

Whose Story Is It?

What's the difference between **perspective** and **point of view**?

Perspective is the way a story is being told based on who is telling the story.

The story of "Little Red Riding Hood" told from the **perspective** of the wolf might be a whole lot less scary and a lot more funny (if the wolf was just coming to borrow a cup of sugar and happened to have a cold). Have you read that one?

Point of View (POV) is the **perspective** from which a story is being told.

There are lots of different points of view to choose from, but the three most common are:

First Person

The story is told from the "I" perspective.

For example:

I really like teaching kids about creative writing, I thought, as I opened my laptop to get started on this week's workshop.

Third Person Limited

The story is told from the "he/she/they" perspective. In third person limited, the perspective of the story is limited to one character's point of view.

For example:

Abbey really liked teaching kids about creative writing. She opened her laptop to get started on this week's workshop. Beside her on the couch, Abbey's daughter turned on the TV. "Could you turn that down?" asked Abbey.

Third Person Omniscient

The story is told from the "he/she/they" perspective. In third person omniscient, the story is told from the perspective of an omnipresent narrator, who can dip in and out of any character's thoughts at any time.

For example:

Abbey really liked teaching kids about creative writing. She opened her laptop to get started on this week's workshop. Beside her on the couch, Abbey's daughter turned on the TV. She had been waiting all day to watch the season premiere of her favorite show.

"Could you turn that down?" asked Abbey.

"Could you go work somewhere else?" asked her daughter.

See the difference?

Here are a few activities that play with perspective and POV:

1. Each of the attached worksheets have a different picture on them. Figure out how many different perspectives the picture's story could be told from. Choose one (or two, or however many you want), and then write a sentence or two from that perspective in EACH point of view.
2. "Going on a Camping Trip"

For this activity, you'll work with the following prompt:

Imagine two families have gone camping together. When they first arrive at the campground, the park ranger warns them that a bear has been spotted on the grounds. In the middle of the night, two kids sneak out together. A mom finds them missing and calls the park ranger for help.

Tell this story from the following perspectives:

One of the kids
One of the moms
The park ranger
The bear

See how your story changes depending on which perspective you choose?
Sometimes, the entire mood and tone might change. How does the story change if you write it from a different POV?

3. For older writers, consider taking a piece of writing that isn't working and ask yourself if a different POV/perspective could be the answer to your problem. Whose story is it? Take one paragraph or one chapter and write it from a different perspective and/or a different POV.



Point of View

Perspectives:

First Person:

Third Person Limited:

Third Person Omniscient:



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