

# **4 Point of View**

Read It, Write It, Tell It Episode: "Harriet Beecher Stowe"

## **Lesson Overview**

The purpose of the lessons in this unit is to help Ohio students in grades 3-7 learn the characteristics of the literary text POINT OF VIEW indicators that they must master for their respective Ohio achievement tests. Special care has been taken to dovetail the lessons with the indicators and the types of questions commonly asked on Ohio tests.

## **Ohio Academic Content Indicators**

- 2001.EL.S05.G04-07.BD.L05.I04 Identify the speaker and explain how point of view affects the text.
- 2001.EL.S05.G04-07.BD.L06.I04 Explain first, third and omniscient points of view, and explain how voice affects the text.
- 2001.EL.S05.G04-07.BD.G07.I04 Identify and compare subjective and objective points of view and how they affect the overall body of a work.

## **Ohio Achievement/Proficiency Tests Point of View Question Types**

- Given a list of characters from a selection, chose the one who is the speaker.
- Read a sentence from a selection where the speaker is referenced by a pronoun. Who is the speaker?
- Who is the speaker for the entire selection?
- Which sentence, of several from a selection, shows that the narrator's point of view is subjective/objective?
- How does the author choose to present the entire selection's point of view?

## **Harriet Beecher Stowe**

### **Episode Overview**

This episode is about the famous 19<sup>th</sup> century author, Harriet Beecher Stowe, who lived in Ohio for 18 years before the Civil War. In the tall tale portion of the episode, Harriet's book *Uncle Tom's Cabin* grows arms and legs and comes to life when it is faced with being revised. Abraham Lincoln helps to capture and subdue the unruly book.

Fact:

- Harriet Beecher Stowe's (1811-1896) nickname was Hattie. She liked to read. She had a brother name Charles and it is quite likely she helped him when he was ill.
- There was unrest in Cincinnati while Stowe lived there.
- She moved to Maine after she lived in Ohio and she did lose an 18-month old son, Samuel Charles (Charley), to a cholera epidemic in Cincinnati in 1849. She probably did feel safer in Maine than in Cincinnati.
- She may have met Abraham Lincoln.
- Harriet wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a book that caused many Americans to think about slavery and stir a nation into action.
- Some Cincinnati citizens did help slaves who were escaping across the Ohio River.

Fiction:

- Fiction: Harriet had half a dozen children. Fact: She had seven children between 1836 and 1850: Twins: Eliza and Harriet, Henry, Frederick, Georgiana, Samuel Charles (Charley), and Charles Edward. The twins and Charles Edward survived her. Charley died of cholera at age 18 months,

Henry drowned at age 16, Frederick was never heard from again after he went to California when he was 30, and Georgiana died at age 47 – probably due to the addiction she developed to morphine she was first given as a painkiller following childbirth.

- Fiction: The storyteller says “Civil unrest was in the streets of Cincinnati – even though war had not been declared yet.” Fact: Only a part of the unrest in Cincinnati was associated with the coming Civil War. The riots in Cincinnati during the years Stowe lived there (1832-1850) included: the Pro Slavery Riots of 1836, the Bank Riot of 1842 and the Jail Riot of 1848.
- Fiction: The storyteller says “At this time, an epidemic broke out. Cholera killed thousands of people, many of them were children. Hattie tried to keep all her children well, but the baby got sick. She took her family to Maine. There, she and her family felt safe.” Fact: She moved to Maine because her husband joined the faculty of Bowdoin College, his alma mater.
- Fiction: Harriet Beecher Stowe met Abraham Lincoln in Ohio before he became President of the United States. Fact: No one is 100% sure if Stowe ever met Lincoln. She did not meet him before he became President.

