Point of View
Who’s Talking?
A Familiar Story?

I had been a frog for a long time, but when the golden sphere splashed into the murky water at the bottom of my pond, it reminded me of something I had known about long before. I had held something in my hands—I had thrown it through the air in the opposite motion from catching a fly. I had laughed—suddenly I could remember laughing.

I took the heavy, cold golden ball and swam to the surface. My head broke through the water, but my body was weighed down by the ball. I hung there, swaying, staring up at the bright world. Then, motion filled my vision. Something large and pale swooped down at me, and suddenly both the ball and I were flying through the air toward a bright shape. “Please,” the shape said in words I could somehow understand, “please give me back my golden ball.”
What Is Point of View?

Point of view is the vantage point from which a writer tells a story.

• What you learn about events, characters, and places depends on the point of view of the narrator, the voice that tells the story.
Points of View

The three most common points of view:

• Omniscient
• Third-person limited
• First person
Omniscient Point of View

• In the omniscient point of view, the narrator knows everything about the story.

• The narrator is not part of the story but rather an observer who knows
  • everything about all the characters, even their private thoughts
  • the past, present, and future of the story, as well as what is happening everywhere in it
Every summer, the cousins played capture the flag when their families met at the lake house. They divided into three teams and every year planned more elaborate tactics.

Russell organized his brothers and sister to hide their flag high in a tree. “They’ll never find it here,” he thought happily. He really wanted to outsmart Lucia this year.

On the other side of the lake, the twins Lucia and Jennifer helped their younger brothers pile up brush to look like an abandoned beaver dam. “We should make a decoy, too,” Lucia suggested.

Paul was an only child, so he and the Franklin family were a team. “I’m the oldest in our family, so I should be in charge,” Janie argued. Paul frowned at her. She was only twelve. What did she know about strategy? “I’m the oldest on the team,” he told her.
Third-Person-Limited Point of View

• In third-person-limited point of view, the narrator zooms in on the thoughts and feelings of just one character.
• The narrator plays no part in the story and has limited knowledge of it.
Paul stood in the woods near the lakefront and looked at Janie. His brown hair fell into his eyes, and he irritably pushed it back. Why did his younger cousin always have to argue? He wondered how his aunt and uncle could put up with her all the time. Maybe it was good that he was an only child. Sometimes even two weeks with Janie seemed long.

“I’m the oldest in our family, so I should be in charge,” Janie argued.

Paul frowned at her. She was only twelve. What did she know about strategy? Paul was fifteen, and he had a lot of great ideas about where to hide the flag. Janie wasn’t old enough to have any clever plans.
First-Person Point of View

• In first-person point of view, the narrator is one of the characters in the story and tells the story using the pronoun I.
  • All of your information about the story comes from this narrator.
First-Person Point of View

Mostly I liked Janie. She was a lot of fun, but sometimes she really got on my nerves! I had all these ideas about capture the flag, and she didn’t want to listen; she only wanted to argue. I didn’t know how my aunt and uncle could stand her! Being with Janie for two weeks really made me glad I was an only child.

“I’m the oldest in our family, so I should be in charge,” Janie whined to me. She was pouting, and her face was turning red.

I sighed. Janie was only twelve. What did she know about strategy? Her idea would probably be to put the flag under a rock and then run around yelling and chasing anyone who came near her. I knew that Lucia and Jennifer and Russell would come up with some really clever plans. Our team was already at a disadvantage because we had the two youngest cousins, Adam and Lynn. “I’m the oldest on the team,” I told her.
Why Is Point of View Important?

• Point of view determines all of the information you get about a story.
  • Consider how a story would be different if another voice were telling it.
  • Think about how information in a story is affected by the narrator’s perspective on the events.
What Have You Learned?

Match these terms with the correct definition.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Omniscient</th>
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<th>Third-person limited</th>
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<tbody>
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The End