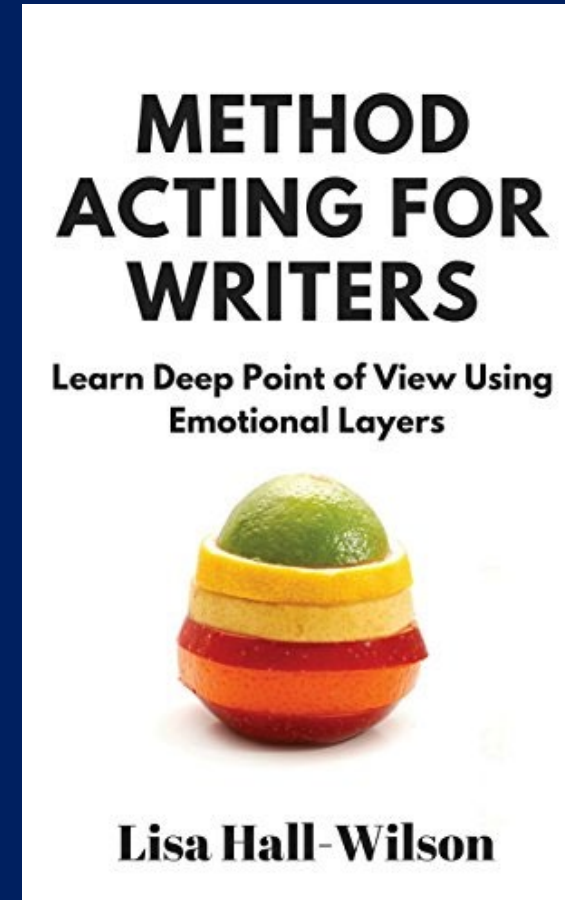# WHAT THE HECK IS DEEP POINT OF VIEW?

Joanne Simon Tailele

Credits and Sources

- Jill Elizabeth Nelson – Rivet Your Readers with Deep Point of View
- Lisa Hall Wilson – Method Acting for Writers

Third Grade Assignment:

Pick a character and write a journal entry from that person's Point of View.

Sacagawea
I am so mad! I took three annoying men who were very stinky to find the best route to the Pacific Ocean, found horses, food and peace so tribes wouldn't attack us! I did that whole journey, but the thing is, I did most of the work, not Lewis, or Clark or my husband! It should have been called the Sacagawea Expedition! I DID THIS ALL WITH A BABY ON MY BACK YET THE MEN DID MORE COMPLAINING!! And I got zero! Like, come on! I'm never doing that again.

POV Decisions

Point of view is the lens though which we see the story. Up close or at a distance.

- 1st Person
- 2nd Person

- 3rd Person Omniscient
- 3rd Person Deep, sometimes called Limited

Why do readers like to read stories written in deep POV?

POVC's thoughts (internal dialogue)

POVC's eyes (body language, facial expressions, hand gestures)

POVC ears (spoken dialogue of both the POVC and other characters)

POVC's feelings (physiology – heart rate, sweating, fear, love)
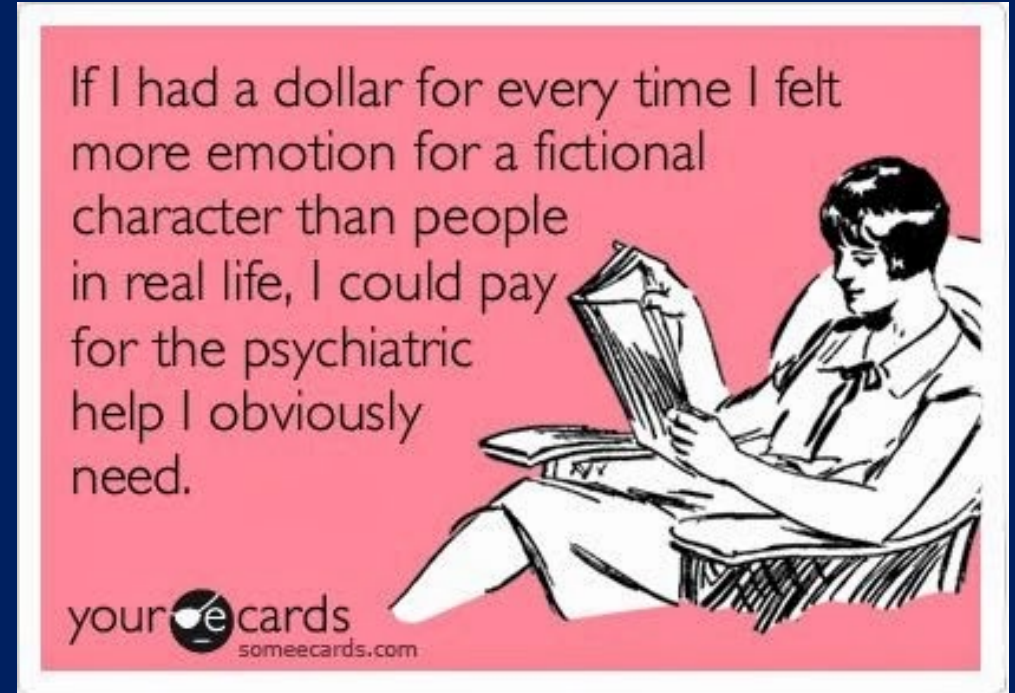
INVESTED-VIRTUAL REALITY