### Vocabulary

The following words used by the storyteller in the *Read It, Write It, Tell It* episode “Harriet Beecher Stowe” may be unfamiliar to some students.

cholera  
civil unrest  
epidemic  
frustration  
injustice

literature  
notions  
publisher  
revision marks

sheer whimsy  
souls  
vivid  
whirlwind

### Before Viewing

1. Say: How do you determine the point of view for a reading selection?
2. Say: If you were telling a story about a famous person like George Washington, would you use 1<sup>st</sup> person, 2<sup>nd</sup> person, or 3<sup>rd</sup> person point of view? Explain your decision.
3. Say: Would you change the point of view for your story if you were creating historical fiction that included a real famous person?
4. Say: Watch the *Read It, Write It, Tell It* episode about Harriett Beecher Stowe. Be prepared to identify the genre and the point of view.

### After Viewing

Pre/Post Questions: If the students cannot easily answer the following questions, you may wish to use the Lessons (Section 4) and/or the Extensions (Section 5) about point of view.

1. Share something from the story you think is historically accurate.  
*Answers will vary. Accept reasonable responses. Responses may include: Harriet Beecher Stowe's (1811-1896) nickname was Hattie. She liked to read. She had a brother name Charles and it is quite likely she helped him when he was ill. There was unrest in Cincinnati while Stowe lived there. She moved to Maine after she was married and she did lose a son, Samuel Charles - Charley, to a cholera epidemic in Cincinnati in 1849. She probably did feel safer in Maine than in Cincinnati. She may have met Abraham Lincoln. Harriet wrote Uncle Tom's Cabin, a book that caused many Americans to think about slavery and stir a nation into action. Some Cincinnati citizens did help slaves who were escaping across the Ohio River.*
2. Share something from the story that is fiction.  
*Answers will vary. Accept reasonable responses. Response may include: The book did not come to life and run away. President Lincoln did not help capture a runaway book.*
3. Who is the narrator of the "Harriet Beecher Stowe" episode?  
*The narrator of the episode is the storyteller, J. D. Williamson.*
4. From what Point of View (1<sup>st</sup> Person, 3<sup>rd</sup> Person-Limited, or 3<sup>rd</sup> Person-Omniscient) was the story told? Support your answer. *3<sup>rd</sup> Person-Limited. The storyteller uses 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns to talk about Hattie and Abe Lincoln such as she, her, and him. The storyteller tells us only a little about the thoughts and feelings of Hattie and Abe but nothing about the book that came to life.*
5. Is the episode an example of subjective or objective point of view? Support your answer.  
*The episode is subjective. The narrator does know what his characters are thinking even when they do not say anything aloud. Example: "Abe almost laughed to himself at her frustration and the sheer whimsy of it all, but he was also too shocked to say anything." An objective narrator might have said, "A brief smile crossed Abe's face but he said nothing."*

## 4 Lesson

### Materials

- Student handout “Point of View”
- Student handout “Point of View Overview” (Optional)
- Student handout “Point of View Quiz”

### Procedure:

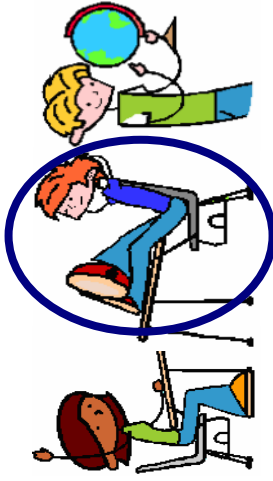
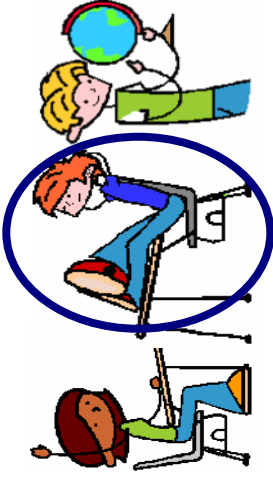

