

# 3

## Lesson Three

### FOCUS: Narrative and Point of View

First-person narration draws the reader into the perspective of the main character, as this person tells us, first-hand, about their experiences. This person uses the first-person, “I”, to draw us through her/his adventures. A first-person narrator is personally invested in how the drama unfolds.

Third-person narration uses “he” or “she” to tell the story from another point of view. Third-person narration establishes a greater distance between narrator and audience, as an outside observer relates events. Since this outside observer does not appear to participate directly in or affect the events of the story, this narrator seems to relay the drama objectively. A third-person narrator may or may not be omniscient. An omniscient third-person narrator knows the thoughts and movements of every character.

*To Kill a Mockingbird* is told in first person by Jean Louise “Scout” Finch. The novel begins from the point of view of the adult Scout, as she looks back on her childhood. Through the filter of her adult experience, she revisits her memories that, though long ago passed, have a life of their own.

### Discussion Activities

Why might Harper Lee tell the story from an adult perspective, narrated many years after the fact? In the first seven chapters, can you find statements that remind us of an adult point of view? Or does the adult narrator enter completely into the world of her childhood?

How would this story be narrated, in the third-person, from the point of view of Dill’s fabulous imagination? Have the class brainstorm the outline of a new version of the novel told from this perspective.

### Writing Exercise

Based on the previous activity, write a few pages of Dill’s version of the story based on the first seven chapters.

Begin another version of the novel told in first-person from Boo Radley’s perspective. How would Boo Radley describe Jem, Scout, and Dill?

### Homework

Read Chapters 8-11 (pp. 63-99). Going through the first 99 pages, how many characters have been introduced? Which are primary? What motivates the primary characters?