

Lesson 17 Point of View



Knowing that a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences their descriptions will improve your understanding of stories and poems.

Read Point of view is how a person thinks or feels about something. Both narrators in stories and speakers in poems have points of view. The background and culture of an author can influence, or affect, that author's point of view.

In the comic strip below, look for evidence of each character's point of view.



Think Consider what you've learned so far about point of view. Use this chart to describe each character's point of view about the grouse. Then provide evidence of the points of view based on what the characters say and do.

Character	Character's Point of View About Grouse	Evidence of Character's Point of View
City cousin		
Country cousin		

- **Talk** Share your chart with a partner.
 - Why do the cousins have different points of view about grouse?
 - What evidence did you give for each cousin's point of view?
 - Suppose each cousin narrated a story about meeting the grouse. How would the stories differ?
 - Academic Talk

Use these words and phrases to talk about the text.

- narrator
- speaker
- point of view
- influence

Read Genre: Poem

The Pima are a nation of Native Americans that lived in what would eventually become the state of Arizona in the United States. They produced many songs and chants, some of which describe natural events that commonly occur in the American Southwest.

LAGHTNANG SOME

from The Path on the Rainbow

See the destructive lightning
Going to kill the distant tree.
It is going, my younger brother,
To split the distant tree.

5 Around the mountain I carry
My poor younger brother:
Carry him around the mountain
And then stand before it.

The lightning like reddish snakes

Tries to lash and shiver the trees.

The lightning tries to strike them.

But it fails and they still stand.

Through the roaring darkness I run,
Carrying my poor younger brother;
15 From the top of the sky the lightning
Shoots, and strikes nearby.

Close Reader Habits

When you reread the poem, **underline** any words and phrases that suggest what the speaker thinks and feels about the lightning.

Explore

What is the speaker's point of view about the lightning?



Think

In the chart below, describe the speaker's point of view about the lightning. Then provide evidence from the poem of the speaker's point of view.

Imagine you could ask the speaker what he or she thinks of the lightning. What would the speaker tell you?

Speaker	Speaker's Point of View	Evidence of Point of View		
an older brother or sister				

Talk

Take turns reading "Lightning Song" aloud. Does reading the poem aloud affect your understanding of it? Does the speaker express a point of view without stating it directly? Make changes to your chart, if necessary.



Write

Short Response What is the speaker's point of view about the lightning? How does it affect the way the speaker describes what the lightning does? Use details from the poem in your response. Use the space provided on page 300 to write your answer.

HINT One main event of the poem occurs when the lightning tries to strike the trees.

The Letter from Sudbury Academy

by William Paigo

- The letter from Sudbury Academy was on the kitchen table, unopened, when Lanie got home from school. It was addressed to "Miss Alana Mercredi." That was startling, because nobody ever called her "Miss Alana" anything—she was just Lanie.
- 2 Lanie studied the envelope. Metallic blue-and-gold lettering, paper so much brighter than the dingy, gray stuff used at her school—this was an envelope from a place that knew its own worth, which is why Lanie's father had made her apply. Sudbury Academy was a good school, a school with many *Nehiyaw*, or Cree, like her, but not just Cree—students from all over Canada would be there.
- 3 Lanie shivered. Sudbury wasn't like the old schools her grandparents talked about, places built to keep First Nation children from their families. The world was different now. But, still, Sudbury was far away, hours from her family and friends.
- 4 Lanie suddenly thought of the large, flat rock she'd found long ago on a mossy forest floor. She'd lifted it and, like a baby, expected to find treasure—a brilliant silver key, maybe. Instead, beetles and millipedes had flooded out and wriggled away.
- Wanting not to think about the letter for a while, Lanie walked to the next room, where her mother and father were watching television. "Mama," she said. "Papa. How were your days?"
- 6 Lanie's mother shrugged, not turning from the television, which is what she did when upset. Mama was worried the letter had good news.
- 7 But Lanie's father rose, smiling, and hugged her grandly. "Lanie-bug," he said. "The letter came. You saw, eh? What did it say?"
- 8 Lanie wished the letter had never come. No matter what it said, someone in her family would be hurt. But she looked in her father's proud eyes, smiled, and said, "I haven't opened it yet, Papa. Let's find out together."

Close Reader Habits

Lanie has a point of view about Sudbury Academy. But does the narrator? Reread the story.

Underline any clues that suggest what the narrator thinks about the

academy.

Think Use what you learned from reading the story to answer the following questions.

1 This question has two parts. Answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

How does the narrator's point of view influence how the events are described?

