it's just too quiet. There's no sound from the bird you know is almost always singing from the top of the maple tree. You think you see a shadow move high up on the slope, but when you look again it's gone. You get goose bumps on your arms.

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2

As I walked up the hill, I realized that it was just too quiet. There was no sound from the bird who was almost always singing from the top of the maple tree. I thought I saw a shadow move high up on the slope, but when I looked again it was gone. I felt goose bumps pop up on my arms.

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3

As she walked up the hill, she realized that it was just too quiet. There was no sound from the bird who she so often heard singing from the top of the maple tree. She thought she saw a shadow move high up on the slope, but when she looked again it was gone. She felt goose bumps pop up on her arms.

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ANSWERS: 1. second 2. first 3. third

# POINT OF VIEW IN STORYTELLING

Every writer tells his or her story from a certain perspective, or point of view. Some stories are told from the perspective of a narrator who is part of the story, known as first person point of view. Other stories are told from the perspective of a “narrator” who is not in the story at all, which is known as third person point of view. With this exercise, you’ll learn about the difference between first person and third person, two of the most common points of view used in storytelling.

## Third Person

The narrator is not in the story, only tells what happens. For example, in the story “Goldilocks and the Three Bears,” the all the characters are called “he,” “she” or “it.”

When deciding if a story is first or third person, conversations in quotation marks don’t count.

## First Person

The narrator is a character in the story and often does not know what is going to happen next. He tells the story using the pronouns “I” and “me.” Example:

Robert Louis Stevenson’s Treasure Island:  
*Well, mother was upstairs with father and I was laying the breakfast-table against the captain’s return when the parlour door opened and a man stepped in on whom I had never set my eyes before.*

## WHAT IS THE POINT OF VIEW?

Circle the correct point of view for the passage.

*I have never forgotten my mother’s advice; I knew she was a wise old horse, and our master thought a great deal of her. Her name was Duchess, but he often called her Pet.*

Black Beauty  
by Anna Sewell

- A. Third Person      B. First Person

*These sounds made the little girl’s heart beat fast, for she did not know what made them; but Toto knew, and he walked close to Dorothy’s side, and did not even bark in return.*

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz  
by L. Frank Baum

- A. Third Person      B. First Person

Tom and me found the money that the robbers hid in the cave, and it made us rich. We got six thousand dollars apiece—all gold.

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn  
by Mark Twain

- A. Third Person      B. First Person

## WORD SEARCH FOR FUN!

Words can go across, up, down, diagonally and backwards.

C V I E W T X U N Y  
X H W Y H E T R A R  
R N A I X S I P R O  
C J R R B S Y H R T  
C D J Z A N U P A S  
W N Y V B C S R T P  
N O S R E P T C O O  
W R I T E R H E R I  
T S R I F E Z F R N  
X P E M X M C J O T

narrator	view
third	character
first	writer
person	story
point	