

Levels of Thinking: Remember, Understand, Apply

What is First Person Point of View?

When an author chooses to use first person point of view, he or she tells the story as though the narrator were speaking directly to the reader. The narrator uses the pronoun "I" as a subject and tells the story using only what he or she, the narrator, would know personally about it. This point of view has both advantages and limitations—it is an intimate way of telling a story that involves readers personally, but the narrator is limited to "knowing" only what goes on in the mind of one character—all other characters' thought and feelings must be suggested by the events of the plot and the narrator's observations of them.

In order to fully understand the meaning of the story, the reader must make some educated guesses about the person who is telling the story and his/her situation. The *speaker*, or narrator, of the story may differ from the *author*—who usually creates a *persona*, a made-up character for that particular story.

When you read fiction, you should consider the point of view and the *persona* of the narrator.

3. Fill out the chart below in order to better understand the *persona* of the narrator.

Something the narrator does or says	What does this suggest about the narrator? That he. . .	Explain your assertion.
"For a whole hour I did not move a muscle" (l. 3).	does not want to get caught	Only someone with a great deal of fear that he will be heard could stand that still for an hour.

4. Looking at the details you provided in the chart, what conclusion can you reach about the narrator?