- **A** By including only Lanie's actions, words, and thoughts, the narrator can't reveal how her parents feel.
- **B** By giving the detail about the rock with bugs under it, the narrator shows Lanie doesn't want to face her parents.
- **C** By showing Lanie's thoughts about the letter, the narrator reveals that she is worried about each parent's feelings.
- **D** By focusing on the letter from the school, the narrator shows how much Lanie hopes she will be accepted there.

Part B

Which detail from the passage supports the answer in Part A?

- **A** "... from a place that knew its own worth...." (paragraph 2)
- **B** "But, still, Sudbury was far away, . . ." (paragraph 3)
- "... places built to keep First Nation children from their families." (paragraph 3)
- **D** "... someone in her family would be hurt." (paragraph 8)



This story has a third-person narrator, or someone standing outside the story. Look for clues that show the narrator's thoughts and feelings.

Talk

Reread paragraphs 2 and 3. What is the narrator's point of view about Sudbury Academy? Use the chart on page 301 to write your ideas and evidence.



Short Response What inference can you make about the narrator's point of view toward Sudbury Academy? Use the details from your chart to support your response. Use the space provided on page 301 to write your answer.

HINT Look at the words and phrases the narrator uses to describe both the letter and the academy.





Write Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 297.

SONG

Short Response What is the speaker's point of view about the lightning? How does it affect the way the speaker describes what the lightning does? Use details from the poem in your response.

HINT One main event of the poem occurs when the lightning tries to strike the trees.



Don't forget to check your writing.

Check Your Writing

- ☐ Did you read the prompt carefully?
- ☐ Did you put the prompt in your own words?
- ☐ Did you use the best evidence from the text to support your ideas?
- ☐ Are your ideas clearly organized?
- ☐ Did you write in clear and complete sentences?
- ☐ Did you check your spelling and punctuation?

The Letter from Sudbury Academy

2 Use the chart below to organize your ideas and evidence.

Narrator	Narrator's Point of View	Evidence of Narrator's Point of View

HHHHH		Write Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 299.		
	Short Response What inference can you make about the narrator's point of view tow Sudbury Academy? Use the details from your chart to support your response.			



WORDS TO KNOW

As you read, look inside, around, and beyond these words to figure out what they mean.

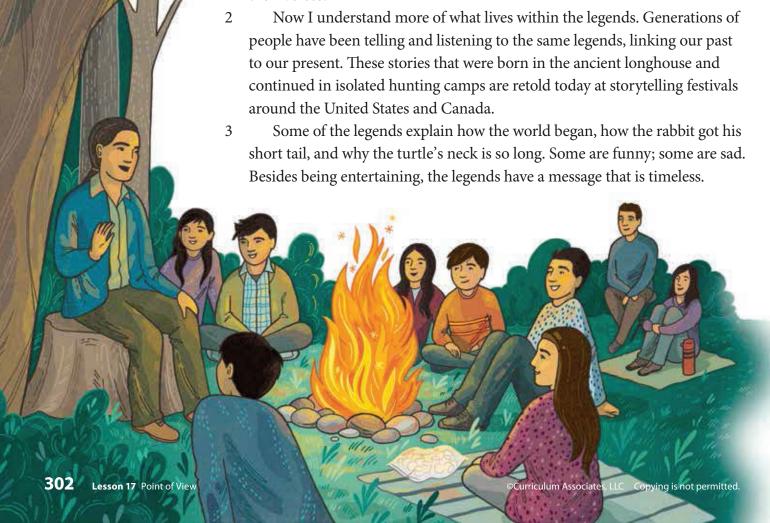
- importance
- generations
- isolated

The author of the following story, Gerard Tsonakwa, is a Native American storyteller who draws on the legends of his tribe, the Abenaki. The Abenaki are an Algonquian-speaking people of northeastern North America.

from Coyote and the Stars

by Tsonakwa, Cobblestone

1 When I was young, I did not realize the importance of the stories told to me by my family and tribe. The legends of heroes, hunters, animals, and spirits of my Abenaki people were exciting and entertaining. The dramatic way the stories were told amid forest shadows made them unforgettable. Even now, I can close my eyes and see the fire-lit faces of those storytellers and hear their voices.

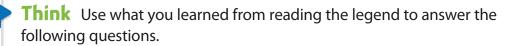




- Now I will tell you a story told to my father when he was young, then told to me when I was a child at my father's knee. I speak his words and voice so that he lives while the story is told. It is a story of Coyote and of stars. Perhaps you have heard coyotes crying pitifully in the night. I will tell you why that is and why the stars are scattered in a great mess all across the sky!
- On the second morning of creation time, the Great Father set about the great task of filling the nighttime sky with beauty. He took a bag and went out on the muskeg [swamp], and there he picked the little flowers we call Morning Stars. He filled the bag with the star flowers, and then he cut a long stick so that he could put the flowers on the end of the stick and place them in the sky just so, in a fine pattern, like beadwork. Then he found the highest hill in the land, so that from that high place he could set the little flowers in the sky, just so. But when he had climbed the mountain, it was still light, so the Great Father decided to take a nap.