1. Use the handout “Point of View” to introduce or review 1<sup>st</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup> person-limited and 3<sup>rd</sup> person-omniscient.
2. Remind students to look outside quotation marks when trying to identify the narrator of a written selection.
3. Have the students rewrite the 1<sup>st</sup> person example from the “Point of View” handout from Markia’s point of view.
4. Have the students rewrite the 3<sup>rd</sup> person-limited example from the “Point of View” handout from Sam’s perspective.
5. Review or introduce the students to the differences between objective and subjective points of view.  
***Subjective:** the author allows the narrator to have superhuman powers and to share information that includes the thoughts, feelings, and actions of one or more characters.*  
***Objective:** the author allows the narrator to have the powers of a video camera and to share only what the camera might see and hear if it was recording the events passing before it. The reader/listener/viewer must add meaning to what is reported by the narrator.*
6. You may wish to give the students the handout “Point of View Overview.”
7. You may wish to have the students conduct independent research of Point of View at one of the following websites:
  - a. Wikipedia
    - i. Point of View: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Point\\_of\\_view\\_%28literature%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Point_of_view_%28literature%29)
    - ii. Narrator: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narrator>
    - iii. Omniscient Narrator: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omniscient\\_narrator](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omniscient_narrator)
    - iv. Third person limited omniscient: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third\\_person\\_limited\\_omniscient](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_person_limited_omniscient)
    - v. Viewpoint Scope: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viewpoint\\_Scope\\_%28literature%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viewpoint_Scope_%28literature%29)
  - b. <http://www.bloomington.in.us/~dory/creative/class10.html>
  - c. [http://www.gaston.k12.nc.us/schools/highland/class/weaver/literary\\_terms.htm#point%20of%20view](http://www.gaston.k12.nc.us/schools/highland/class/weaver/literary_terms.htm#point%20of%20view)
8. Give the students the handout “Point of View Quiz” to evaluate their knowledge. See the teacher handout: “Point of View Quiz – Answer Key.”

# Point of View

## Point of View



An author thinks about a story and its characters before writing. In literary text, characters are very important. Who will be in the story? Who is the main character?  
Who, in the story, will narrate (tell) the story?

First Person	Third Person, Limited	Third Person, Omniscient
 <p><u>I</u> leaned back in my seat and put <b>my</b> hands behind <b>my</b> neck. <b>I</b> saw Marika raising her hand. <u>She's always ready to answer every question. She must really want to impress the teachers.</u> <u>Behind <b>me</b></u>, Sam looked at a globe.</p> <p>Choose one character. Write the story as if you are that character. Pretend that you know nothing more about the other characters in the story than you know about other people around you in the real world. You can see what they do and they may have told you their feelings – or you may have guessed why they behave as they do. Use pronouns like <b>I</b>, <b>me</b>, and <b>my</b>.</p>	 <p><u>Nate</u> leaned back in <b>his</b> seat and put <b>his</b> hands behind <b>his</b> neck. <b>He</b> saw Marika raising her hand. <b>He</b> knew that she <u>was always answering every question and he felt she must really want to impress the teachers.</u> <u>Behind <b>him</b></u>, Sam looked at a globe.</p> <p>Choose one character but don't become the character. You, the author, are not part of the story. Tell about what that character sees, feels, thinks, and/or does. Pretend to know nothing more about the other characters than the chosen character could know. Use pronouns like <b>he</b>, <b>him</b>, <b>his</b> or <b>she</b>, <b>her</b>, <b>hers</b>.</p>	 <p><u>Nate</u> leaned back in <b>his</b> seat and put <b>his</b> hands behind <b>his</b> neck. <b>He</b> saw <u>Marika</u> raising <b>her</b> hand. <u>Nate didn't know that <b>she</b> always had <b>her</b> hand up because <b>her</b> parents keep pressuring <b>her</b> to get straight "A"s.</u> <b>She</b> feels <b>she</b> must work to stand out in class <b>for</b> them. <u>Behind Nate</u>, Sam looked at a globe.</p> <p>Choose any or all of the characters but do not become any of them. As the author, you know everything that has or will happen including what everyone will be thinking and feeling and how they will behave. Tell your readers everything you think they should know about each character. Use <b>he/she, him/her, his/hers</b>.</p>

## Overview - Point of View

The point of view is the character (or observer) in a selection who tells readers/viewers/listeners the story. A skilled author can suppress his/her personal feelings, opinions, perspectives, or biases and become that narrator – telling the story as his/her narrator would see it.