If I had a dollar for every time I felt more emotion for a fictional character than people in real life, I could pay for the psychiatric help I obviously need.

your ecards
someecards.com

Distance **Red Flag** Words

Automatically creates distance because they TELL the reader instead of SHOW what the POVC is thinking, feeling, doing, etc.

- Watched
- Saw
- Felt
- Wished
- Heard
- Thought

- Remembered
- Wanted
- Believed
- Regarded
- Noticed
- Looked

- Knew
- Wondered
- Hoped
- Caused
- Made
- Smelled

Examples of Red Flag words

- He **felt** like no one understood him.

- She **watched** the plane until it was out of sight.

- Heidi **heard** the sirens and **knew** she would be okay.

- *If only Gilbert knew how much she loved him,* Anne **thought**. (italic)

becomes

- No one understood him.

- The gigantic silver bird took flight until it was only a tiny speck in the sky, then it was gone.

- Sirens. At first only a distant tinging, got louder and more urgent. Thank God. She wasn't going to die today.

- If only Gilbert knew how much she loved him. (no italic)

Use the DEEP POV toolbox

Internal Dialogue (thoughts)

Body Language (facial expressions, gestures)

Spoken Dialogue (from both the POVC and others)

Physiology (heart rate, sweating, etc.)

Behavior (Actions)

Internal Dialogue

What it IS

- The POVC 's inner thoughts
- Often random and unorganized
- May or may not be true or rational
- Always Immediate
- Without narrators (outside voices)
- Causes a physical reaction or action

What it is NOT

- Not italicized with , she thought.
- Not analytical
- Not always factual
- Not Telepathy or mind speak
- No Narration – someone else telling the story
- Without consequences

Body Language and Subtext (what is NOT said)

How a character stands.   Facial Expression   Tone of Voice

If it is your POVC you are describing, remember, she/her can NOT see herself, so be careful to only mention what she/he is aware of and can readily see.

If your POVC character is observing someone else, the reader needs to know how the POVC character interprets the action.

Example: hands on the side – if a football player saw his opponent with his hands on his hips, usually means he is tired - completely different evaluation from on the right.

And sometimes – your POVC gets it all wrong.

It is subjective to your POVC's view on life .

ARMS AKIMBO:

Establishes dominance or communicates there are 'issues.'

ARMS BEHIND THE BACK:

Says "don't draw near" —keeps people at bay.
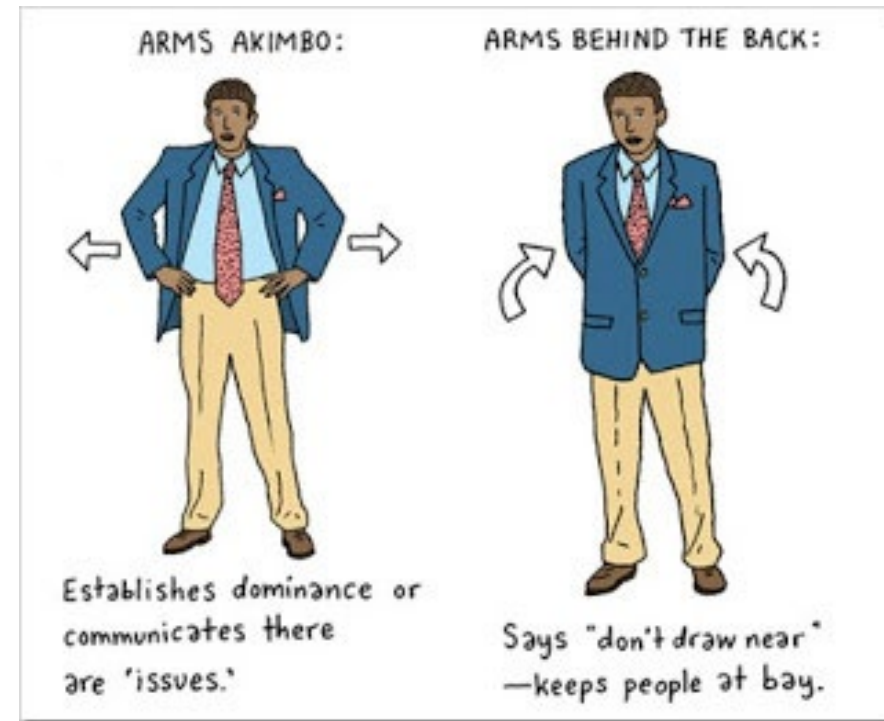
Spoken Dialogue
both the POVC and others.

