

## Point of View: Where We Stand as We Tell the Story

Grammatical Third Person: She, It, He, They

Grammatical Second Person: You

Grammatical First Person: I, We

Omniscient	Chronicle	3 <sup>rd</sup> person limited (or “free indirect style” or “the reflector”)	Second person	First Person	Stream of Consciousness
<p>All knowing; freedom to visit every thought and deed of every character. Can describe anyone, switch around at will.</p> <p>Much 19<sup>th</sup> c. fiction. Many genre novels and best sellers of late 20<sup>th</sup> c. and today. James Michele.</p> <p>Old fashioned stories, fables, parables, and fairy tales.</p> <p>The Bible.</p>	<p>All exterior, few thoughts. Just the facts.</p> <p>Usually stays outside the characters and looks at them.</p> <p>Some Hemingway. “Hills Like White Elephants.”</p> <p>Reporting.</p>	<p>One of most common of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and today. Everything that is seen and thought by one character. It only goes inside that one person’s head, but the character can also be described. Uses the grammatical 3<sup>rd</sup> person.</p> <p>“He walked down the street. <i>It’s so hot today</i>, he thought. He lifted his hand to wipe sweat off his balding forehead.”</p> <p><b>Multiple or alternating 3<sup>rd</sup> persons</b></p>	<p>Generally a <i>tour de force</i>— Jay McInerney’s novel <i>Bright Lights, Big City</i>. Most often a quirky first person, but might be addressed to another.</p> <p>Also used for author to address a story to a particular character. Example: Randall Kenan, “This Far; Or, A Body in Motion,” addressed to Booker T. Washington (in <i>Let the Dead Bury Their Dead</i>).</p> <p>A children’s “Write Yr Own Adventure”</p> <p>Italo Calvino</p>	<p>Also very common in 20<sup>th</sup> c &amp; today. Usually one person’s story, in the grammatical first person. Could be in the form of “life review,” fictional autobiography, journal, letters, email messages, alternating 1<sup>st</sup> persons, or monologue.</p> <p>Uncommon is communal “We,” like <i>Autumn of the Patriarch</i>, by Gabriel Garcia Marquez.</p> <p>Narrator may be protagonist, or might be peripheral as in <i>Gatsby</i>, or unreliable as in famous Eudora Welty short story “Why I Live at the P.O.”</p>	<p>Very intimate first person that tells sensations and impressions, usually as they are happening.</p> <p>Often used in the middle of other forms for moments of great stress.</p> <p>Lots in James Joyce and other Modernists.</p> <p>Virginia Woolf’s <i>The Waves</i>.</p>