Point of View

**Point of view** is the vantage point from which a story is told. Point of view is important because no two people see a sequence of events in the exactly the same way. Most writers use one of these points of view: **first-person**, **third-person omniscient**, or **third-person limited**.

The chart below indicates the features of each point of view. The characteristics that are shown in a gray box are those features that two points of view have in common.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **First-person** | **Third-person omniscient** | **Third-person limited** |
| The narrator is a character in the story. | The narrator is not a character in the story. | The narrator is not a character in the story. |
| The narrator uses the pronoun *I* and other first-person pronouns. | The narrator uses third-person pronouns: *he, she, it, they…* | The narrator uses third-person pronouns: *he, she, it, they.* |
| The reader sees and knows only what the narrator sees and knows, and the narrator is limited to his or her own experience. | The narrator can tell the reader everything about any character, including what will happen in that character’s future. | The narrator reveals the thoughts and feelings of just one character, and does not know everything. |

**Understanding Point of View**Identify the point of view from which each of the following passages is told.

1. “He had enjoyed his work, however, knowing that she stood there on the shore, watching him, admiring him. He hadn’t been afraid to fall into the water because that would have only been a repeat jump. But he had been concerned be might drop the bicycle.”

Point of view:

2. “Behind me I hear before I can see Granddaddy Cain comin through the woods in his field boots.”

Point of view:

3. “Try as they did to ignore it, they were all aware of the shuffling, the stabbing, the persistent beating and sweeping of wings.”

Point of view:

4. “I hoped to find something to eat and then get on to Houston.”

Point of view:

5. “We walked up the wide staircase hand in hand and through the door, which closed by itself. A mechanical contraption screwed to the top shut it behind us quietly.”\

**Changing Point of View:**

Consider all the Disney movies with which you are familiar. Choose ONE and rewrite a single scene from all three points of view. The first paragraph should be in FIRST PERSON. The second paragraph should be THIRD PERSON LIMITED, and the third should be THIRD PERSON OMNISCIENT.