



# POINT OF VIEW

---





# WHAT IS A “POINT OF VIEW”?

.....

- The point of view (often shortened to POV) is the perspective from which a story is being told
- This perspective is often tied to a character (but there can be exceptions!)
- Stories can have one or multiple points of view
- The most common points of view are:
  - First-person
  - Third-person “limited”
  - Third-person “omniscient”
  - Second-person

# COMMON POINTS OF VIEW: FIRST PERSON

---

- First-person points of view use “I,” “me” and “my” pronouns
  - The narrator is the character whose eyes we’re seeing the world through
- For example, we see this in the very first two paragraphs of *My Summer of Love and Misfortune* by Vancouver-based writer Lindsay Wong, where we are introduced to the POV of Iris!

**I, Iris Wang, was born to be unlucky.**

This is because I was born in the Year of the Tiger, and everyone in our Chinese family knows that girls born in Tiger Year are bad luck.

A flower-hearted Tiger girl, such as yours truly, means that I’m destined to pick loser boys and never listen to my parents. A flower-heart is someone who shows up hungover to her SATs and half-asses her college admission essays. She’s also addicted to Starbucks lattes, expensive makeup, and super-fun parties.



# COMMON POINTS OF VIEW: THIRD-PERSON

---

- Third-person uses “she,” “he” and “they” pronouns
  - The narrator shows us the story, but is either not a character or an active participant
  - In video games, this would be an “over-the-shoulder view”
- In this example from *Love from A to Z* by Toronto-based novelist S.K. Ali, we are introduced to Zayneb Malik:

On the very late evening of Saturday, March 11, sixteen-year-old Zayneb Malik clicked on a link in her desperation to finish a project. She'd promised a Muslim Clothing Through the Ages poster for the Islamic History Fair at the mosque, and it was due in nine hours, give or take a few hours of sleep.

- Note that we still have access to Zayneb's inner thoughts!

# COMMON POINTS OF VIEW: THIRD-PERSON

---

Third-person points of view often fall into one of two categories:

## Third-person limited

- Follows the perspective of one character at a time
- Can switch characters, but usually only between chapters or scenes

