

Choosing a point of view is a very important decision for an author. This is because the choice of point of view is what decides who will tell the story and how they will be able to tell it.

Alongside character and plot, point of view choice is absolutely fundamental to a writer's story in determining how it will come across to the reader.

There are four main types of point of view:

- first person
- third person objective
- third person subjective/limited
- omniscient.

Task 1

Find the definitions for each type of point of view. Next, read the following paragraphs and identify what type of point of view is used.

1. All the students were standing in a circle. They were all thinking same thing, 'Who is responsible for the missing money?' Sandy seemed to remember seeing Ben entering the classroom by himself during recess. Ben was thinking that Sandy seemed awfully concerned about something. Little did they all know that the real culprit was not even in the circle, she was already spending her ill-gotten gains at the shopping centre.

a) What in the paragraph lets you know what point of view is being used?

2. I know I saw Ben entering the classroom during recess and he was by himself. I cannot think of any reason he would have for going there. That is, I cannot think of any reason except one that he would have for going there. My next step must be to find out if that was indeed the reason and get the money back.

a) What in the paragraph lets you know what point of view is being used?

Point of view

3. Ben was watching Sandy intently from his position in the circle. 'Why does she seem so concerned?' he thought. Something was up and it seemed as if Sandy might know more about the missing money than she was letting on. Ben had gone into the classroom at recess to go get his MP3 player but, unfortunately, had not seen or heard anything out of the ordinary. He was determined to keep an eye on Sandy.

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- a) What in the paragraph lets you know what point of view is being used?
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Task 2

Now that you have read some examples using different points of view, have a class discussion about which point of view you prefer and why. There is no one correct answer. However, keep in mind that the author always chooses a certain point of view for a specific reason.

Task 3

In the above paragraphs, you were introduced to a story about money being stolen from a classroom. Each paragraph used a different point of view to illustrate how any novel or short story that is written could have been written from a different point of view with a different effect. It is now your job to write a paragraph detailing what the actual thief was doing in this story. You can write this paragraph using any point of view that you want, just be sure to stick to that point of view!