- **Author** – The person or people who write a story.
- **First-person** – The narrator takes part in a story. The author uses pronouns like I, me, mine.
- **Limited omniscient** – All-knowing narrator about one or two characters, but not everything and everybody.
- **Narrator** – The character or observer telling the story to the reader/listener/viewer.
- **Objective** – The narrator is unnamed and/or unidentified. An objective narrator simply reports on events and lets the reader supply the meaning.
- **Omniscient** – All-knowing narrator. The narrator knows everything about all of the characters and the events of the story. The author decides what the narrator discloses about the character(s) and the events.
- **Subjective** – The narrator takes on the mindset of one (or more characters). The narrator shares opinions or makes judgments about events, other characters, and the characters' motivations.
- **Third-person** – The narrator is not a part of the story. The author uses pronouns like she, he, him, her, they.
- **Unreliable narrator** – The narrator cannot be trusted. Details shared about one or more characters and events may not be true.

## Personal pronouns

	1st Person		2nd Person		3rd Person	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Subject pronoun	I	we	you	you	he she it	they
Object pronoun	me	us	you	you	her him it	them
Reflexive pronoun	myself	ourselves	yourself	yourselves	himself herself itself oneself one's self	themselves
<i>Possessive adjective</i>	<i>my</i>	<i>our</i>	<i>your</i>	<i>your</i>	<i>his</i> <i>her</i> <i>its</i>	<i>their</i>
Possessive pronoun	mine	ours	yours	yours	his hers its	theirs

Source: Wiktionary > English inflection > Forms of Pronouns: [http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Wiktionary:English\\_inflection](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Wiktionary:English_inflection)

## Point of View Quiz

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Read each statement or example below. Choose one (or more) of the following Point of View terms and write it (or them) in the boxes in each row. Terms: **1<sup>st</sup> Person, 2<sup>nd</sup> Person, 3<sup>rd</sup> Person, 3<sup>rd</sup> Person - Limited, 3<sup>rd</sup> Person-Omniscient, Subjective, Objective**

	1. The author can shift focus from character to character. The author's narrator shares knowledge of each main character's thoughts and of events which no single character could be aware.
	2. The author, when speaking of the main character, uses pronouns like you and yours.
	3. The author picks one character and follows him or her around for the duration of the book.
	4. This point of view is the least often used by writers.
	5. The author, when speaking of the main character, uses pronouns like I, me, mine.
	6. You say, "I'm only going to say this once. I am not going with you to the mall." You hate doing it but have no intention of admitting to him that the reason is that you want to work on your history project.
	7. The author's narrator shares the thoughts, feelings, and memories of the main character.
	8. The author, when speaking of the main character, uses pronouns like he, him, his.
	9. Harry said, "I'm only going to say this once. I am not going with you to the mall."
	10. I said, "I'm only going to say this once. I am not going with you to the mall."
	11. The author's narrator tells only what can be seen and heard. The narrator does not give the reader the internal thoughts or feelings of any of the characters. This type of narration is like a store's surveillance camera recording the audio and video of the events that occur within its line of sight.
	12. Harry told Nathan, "I'm only going to say this once. I am not going with you to the mall." Harry felt he would lose Nathan's friendship all together if Nathan knew why he didn't want to go. Harry was judging Nathan too harshly. Nathan would have helped him study, not ditched him.
	13. Harry told Nathan, "I'm only going to say this once. I am not going with you to the mall." Nathan gave Harry a crooked grin, turned, and walked away. When Nathan was out of sight, he stopped and said, "I'll bet he wanted to study and he didn't want me to know it."
	14. The author takes on the personality of a character in the story and has that character narrate the story to the reader.



