Literary Elements: Point of View

The **perspective** from which a story is told.

Ask yourself, “Who’s telling the story?”
Literary Elements: Point of View

Types of P.O.V.

Omniscient

The narrator is NOT a part of the story. He knows ALL about every character.
Literary Elements: Point of View

Example:

The principal rushed in. *What a morning,* he thought. *I’ve got to get away for awhile.* Nigel Smith saw that this was not going to be a pleasant visit. *Why did I have to pick today to punch Kevin Riley,* he wondered to himself.
Literary Elements: Point of View

Example:

The principal rushed in. *What a morning,* he thought. *I’ve got to get away for awhile.* Nigel Smith saw that this was not going to be a pleasant visit. *Why did I have to pick today to punch Kevin Riley,* he wondered to himself.

**Third Person Omniscient**

The narrator does not use first person pronouns, and the thoughts or feelings of BOTH characters are expressed.
Literary Elements: Point of View

Types of P.O.V.

Third Person Limited

The author tells the story from the viewpoint of just one character. 

LIMITED KNOWLEDGE.
Example:

Nigel Smith sat nervously in the principal’s office, awaiting his impending doom. *Maybe he took the rest of the day off, and this whole thing will just blow over,* he thought to himself. The principal came running into the room and immediately a look of total displeasure was plastered on his face.

“What a pleasure to see you here, Nigel,” he said while throwing himself into his chair.

*Oh yeah,* Nigel thought. *It’s a real pleasure to see you too.*
Example:

1. Nigel Smith sat nervously in the principal’s office, awaiting his impending doom. *Maybe he took the rest of the day off, and this whole thing will just blow over,* he thought to himself. The principal came running into the room and immediately a look of total displeasure was plastered on his face.

   “What a pleasure to see you here, Nigel,” he said while throwing himself into his chair.

   *Oh yeah, Nigel thought. It’s a real pleasure to see you too.*

**Third Person Limited**

The narrator does not use first person pronouns, and the thoughts or feelings of ONE of the characters are expressed.
Literary Elements: Point of View

Types of P.O.V.

*Objective*: a narrator who tells a story without describing any character’s thoughts, opinions, and/or feelings (unbiased)

Example

Jim walked up to Bob, and began accusing Bob of lying to him. When Jim started accusing Bob, he just slammed his locker door shut and ran out the front door of the school and didn’t look back.
Literary Elements: Point of View

Example:

The principal entered his office on the run. He had the look of a man thoroughly fed up with life. When he saw the scruffy boy waiting in the corner, a look of pained displeasure came over him and he sighed deeply.
Literary Elements: Point of View

Example:

The principal entered his office on the run. He had the look of a man thoroughly fed up with life. When he saw the scruffy boy waiting in the corner, a look of pained displeasure came over him and he sighed deeply.

Third Person Objective

The narrator does not use first person pronouns, and no thoughts or feelings of either of the characters are expressed.
Literary Elements: Point of View

Types of P.O.V.

First Person
A character in the story. He/she will use first person pronouns such as I, me, we, etc.
I came rushing in late from lunch. The last thing that I wanted to deal with was a problem student, but there was Nigel Smith, looking like a condemned man. Suddenly, I was fed up with being a principal. I wanted a vacation.
I came rushing in late from lunch. The last thing that I wanted to deal with was a problem student, but there was Nigel Smith, looking like a condemned man. Suddenly, I was fed up with being a principal. I wanted a vacation.

First person
Words such as “I” are used, outside of dialogue.
Types of P.O.V.

Second Person

The second-person point of view belongs to the person (or people) being addressed.

This is the “you” perspective. The biggest indicator of the second person is the use of second-person pronouns: you, your, yours, yourself, yourselves.

Stories and novels written in the second person exist, but they are much rarer than narratives written from a first- or third-person perspective.
Literary Elements: Point of View

**Second Person** Examples:

**In directions:** To add oil to your car engine, unscrew the cap, place a funnel inside, and slowly add the oil.

**In advertising:** Skittles - Taste the rainbow

**In song lyrics:** "Don't stop believin', Hold on to the feelin', Streetlights people" Don't Stop Believin' by Journey

**In famous quotes:** "My fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." - John F. Kennedy