

Think and Write for CSEC English A and B



What is Narrative Point of View in Story Writing

by Julie Tagg (Think and Write for CSEC English A and B) | November 20, 2022
| Story Writing

The terms *narrative* and *story* are used to describe a sequence of events that can be real or fictional. These events are shared through different forms of medium and this varies from film to prose. Still, the narrative, reflects the structural nature or presentation of the story or the way that the story is told.

Narrative Point of View

The narrator is the storyteller or the voice that shares the events of the story. The audience hears or reads the story based on the narrative point of view or the POV. In other words, the narrative point of view gives the position of the narrator as it relates to the story. This can be done from the first-, second- or third-person perspective.

First Person

In this form of narrative, the narrator is also in the story but is not always an active character. The reader recognizes the first-person point of view by the narrator's use of *I* or *we*. The protagonist is generally the first –

person narrator but there are cases where the first-person narrative is conveyed through a secondary or tertiary character. This is common when the narrator is a witness to the events in the story and is not actively present in the story.

The first-person point of view gives a variety of opportunities for the writer to have a narrator with a diverse voice. This diversity adds to the tone of the story and the reader feels as if he or she is in the head of the narrator. It also gives the story personality and a subjective slant. Additionally, this narrative technique is more intimate, and the reader feels a closer relationship with the person who is telling the story. While the first-person narrative can be ideal in understanding the internal emotions and thoughts of the storyteller, there is the challenge of not being able to explore the thoughts and emotions of other characters.

Second Person

The second-person narrative is different from the first-person narrative as it tells the story as though the narrator is talking to the reader or as though the reader is the main character in the story. The second-person narrative uses the pronoun “you” to refer to the other characters or the reader. Most writers will avoid using this narrative voice.

Third Person

The most popular form of narrative point of view is the third-person point of view. It is flexible because the narrator has access to all characters and full view the events taking place in the story. There is no use of the pronouns *I* or *you*. Instead, the characters are referred to as *he*, *she*, *they*, or *it*. **The third-person narratives** are either: subjective or objective and omniscient or limited.

Third-person subjective uses internal dialogue and allows the narrator to describe the thoughts and emotions of the characters as the story progresses. In contrast, **the third-person objective** does not have access to the inner thoughts and emotions of the characters. Nevertheless, it gives an external understanding of the characters. Stories will move from the subjective to the objective narrative and vice versa as this gives the readers different perspectives of the thoughts and feelings of the characters.

A third-person omniscient narrative always gives a complete view of the events in the story as well as the actions of the characters. In this narrative voice, the narrator knows everything that is taking place in the story

but will choose which details to share with the readers. The third-person limited narrative has full knowledge of one character and not of all characters. As such, this allows the narrative voice to relay events that are unique to a specific character.