## Point of View Quiz – Answer Sheet

Terms: **1<sup>st</sup> Person, 2<sup>nd</sup> Person, 3<sup>rd</sup> Person, 3<sup>rd</sup> Person - Limited, 3<sup>rd</sup> Person-Omniscient, Subjective, Objective**

Student Directions: Read each statement or example below. Choose one (or more) of the following Point of View terms and write it (or them) in the boxes in each row.

3 <sup>rd</sup> Person – Omniscient Subjective	1. The author can shift focus from character to character. The author's narrator shares knowledge of each main character's thoughts and of events which no single character could be aware.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Person	2. The author, when speaking of the main character, uses pronouns like you and yours.
1 <sup>st</sup> Person	3. The author picks one character and follows him or her around for the duration of the book.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Person	4. This point of view is the least often used by authors.
1 <sup>st</sup> Person	5. The author, when speaking of the main character, uses pronouns like I, me, mine.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Person Subjective	6. You say, "I'm only going to say this once. I am not going with you to the mall." You hate doing it but have no intention of admitting to him that the reason is that you want to work on your history project.
1 <sup>st</sup> Person 3 <sup>rd</sup> Person	7. The author's narrator shares the thoughts, feelings, and memories of one main character.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Person	8. The author, when speaking of the main character, uses pronouns like he, him, his.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Person	9. Harry said, "I'm only going to say this once. I am not going with you to the mall."
1 <sup>st</sup> Person	10. I said, "I'm only going to say this once. I am not going with you to the mall."
3 <sup>rd</sup> Person – Objective	11. The author's narrator tells only what can be seen and heard. The narrator does not give the reader the internal thoughts or feelings of any of the characters. This type of narration is like a store's surveillance camera recording the audio and video of the events that occur within its line of sight.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Person – Omniscient Subjective	12. Harry told Nathan, "I'm only going to say this once. I am not going with you to the mall." Harry felt he would lose Nathan's friendship all together if Nathan knew why he didn't want to go. He judged Nathan too harshly. Nathan would have helped him study, not ditched him.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Person – Omniscient Objective	13. Harry told Nathan, "I'm only going to say this once. I am not going with you to the mall." Nathan gave Harry a crooked grin, turned, and walked away. When Nathan was out of sight, he stopped and said, "I'll bet he wanted to study and he didn't want me to know it."
1 <sup>st</sup> Person	14. The author takes on the personality of a character in the story and has that character narrate the story to the reader.



## 5 Extension Activities

### Point of View • Internet Resources

#### Ohio Instructional Management System

- <https://ims.ode.state.oh.us>. Use the IMS Quick Search:
- Chose ☉ Lesson Plans, Content Area: English – Reading ▼, Grade Level: as desired ▼, Keyword: type Point of View. Click Search.

#### “Establishing a Point of View in Narratives - Grade Four”

- Establishing point of view is a new concept for fourth grade students. This lesson introduces and develops the concept and gives students the opportunity to both identify and to construct point of view in narratives. Additionally, students practice identifying and sequencing main events.

#### “What's My Point - Grade Six”

- This lesson develops student understanding of persuasion. Students move through the process of defining persuasion, identifying persuasive arguments and techniques in writing and evaluating their own use of accurate details. Students also define an author's point of view.

#### Ohio Resource Center – Reading [http://www.ohiorc.org/search/search\\_adv.aspx](http://www.ohiorc.org/search/search_adv.aspx)

- Advanced Search: Choose Free Text and ORC Number from the drop down menus and type the ORC Lesson number in the center box. Scroll down and click Submit. For example:  
Search for resources that...contain   in the

#### “Cross-cultural Dialogue,” Grades 7-10

- ORC Lesson# 1319
- Cross-cultural Dialogue uses two personal narratives, written by a beginning English teacher in an unfamiliar culture, to teach point of view. Students read two narratives, first from the teacher's point of view and then from what she imagines to be her students' point of view.

