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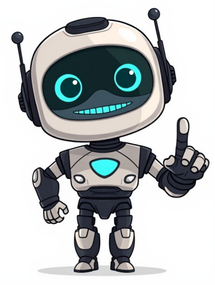

What is narrative? Here’s a quick and simple definition: A narrative is an account of connected events. Two writers describing the same set of events might craft very different narratives, depending on how they use different narrative elements, such as tone or point of view. For example, an account of the American Civil War written from the perspective of a white slaveowner would make for a very different narrative than if it were written from the perspective of a historian, or a former slave. Some additional key details about narrative: The words "narrative" and "story" are often used interchangeably, and with the casual meanings of the two terms that's fine. However, technically speaking, the two terms have related but different meanings. The word "narrative" is also frequently used as an adjective to describe something that tells a story, such as narrative poetry. How to Pronounce Narrative Here's how to pronounce narrative: nar-uh-tiv Narrative vs. Story vs. Plot In everyday speech, people often use the terms "narrative," "story," and "plot" interchangeably. However, when speaking more technically about literature these terms are not in fact identical. A story refers to a sequence of events. It can be thought of as the raw material out of which a narrative is crafted. A plot refers to the sequence of events, but with their causes and effects included. As the writer E.M. Forster put it, while "The King died and the Queen died" is a story (i.e., a sequence of events), "The King died, and then the Queen died of grief" is a plot. A narrative, by contrast, has a more broad-reaching definition: it includes not just the sequence of events and their cause and effect relationships, but also all of the decisions and techniques that impact how a story is told. A narrative is how a given sequence of events is recounted. In order to fully understand narrative, it's important to keep in mind that most sequences of events can be recounted in many different ways. Each different account is a separate narrative. When deciding how to relay a set of facts or describe a sequence of events, a writer must ask themselves, among other things: Which events are most important? Where should I begin and end my narrative? Should I tell the events of the narrative in the order they occurred, or should I use flashbacks or other techniques to present the events in another order? Should I hold certain pieces of information back from the reader? What point of view should I use to tell the narrative? The answers to these questions determine how the narrative is constructed, so they have a huge influence on the way a reader sees or understands what they're reading about. The same series of events might be read as happy or sad, boring or exciting—all depending on how the narrative is constructed. Analyzing a narrative just means examining how it is constructed and why it is constructed that way. Narrative Elements Narrative elements are the tools writers use to craft narratives. A great way to approach analyzing a narrative is to break it down into its different narrative elements, and then examine how the writer employs each one. The following is a summary of the main elements that a writer might use to build his or her narrative. Point of View: Point of view refers to the perspective that the narrator holds in relation to the events of the story. The three primary points of view are first person, in which the narrator tells a story from their own perspective ("I went to the store"); second person, in which the narrator tells a story about you, the reader or viewer ("You went to the store"); and third person, in which the narrator tells a story about other people ("He went to the store"). Each point of view creates a different experience for the reader, because, in each point of view, different types and amounts of information are available to the reader about the events and characters. Writers must also choose which character will narrate the story—another factor that determines the point of view and has a huge impact on how the reader understands the events of the story. For example, a story about a crime told from the perspective of the victim might be very different when told from the perspective of the criminal. Voice: Everyone's voice sounds a little bit different, and it's a distinct part of who they are. In the same way, all writers have their own distinct voice. Once you get to know a certain writer's work, you'll likely be able to recognize something they wrote based on the style of their writing. For instance, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway were friends, and they wrote during the same era, but their writing is very different from one another because they have markedly different voices. Tone: While each writer has their own voice, writers can take on a variety of different tones. F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway have their own voices that make them unique as writers, but each of them could write with a humorous tone, a contemplative tone, or even with a romantic tone. Tone can completely alter a reader's perception of a narrative. For example, Jonathan Swift's essay "A Modest Proposal" satirizes the British government's callous indifference toward the famine in Ireland by sarcastically suggesting that cannibalism could solve the problem—but the essay would have a completely different meaning if it didn't have a sarcastic tone. Pacing: In literature, film, and television, pacing refers to the how close together the writer places major events in a narrative, how much time (or how many words) the writer devotes to describing each event, and how much of the narrative is recounted in a given space. For example, the first half of Charles Dickens' novel David Copperfield tells the story of the narrator David