Where we learn about the other characters

Must have a purpose. No idle chatter.

Unlike real life – keep it tight – no bantering back and forth

If more than two people, more tags or beats needed

Do **not** keep repeating names . Example:
"Mary, are you going to the dance?" asked Ellie.
"No Ellie," said Mary. "My Mom has grounded me."

Tags , Beats and Stage Direction

Dialogue Tags 😐

 He said, she said.

almost invisible. Used most often

Only serves one purpose – to tell us who is speaking.

Using attributes like shouted, exclaimed, proclaimed are TELLING

"I like the purple sweater," Jennifer said. She pulled the hanger off the rack and held it up.

"It's a common mistake," he laughed.   NOT a tag.   Correct would be:

"It's a common mistake." He laughed.

Beats 🙂

An action or a bit of internal dialogue that identifies who is speaking and moves the story forward.

Jennifer pulled the purple sweater off the rack and held it up. "I like this one."

(no need for the tag)

(We know Jennifer is speaking and we learned she liked the purple sweater.)

Stage Direction 😟

When a character does an action or gesture that doesn't move the story along or reveal anything about the character.

Try to avoid.

Use a beat instead.

She walked around the racks until she found one that she liked.

(We learned nothing here. Not even sure who "she" is or what she likes.)

Physiology
The Silent Orchestra (*from Psychology Today*)

▶ Ever have a parent give you "that look?"   No words necessary.

▶ What happens internally when you get a call from the police at 3 a.m.?

▶ What was happening inside on the day you decided to propose?

▶ You turn around in the grocery story, and your 3-yr-old child is missing.

Sometimes, what you feel inside, and what you show on the outside do not match. Often, a woman will smile when she feels uncomfortable. Or a soldier may not show his despair over losing a comrade because he has to stay strong for his unit. The same applies to your characters. SHOW the physiology, Do NOT name the emotion. i.e He was so angry.

Avoid naming emotions
such as love, hate, lust, grief, anger, jealousy

- Cassandra loved the way he lightly touched the small of her back as they walked along the pier.

- Sam hated that his father just assumed he'd take over the firm.

- He extended his hand but was clearly jealous of Brad's success.

- Cassandra's heart did a somersault as his hand touched the small of her back as they walked along the pier.

- Sam clenched his fist. How dare his father make assumptions about his future.

- He extended a hand to congratulate Brad. So, the pretty-boy did it again.

Let the reader be an active participant,
to decide what the emotion is by the action.

Behavior
Action speaks louder than words

The way your characters react to the situation in your scenes can make or break your story. Get it wrong and your readers may misinterpret it, or worse, quit reading.

Behavior must be:
- Believable
- Relevant to the scene and overall arc of the story.
- Shown through dialogue and body language
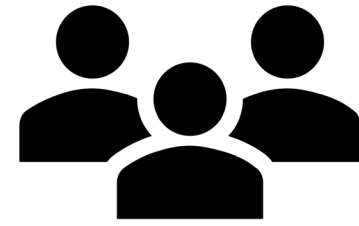
Subtext (unspoken word)
The elephant in the room.
- **Requires interpretation for the reader.**
- **The POVC must let the reader know how she/he feels about the subtext. Did it make her happy, sad, angry, indifferent?**

- **WITHOUT NAMING IT**

The WHY   - No Secrets

In Deep POV the **reader** is **IN** the POV character's head, so they know **everything** she /he does.

the reader MUST know WHY the POVC cares.