### Other Internet Resources

#### “Critical Literacy: Point of View,” Grades 6-8

- [http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=23](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=23)
- Many students read without questioning a text or analyzing the author's viewpoint. This lesson encourages sixth- through eighth-grade students to question what they are reading by providing them with the language and skills needed to analyze a text. Students learn to look at the author's purpose and viewpoint, and also recognize gaps in the text. Extension activities include debating a fairy tale using different character viewpoints.

#### “Teaching Point of View with *Two Bad Ants*,” Grades 3-5

- [http://readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=789](http://readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=789)
- This lesson provides students with the opportunity to use illustrations and text to develop an understanding of the point of view of the characters. Students read the story *Two Bad Ants* by Chris Van Allsburg, work in pairs to analyze the illustrations and text, and compare and contrast points of view. Finally, they reread the story, applying their knowledge of point of view.

“Teaching Voice with Anthony Browne’s *Voices in the Park*,” Grades 6-8

- [http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=167](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=167)
- The concept of voice is often difficult for middle school students to incorporate into their writing. This lesson, aimed at grades 6-8 but easily applicable to any level, provides a clear example of an author who created four specific voices. By reading and discussing the characters in Anthony Browne's picture book, *Voices in the Park*, students will gain a clear understanding of how to use voice in their own writing.

Matson, Nancy. “Point of View in Literature and Unreliable Narrators with *The Boy Trap*” Grades 3-5

- <http://www.nancymatson.com/BTLPI1.HTM>
- This lesson serves to improve kids' reading and critical thinking skills by asking them to identify ways to determine someone's point of view without the characters expressing their views outright. It also introduces them to the idea of an unreliable narrator, and gives them a chance to develop critical thinking skills on the nature of prejudice.

“Seeing Integration from Different Viewpoints,” Grades 6-8

[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=816](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=816)

- This lesson uses *The Story of Ruby Bridges* by Robert Coles, which describes the court-ordered desegregation of an all-white school in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1960, as a basis for a Directed Reading–Thinking Activity. A pre-reading strategy captures students' interest using a question and a during-reading strategy focuses their attention on key ideas. Finally, a post-reading group activity called The Five Decision Lenses, (adapted from *Six Thinking Hats* by Edward de Bono, Back Bay Books, 1999) uses colored glasses to encourage students to view court-ordered desegregation from different perspectives.

“Poems that Tell a Story: Narrative and Persona in the Poetry of Robert Frost,” Grades 6-8

[http://edsitement.neh.gov/view\\_lesson\\_plan.asp?id=345](http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=345)

- Students explore such questions and mysteries in journal entries that build upon narrative hints in poems chosen from an online selection of Frost's most frequently anthologized and taught works. By analyzing what a speaker (or persona) in one of Frost's poems includes or omits from his narrative account, students make inferences about that speaker's motivations and character, find evidence for those inferences in the words of the poem, and apply their inferences about the speaker in a dramatic reading performed for other class members.

“The Eye of the Beholder: Point of View”

- <http://staff.fcps.net/tcarr/shortstory/plot1.htm#Eye>
- To examine how point of view affects the development of the short story, choose from the following activities.
  - Activity 1: Review the different types of point of view.
  - Activity 2: In this activity, users will take a given scenario and rewrite it showing different points of view.

“Thanksgiving: A Turkey's Point of View” by Laura Beeler, Grades 3-5

- <http://www.lessonplanspage.com/LAWritingThanksgivingTurkeysPointofViewStory35.htm>

“School Uniforms: Point of View Writing” Grade 7

- <http://www.learnnc.org/lessons/LindaBulluck982002894>

## Point of View

“Local Historians” <http://www.storyarts.org/lessonplans/lessonideas/>

- Have students collect stories about their town from older people. Have students find out how the streets were named. Are there any interesting people or legends to which the street names refer? Are there any local places in town about which people tell stories? Any haunted houses? Have students find out when the town was founded and by whom? Visit a local historical society to see old photographs or artifacts.
- Have students create an original historical fiction: Describe the town from the point of view of a fictitious citizen who might have lived in the town long ago. Include local issues of the time in the story. Tell the story of the town from the fictionalized point of view of a resident who actually lived.