Copperfield's early childhood over the course of many chapters; about halfway through the novel, David quickly glosses over some embarrassing episodes from his teenage years (unfortunate fashion choices and foolish crushes); the second half of the novel tells the story of his adult life. The pacing give readers the sense that David's teen years weren't really that important. Instead, his childhood traumas, the challenges he faced as a young man, and the relationships he formed during both childhood and adulthood make up the most important elements of the novel. Frame stories: In a frame story, one story is placed within (or "framed by") one or more other stories, which serve as exposition or context for the central story. Oral storytelling, letters, and diaries can all act as framing devices to contextualize or introduce a story. For example, Mary Shelley's novel Frankenstein uses three different "frames" to tell the story of Dr. Frankenstein and the creature he creates: the novel takes the form of letters written by Walton, an arctic explorer; Walton is recounting a story that Dr. Frankenstein told him; and as part of his story, Dr. Frankenstein recounts a story told to him by the creature. Linear vs. Nonlinear Narration: You may also hear the word narrative used to describe the order in which a sequence of events is recounted. In a linear narrative, the events of a story are described chronologically, in the order that they occurred. In a nonlinear narrative, events are described out of order, using flashbacks or flash-forwards, and then returning to the present. In some nonlinear narratives, like Ken Kesey's Sometimes a Great Notion, there is a clear sense of when the "present" is: the novel begins and ends with the character Viv sitting in a bar, looking at a photograph. The rest of the novel recounts (out of order) events that have happened in the distant and recent past. In other nonlinear narratives, it may be difficult to tell when the "present" is. For example, in Kurt Vonnegut's novel Slaughterhouse-Five, the character Billy Pilgrim, seems to move forward and backward in time as a result of post-traumatic stress. Billy is not always certain if he is experiencing memories, flashbacks, hallucinations, or actual time travel, and there are inconsistencies in the dates he gives throughout the book—all of which of course has a huge impact on how his stories are relayed to the reader. Narrative as an Adjective It's worth noting that the word "narrative" is also frequently used as an adjective to describe something that tells a story. Narrative Poetry: While some poetry describes an image, experience, or emotion without necessarily telling a story, narrative poetry is poetry that does tell a story. Narrative poems include epic poems like The Iliad, The Epic of Gilgamesh, and Beowulf. Other, shorter examples of narrative poetry include "Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carrol, "The Lady of Shalott" by Alfred Lord Tennyson, "The Goblin Market" by Christina Rossetti, and "The Glass Essay," by Anne Carson. Narrative Art: Similarly, the term "narrative art" refers to visual art that tells a story, either by capturing one scene in a longer story, or by presenting a series of images that tell a longer story when put together. Often, but not always, narrative art tells stories that are likely to be familiar to the viewer, such as stories from history, mythology, or religious teachings. Examples of narrative art include Michelangelo's painting on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and the Pietà; Paul Revere's engraving entitled The Bloody Massacre; and Artemisia Gentileschi's painting Judith Slaying Holofernes. Narrative Examples Narrative in The Book Thief by Markus Zusak Zusak's novel, The Book Thief, is narrated by the figure of Death, who tells the story of Liesel, a girl growing up in Nazi Germany who loves books and befriends a Jewish man her family is hiding in their home. In the novel's prologue, Death says of Liesel: Yes, often, I am reminded of her, and in one of my vast array of pockets, I have kept her story to retell. It is one of the small legion I carry, each one extraordinary in its own right. Each one an attempt—an immense leap of an attempt—to prove to me that you, and your human existence, are worth it. Narrators do not always announce themselves, but Death introduces himself and explains that he sees himself as a storyteller and a repository of the stories of human lives. Choosing Death (rather than Leisel) as the novel's narrator allows Zusak to use Liesel's story to reflect on the power of stories and storytelling more generally. Narrative in A Visit From the Goon Squad by Jennifer Egan In A Visit From the Good Squad, Egan structures the narrative of her novel in an unconventional way: each chapter stands as a self-contained story, but as a whole, the individual episodes are interconnected in such a way that all the stories form a single cohesive narrative. For example, in Chapter 2, "The Gold Cure," we meet the character Bennie, a middle-aged music producer, and his assistant Sasha: "It's incredible," Sasha said, "how there's just nothing there." Astounded, Bennie turned to her…Sasha was looking downtown, and he followed her eyes to the empty space where the Twin Towers had been. Because there is an empty space where the Twin Towers had been, the reader knows that this dialogue is taking place some time after the September 11th, 2001 attack in which the World Trade Center was destroyed. Bennie appears again later in the novel, in Chapter 6, "X's and O's," which is set ten years prior to "The Gold Cure." "X's and O's" is narrated by Bennie's old friend, Scotty, who goes to visit Bennie at his office in Manhattan: I looked down at the city. Its extravagance felt wasteful, like gushing oil or some other precious thing Bennie was hoarding for himself, using it up so no one else