Test each scene :

► If the reader does not know WHY the POVC cares about something happening in the scene, they won't care either.

► In every scene – ASK – why does the POVC care ?

► What are the consequences (stakes) if the POVC does not get the result he/she wants?

► What is the reward if she/he does?

► How does it move the story forward. If this scene was cut, how would it affect the story's main theme or purpose?

Eliminate narrative distance

Nothing between the reader and the POV character.

With the narrator

- She wished she could whisk back in time and redo the last few minutes.

- He had to think hard about what to do next.

- Jason's scowl caused Meg to sigh on the inside.

Without the narrator

- Too bad life didn't come with an undo button like a computer.

- What should he do next?

- If Jason's scowl turned any blacker, lightning would strike her dead. A silent sigh left Meg's lips.

Deep (Close/Limited) Point of View examples

1st Person

▶ Shallow: The hot, stuffy air caused my head to spin.

▶ Deep: The heavy air wrapped me in cellophane. A sauna would be less stifling. Every thought wilted in my brain – shriveled like my last hope of a breeze.
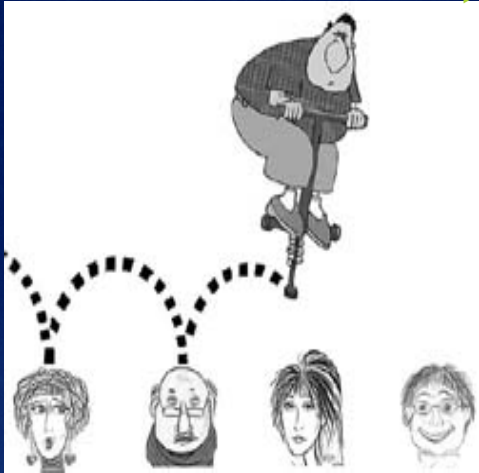
3rd Person

▶ Shallow: Desiree eyed the paper with satisfaction.

▶ Deep: Pate shoved the form across the desk toward her. Desiree grinned on the inside. Gotcha!

Examples from *Rivet Your Readers with Deep Point of View*

Avoiding Head Hopping

▶ EXAMPLE: Josh froze behind the bar of the saloon as Emily pointed a pistol directly at his heart. Hatred burned in her eyes, and he knew that she must have heard about what he did at the brothel. *Holy mackerel*, Bob thought, and stopped playing the piano. After all, the song "Git Along Little Dogies" didn't seem like appropriate music to die to. Emily wondered if Josh would try to come up with some excuse, and whether she should even wait to find out.

How many heads were in this scene? How would you fix it?

➢ Introduce the new viewpoint character by naming him /her in the first sentence.
➢ Only change the viewpoint character if the story dictates it. – use a scene or chapter break
➢ Changing viewpoint characters frequently creates distance between reader and the story.
➢ Jumping Point of View gives readers whip-lash.

Answer: 3, Josh, Bob, Emily

Author Instrusion
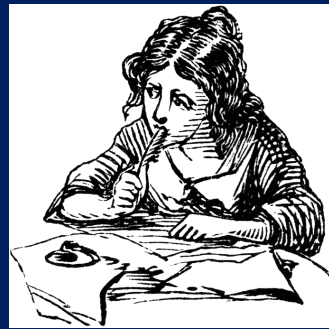
"At their most basic, author intrusions are where the writer has projected herself into the fictional world. These intrusions show up as events or knowledge or words that don't fit the story." by Fiction Editor Beth Hill

- In contemporary writing, Author Intrusion is frowned upon.

- When the author, not the character is addressing the reader.

- When the author feels the need to explain something to the reader, which stops the flow and pace of the story. {Many times a writer will use brackets}

With Author Intrusion: Sandra reached for the celery stick and chomped down hard. (She would have much rather had that chocolate cake.)

Without Author Intrusion: Sandra dreamed of the chocolate cake , the richness of the frosting on her tongue, the scent of chocolate tickling her nose as reached for the celery stick and chomped down hard.   (Stayed in her POV)

In Review
Deep (Close/Limited) Point of View

- Is always immediate
- Can be active (in an action)
- Can be contemplative
- Eliminates most show/tell problems
- Enhances the POVC's voice
- Takes more words so it slows down the pace
- Can be 1st or 3d person (close)
- Uses the five senses

- Never says, he thought, she thought
- Does not use italics
- It is not a string of internal monologue

- When you don't want to use deep POV
  - want to speed up the action
  - When you want a broad overview of a scene

Thank you.

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