- So he laid the bag down in the shade of a tree. And while he was sleeping, Coyote came along. Coyote is like all dogs—he's always thinking of food. He saw the Creator sleeping, and right nearby a great bag filled with something. Coyote said to himself, "I bet there's food in that bag. I'm going to look inside and see." So Coyote grabbed the bag and ran off. But as he ran, he tripped and fell, and the bag ripped open and the stars spilled out and flashed across the sky, every which-way. Then the Great Creator woke up from his nap, and the first thing he saw were his stars flashing all across the sky. And he looked down, and he saw Coyote standing there with the bag in his teeth, ripped open. And the Great Father said to Coyote, "Look what you've done! I wished to put those stars in the sky in a fine pattern, like beads, and look at the mess you've made!"
 - Poor Coyote. He looked up and tears filled his eyes as shame filled his heart to see what he had done to the night sky. And Coyote began to howl. This is why today the stars are scattered all across the sky every which-way, and this is why coyotes, when they see the night sky and the mess their great-grandfather made, fill up with shame and howl.





1 This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

How does the narrator's point of view influence how events are described in paragraph 6?

- **A** By including the Great Father's reaction to Coyote's actions, the narrator shows how cruel the Great Father is.
- **B** By focusing on why Coyote took the bag, the narrator shows that Coyote is greedy but not evil.
- **C** By including a description of the Great Father's nap, it shows how little the Great Father cares about his work.
- **D** By focusing on how clumsy Coyote is, the narrator provides information on how Coyote got that way.

Part B

Which sentence from paragraph 6 supports the answer in Part A?

- **A** "And while he was sleeping, Coyote came along."
- **B** "Coyote is like all dogs—he's always thinking of food."
- **C** "But as he ran, he tripped and fell, and the bag ripped open and the stars spilled out and flashed across the sky, every which-way."
- **D** "'I wished to put those stars in the sky in a fine pattern, like beads, and look at the mess you've made!""
- What does the word <u>pattern</u> mean as it is used in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the story?
 - **A** a model or good example
 - **B** an obvious personality trait
 - **C** a flight path for an airplane
 - **D** a decorative or artistic design

This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

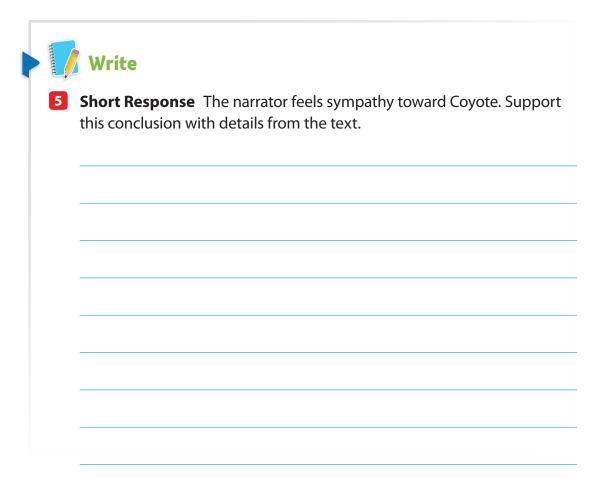
How was the author's point of view influenced by events from his childhood?

- Α Those events made him fearful of being in the forest at night.
- Those events caused him to dislike the traditions of his culture.
- C Those events taught him how to build longhouses and hunting camps.
- Those events led him to respect how long his culture has been around.

Part B

Which detail from the passage **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- "The dramatic way the stories were told amid forest shadows made them unforgettable." (paragraph 1)
- "Even now, I can close my eyes and see the fire-lit faces of those storytellers and hear their voices." (paragraph 1)
- "Generations of people have been telling and listening to the same legends, linking our past to our present." (paragraph 2)
- "I will tell you why that is and why the stars are scattered in a great mess all across the sky!" (paragraph 4)
- 4 How might the story be different if it were told from Coyote's point of view?
 - Α It would explain that Coyote and the Great Father are enemies.
 - It would give a different reason why the stars look as they do.
 - It would show that Coyote is a clever and sneaky trickster.
 - It would tell why Coyote feels shame for scattering the stars.





Learning Target

In this lesson, you explored how the point of view of narrators or speakers can influence how they describe events. Explain how knowing this will help you better understand any stories or poems you read.

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