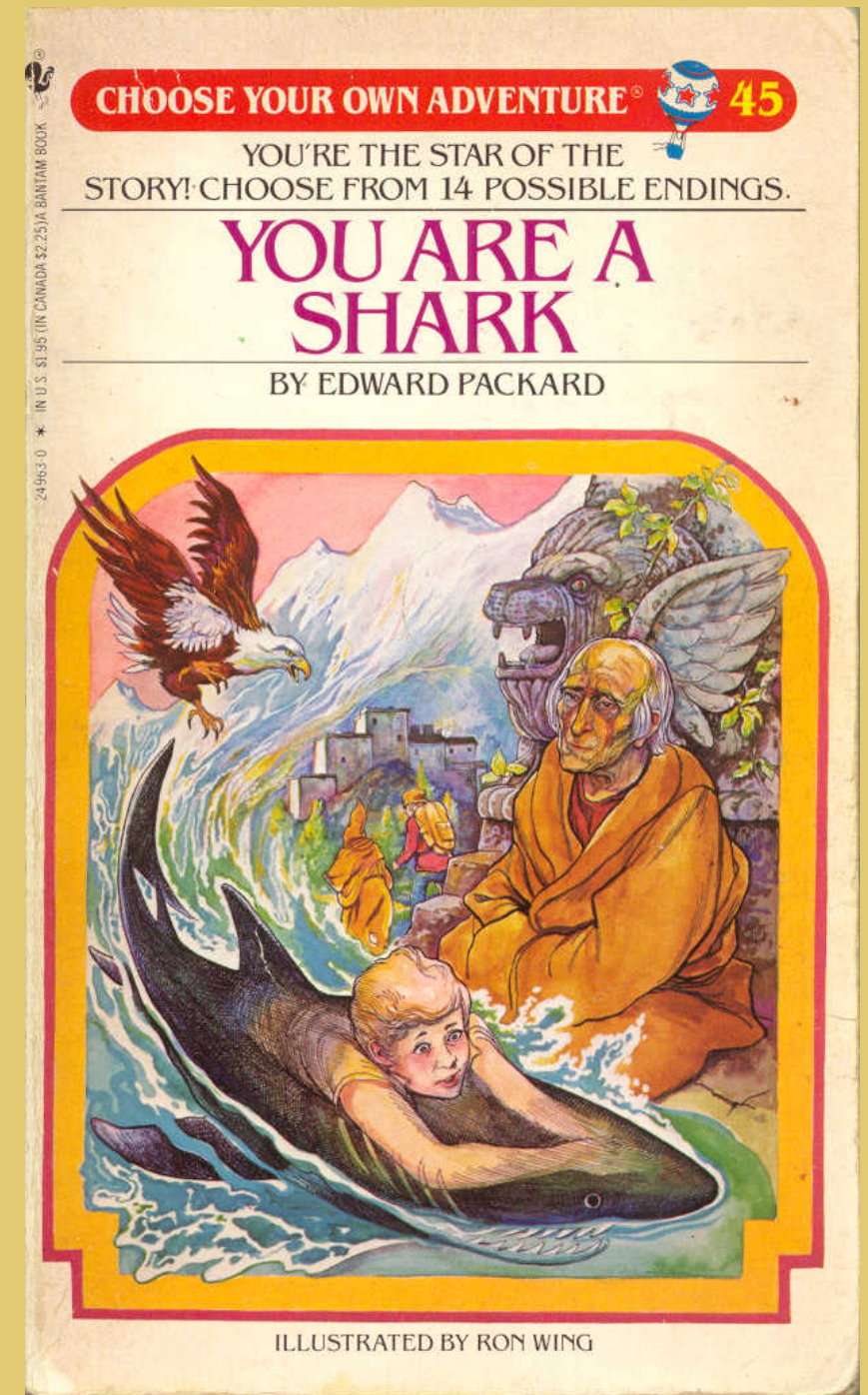
## Third-person omniscient

- Omniscient means “all-knowing”
- The narrator is aware of everything and freely moves between the perspectives of different characters

# A LESS COMMON POINT OF VIEW: SECOND-PERSON

.....

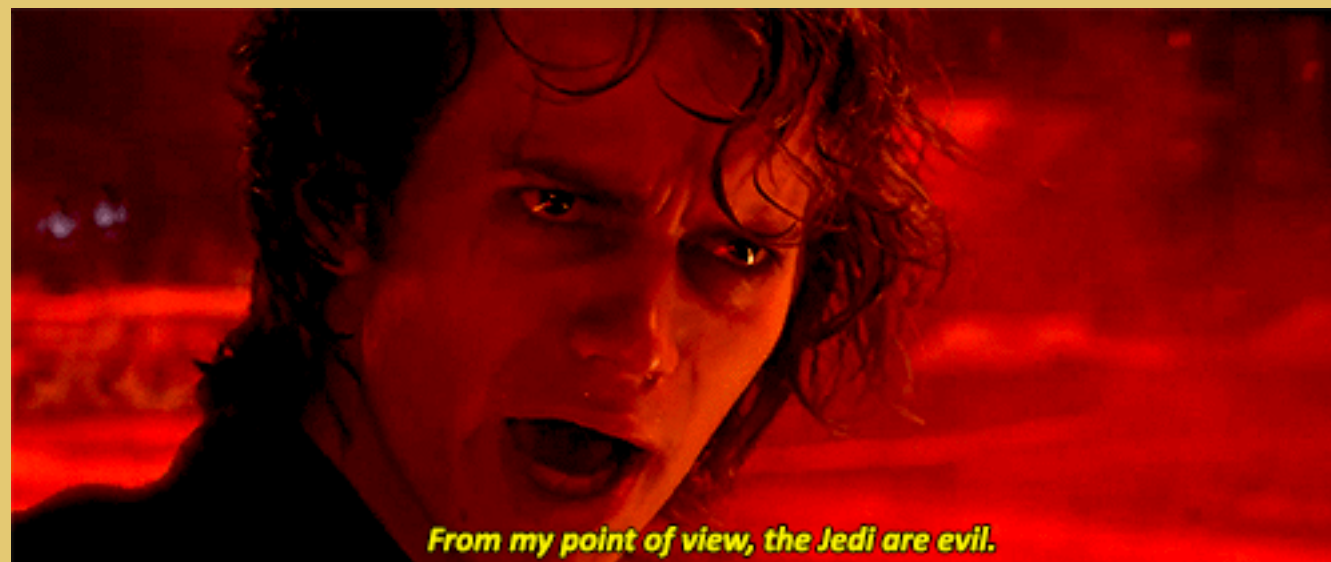
- Second-person point of view uses “you” pronouns
- The narrative addresses the reader
- Can be used to make the reader the character, such as in *Choose Your Own Adventure* books
- BUT: more often the “you” is another character in the story
- These points of view are quite uncommon in fiction



# DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES

---

- The point of view reveals the character's inner life
- A character's values and motivations will alter how they see the world around them
  - For example, a scientist may see and describe the world very differently from a guitarist
- Different characters will often have different understandings of how events occur!
- A point of view doesn't always have to be trustworthy
- How they think and how they present themselves to other may differ!





# WALK A MILE IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES

---

- Choose a public figure and change one major quality about them. This public figure could be an actor, politician, YouTuber...
- From their perspective, free write one of the following:
  - An acceptance speech
  - An apology video
  - A letter to a fan
- Pay attention to things like word choice, their tone and how they see the world around them

