** Point-of-View Narration**

WCCS Writing Center

Narration describes the point of view from which the narrative (story, essay, or information) is presented. Usually third-person narration is used in formal writing. Be sure to check with your instructor to find out the specific requirements for the essay you are writing.

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| Narration | Definition | Examples | Pronouns |
| First person singular | * Writing from the *I* point of view.
* The narrator is a character (the protagonist) in the story or essay.
 | * I enjoy learning English.
* She gave me the homework.
* That is my project.
 | I, me, my, mine, myself |
| First person plural | * Writing from the *we* point of view.
* The narrator is a character in the story, but speaks in an inclusive voice, joining with the reader.
 | * We need to work together toward world peace.
* The teacher gave us our assignment last night.
* Ours took us several hours to complete.
 | we, us, our, ours, ourselves |
| Second person | * Narrator refers to one of the characters or the audience as *you*.
 | * Did you see the movie last night?
* Yours is the book with the large writing.
* (You) Make sure to vote in the next election.
 | you, your, yours, yourselfImperative sentences (commands) don’t include the written word *you*; however, the subject is understood. Avoid imperative sentences if writing in first or third person.  |
| Thirdperson | * Narrator refers to every character as *he, she it,* or *they.*
* Limited: Narrator tells events through one character’s experiences.
* Omniscient: Narrator knows and tells information about all events, places, and characters’ thoughts/feelings.
 | * Everybody needs to do his or her best work.
* She yelled, “I can’t do this anymore!”
* All people need to work together toward world peace.
* It is important for Wallace to support its athletes and student activity groups.
 | it, its, someone, somebody, everyone, anybody, everybody, everything, she, her, hers, he, his, him, they, them, their, theirs, many, most, all, none, some, etc.\*Do not use any of the first or second person pronouns.\*Consider using plural nouns that support your topic such as children, students, people, adults, teenagers, citizens, Joe, (names of people), etc. |

If you’ve written your essay in first or second person and need to convert it to third person, consider these tips:

1. Sometimes you can easily replace a pronoun for another pronoun or noun:

*You should do your homework every night.* (second person)

*Students should do their homework every night.* (third person)

1. Be careful with indefinite pronouns. Many of them are singular, so the pronoun and antecedent must match:

*Everybody should do their work*. (third person, but grammatically incorrect—singular to plural)

*Everybody should do his or her work.* (third-person singular)

1. If you’ve written your essay from first-person point of view and need to write in the third person, you may need to change your topic entirely if you’ve written about a personal experience. For example, if I’ve described my favorite memory as a teenager, it would be difficult to do so from a third-person point of view.

*Note: Dialogue is not narration. Dialogue = when characters speak. Narration = when narrator speaks.*