

1 Narrators, and why point of view limits – Part 2

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Vocabulary

Write each word three times.

English

Write it 3 times (English)

Point of view

Recall

- You have heard two people describe the same argument differently.
- You know a witness can be honest and still wrong.
- You have read a story where you knew more than the narrator did.

New ideas

Read these first. Each idea has a short worked example. Then do the Practice below.

■ 1 Perspective and point of view

Point of view is the position from which events are related; perspective is how the teller sees them. One is a place to stand, the other a way of seeing.

Worked example. A first-person narrator has a fixed position and a perspective formed by their involvement.

■ 2 What a point of view cannot give

Point of view determines what a narrator **can and cannot** provide. A first-person narrator is inside the events; a third-person narrator observes from outside, with knowledge ranging from limited to all-knowing.

Worked example. A narrator who reports a room she never entered is not a limited first-person narrator.

■ 3 The narrator is not the author

A speaker or narrator is not necessarily the author. Attributing a narrator's opinion to the writer converts a literary choice into a biographical claim the text cannot support.

Worked example. A novel narrated by a liar is not a lying novel.

Watch out: What a narrator cannot see is as useful as what they can. A gap in the account is a choice the text has made, and it is analysable.

Practice

2.1 Distinguish perspective from point of view. [2]

2.2 State what point of view determines. [2]

2.3 Distinguish a first-person from a third-person narrator. [2]

2.4 State the range of a third-person narrator's knowledge. [2]

2.5 Explain why a narrator's opinion should not be attributed to the author. [2]
