

Narrator and Point of View

Name: _____

In every story there is a storyteller, called a narrator. The narrator tells the actions, the characters and the setting of the story. In fiction, the narrator is not the same as the author. An author creates a narrator. For example, in *Treasure Island* the narrator who tell the story is Jim Hawkins, the son of an innkeeper. The author who wrote the book is Robert Louis Stevenson. Jim says in the first lines of the book:

“Squire Trelawney, Doctor Livesey, and the rest of these gentlemen having asked me to write down the whole particulars about Treasure Island, from the beginning to the end...”

He goes on to mention that he is writing the story in the 1700s. Robert Louis Stevenson was not born until 1850, and wrote *Treasure Island* in 1883.

There are two main types of narrators: first person and third person. A first person narrator is usually a part of the story. This narrator uses *I* and *me* in the text. *Treasure Island* is a first person narration, or story told by Jim, who is a character in the story and uses *I* and *me*. Another example from the book:

“I was standing at the door for a moment, full of sad thoughts about my father, when I saw someone drawing slowly near along the road.”

A third person narrator is the most common in fiction. This narrator is not a character or at least not a main character. This narrator watches what goes on, but does not take a

part in it. A third person narrator only uses *he*, *she* or *it*, never *me* or *I*. Like a first person narration, the author still creates the narrator. An example of a third person narration is *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, by L. Frank Baum.

“When Dorothy stood in the doorway and looked around, she could see nothing but the great gray prairie on every side.”

The author uses *she* when talking about Dorothy, the main character. The only time that *I* or *me* is used in the story is in conversations.

Remember: In first person, the narrator is usually a main character and uses *I* and *me*.

In third person narrations, the narrator is not a main character and uses *she*, *he*, *they* or *it*. *I* and *me* is used only in conversations.

Below are some passages from books. Read them and write what type of narration it is: first person or third person.

1. At half-past nine, that night, Tom and Sid were sent to bed, as usual. They said their prayers, and Sid was soon asleep. Tom lay awake and waited, in restless impatience.

(*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain)

2. There were six young colts in the meadow besides me; they were older than I was; some were nearly as large as grown-up horses. I used to run with them, and had great fun; we used to gallop all together round and round the field as hard as we could go.

(*Black Beauty* by Anna Sewell)

3. To begin my life with the beginning of my life, I record that I was born (as I have been informed and believe) on a Friday, at twelve o'clock at night. It was remarked that the clock began to strike, and I began to cry, simultaneously.

(*David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens)

4. Since his papa's death, Cedric had found out that it was best not to talk to his mamma about him. When his father was ill, Cedric had been sent away, and when he had returned, everything was over...

(*Little Lord Fauntleroy* by Frances Hodgson Burnett)
