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Third-Person Objective Point of View

Determining the best point of view is one of the skills better writers master. Most essay writing is usually written from the first-person point of view, using pronouns such as I or we, or the third-person point of view, using pronouns such as he, she, they, or one.

College essays should be written in the third-person.

The third-person point of view is also known as the **third-person objective point of view**. Learning this technique adds a sophisticated tool to the repertoire of a masterful writer. Like all skills, one must practice the technique to master the skill.

First, a writer must learn to recognize first, second, and third person. Below is a basic personal pronouns chart.

Personal Pronouns			
Pronouns	Nominative Case	Objective Case	Possessive Case
1st Person	I, we	me, us	my, mine, our, ours
2nd Person	you	you	your, yours
3rd Person	he, she, it, they	him, her, it, them	his, her, hers, it, their, theirs

No nouns are entered in this chart. **All nouns are the third person.**

Another class of pronouns to learn are called **indefinite pronouns**. **All indefinite pronouns are the third person.**

Indefinite Pronouns			
another	each	everything	one
anybody	either	neither	somebody
anyone	everybody	nobody	someone
anything	everyone	no one	
both	many	few	several

Here is how this skill can be put to use.

Below is a statement in the first-person point of view:

I think Congress should reconsider its recent vote on gun control.

Below is the same statement in the third-person objective point of view. The **I** or first person has been eliminated.

Congress should reconsider its recent vote on gun control.

The second statement has a more objective tone, and it has the added benefit of presenting the same message with

fewer words. Dr. Irmischer of the University of Washington stated, "Good writing is saying the most with the fewest words."

Below is a statement from Senator Hatch regarding the flag amendment.

"It is the embodiment of our heritage, our liberties, and indeed our sovereignty as a nation." [Seattle Times, 3-30-2000]

Below is the same statement in the third-person objective point of view. The **our** or first person has been eliminated.

It is the embodiment of America's heritage, liberties, and indeed this country's sovereignty as a nation.

The second statement eliminates the first person, but depending on the writer's purpose, the second statement may have a weaker emotional tone. Often writers/speakers want to personalize a message, and the use of "**our**" may help make a statement more personal.

More examples of how this skill can be put to use.

Below is a statement in the **second**-person point of view:

*You should exercise **your** rights as American citizens and vote in next year's election.*

Below is the same statement in the third-person objective point of view. Here the second person (**you, your**) has been replaced by the third person (**citizens, their**).

*Citizens should exercise **their** rights as Americans and vote in next year's election.*

Below is a statement in the first-person point of view:

*We should do a better job during **our** student council meetings.*

Below is the same statement in the third-person objective point of view.

***Student leaders** should do a better job during **Miami Dade College's** student council meetings.*

The second version accomplishes two purposes.

One, the first person (**we, our**) has been replaced by the third person (**Student leaders, Miami Dade College's**).

Second, the revised statement is more specific. Sometimes pronouns lack the needed specificity to make the message clear. Nouns provide more meaning. Although the revised statement has more words than the original statement, the added specificity makes the message clearer.