

Point of View Reference Sheet

Use this chart to help you determine what point of view a story is told in.

1st person

Pronouns

S	O	P
I	me	my/mine
we	us	our/ours

Shiloh by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

The day Shiloh come, **we're** having us a big Sunday dinner. Dara Lynn's dipping bread in her glass of cold tea, the way she likes, and Becky pushes her beans over the edge of her plate in her rush to get 'em down. Ma gives **us** her scolding look. We live high up in the hills above Friendly, but hardly anybody knows where that is. Friendly's near Sistersville, which is halfway between Wheeling and Parkersburg. Used to be, **my** daddy told **me**, Sistersville was once of the best places you could live in the whole state.

2nd person

Pronouns

S	O	P
you	you	your/yours

The Baffled Parent's Guide to Great Basketball Drills by Jim Garland

Before each practice begins, make sure **you** check the court and remove any debris from the playing surface. When **your** players arrive, check that they have the proper footwear and that they've removed any jewelry, which could injure the player wearing the jewelry or another player. Always carry a list of emergency phone numbers for **your** players, and know where the nearest phone is located. **You** should also have a first-aid kit, and **you** might want to take a first-aid course.

3rd person

Pronouns

S	O	P
he	him	his
she	her	her(s)
it	it	its
they	them	their(s)

Sideways Stories from Wayside School by Louis Sachar

Leslie sat in front of Paul. She had two long, brown pigtails that reached all the way down to her waist. Paul saw those pigtails, and a terrible urge came over him. He wanted to pull a pigtail. He wanted to wrap his fist around it, feel the hair between his fingers, and just yank. He thought it would be fun to tie the pigtails together, or better yet, tie them to her chair. But most of all, he just wanted to pull one.

Do you know what any of the characters are thinking?

↓
yes



Do you know what most (three or more) characters are thinking?

no

yes

3rd person

3rd person

limited

omniscient

Pronouns

- S These pronouns are used in the subject of a sentence. (subjective case)
- O These pronouns are used as the object in a sentence. They are in the predicate. (objective case)
- P These pronouns are used to show possessiveness. (possessive case)

Problems with Point of View

Beginning writers usually mix 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person into one paragraph. It can be confusing to the reader if you shift the point of view in your writing (meaning starting in the 3rd person, moving to the 2nd person, then switching back to 3rd).

Increasing one's workload is taxing on both your physical and mental health. Unless someone is in a physically-intensive profession, your body is wasting away while you are working. Additionally, diet also suffers as you spend more time at work. No longer do you have the time to prepare healthy meals at home or even worse, we may not have time to eat at all.

Why does the writer of this paragraph use pronouns incorrectly and ineffectively?

Increasing one's **[3rd person]** workload is taxing on both your **[2nd person]** physical and mental health. Unless someone **[3rd person]** is in a physically-intensive profession, your **[2nd person]** body is wasting away while you **[2nd person]** are working. Additionally, diet **[3rd person]** also suffers as you **[2nd person]** spend more time at work. No longer do you **[2nd person]** have the time to prepare healthy meals at home or even worse, we **[1st person]** may not have time to eat at all.

Using Point of View Correctly

1st person, indicating a personal experience

I have found that increasing my workload is taxing on both my physical and mental health. Unless I am in a physically-intensive profession, my body is wasting away while I work. Additionally, my diet has also suffered as I have spent more time at work. No longer do I have the time to prepare healthy meals at home or even worse; I sometimes do not have time to eat at all.

2nd person, instructing the reader

Increasing your workload is taxing on both your physical and mental health. Unless you are in a physically-intensive profession, your body is wasting away while you are working. Additionally, your diet also suffers as you spend more time at work. No longer do you have the time to prepare healthy meals at home or even worse, you may not have time to eat at all.

3rd person, addressing a general situation

Increasing workloads tax both physical and mental health. Unless a person is in a physically-intensive profession, a body will waste away with inactivity. Additionally, the diet suffers as more time is spent at work because people do not have the time to prepare healthy meals or, even worse, may not have time to eat at all.