could get any. I thought: If I had a view like this to look down on every day, I would have the energy and inspiration to conquer the world. The trouble is, when you most need such a view, no one gives it to you. Just as Sasha did in Chapter 2, Scotty stands with Bennie and looks out over Manhattan, and in both passages, there is a sense that Bennie fails to notice, appreciate, or find meaning in the view. But the reader wouldn't have the same experience if the story had been told in chronological order. Narrative in Atonement by Ian McEwan Ian McEwan's novel Atonement tells the story of Briony, a writer who, as a girl, sees something she doesn't understand and, based on this faulty understanding, makes a choice that ruins the lives of Celia, her sister, and Robbie, the man her sister loves. The first part of the novel appears to be told from the perspective of a third-person omniscient narrator; but once we reach the end of the book, we realize that we've read Briony's novel, which she has written as an act of atonement for her terrible mistake. Near the end of Atonement, Briony tells us: I like to think that it isn’t weakness or evasion, but a final act of kindness, a stand against oblivion and despair, to let my lovers live and to unite them at the end. I gave them happiness, but I was not so self-serving as to let them forgive me. Not quite, not yet. If I had the power to conjure them at my birthday celebration…Robbie and Cecilia, still alive, sitting side by side in the library… In Briony's novel, Celia and Robbie are eventually able to live together, and Briony visits them in an attempt to apologize; but in real life, we learn, Celia and Robbie died during World War II before they could see one another again, and before Briony could reconcile with them. By inviting the reader to imagine a happy ending, Briony effectively heightens the tragedy of the events that actually occurred. By choosing Briony as his narrator, and by framing the novel Briony wrote with her discussion of her own novel, McEwan is able to create multiple interlacing narratives, telling and retelling what happened and what might have been. Narrative in Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut Kurt Vonnegut’s novel Slaughterhouse-Five tells the story of Billy Pilgrim, a World War II veteran who survived the bombing of Dresden, and has since “come unstuck in time.” The novel uses flashbacks and flash-forwards, and is narrated by an unreliable narrator who implies to the reader that the narrative he is telling may not be entirely true: All this happened, more or less. The war parts, anyway, are pretty much true. One guy I knew really was shot in Dresden for taking a teapot that wasn’t his. Another guy I knew really did threaten to have his personal enemies killed by hired gunmen after the war. And so on. I’ve changed all the names. The narrator’s equivocation in this passage suggests that even though the story he is telling may not be entirely factually accurate, he has attempted to create a narrative that captures important truths about the war and the bombing of Dresden. Or, maybe he just doesn’t remember all of the details of the events he is describing. In any case, the inconsistencies in dates and details in Slaughterhouse-Five give the reader the impression that crafting a single cohesive narrative out of the horrific experience of war may be too difficult a task—which in turn says something about the toll war takes on those who live through it. What's the Function of Narrative in Literature? When we use the word "narrative," we're pointing out that who tells a story and how that person tells the story influence how the reader understands the story's meaning. The question of what purpose narratives serve in literature is inseparable from the question of why people tell stories in general, and why writers use different narrative elements to shape their stories into compelling narratives. Narratives make it possible for writers to capture some of the nuances and complexities of human experience in the retelling of a sequence of events. In literature and in life, narratives are everywhere, which is part of why they can be very challenging to discuss and analyze. Narrative reminds us that stories do not only exist; they are also made by someone, often for very specific reasons. And when you analyze narrative in literature, you take the time to ask yourself why a work of literature has been constructed in a certain way. Other Helpful Narrative Resources Etymology: Merriam-Webster describes the origins and history of usage of the term "narrative." Narrative Theory: Ohio State University's "Project Narrative" offers an overview of narrative theory. History and Narrative: Read more about the similarities between historical and literary narratives in Hayden White's Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in 19th-Century Europe. Narrative Art: This article from Widewalls explores narrative art and discusses what kind of art doesn't tell stories. Arif Ahmed January 8, 2025 Ever struggled to explain what someone said in their exact words or your own? That’s where narration steps in. Narration, the art of telling a story or reporting speech, comes in various forms. From quoting directly to paraphrasing smoothly, mastering narration can enhance your communication skills in writing, speaking, and beyond.In this post, we’ll explore the concept of narration, Definition of Narration Types of Narration Examples With Answers. Packed with examples and exercises, this guide will help you confidently navigate the world of narration. Let’s start to learinig.Types of NarrationWhat is Narration?Narration is the act of telling or reporting events, stories, or speech. It’s a fundamental aspect of communication that helps us share information effectively.Types of NarrationFirst-Person Narration:The narrator is the protagonist or a character in the story.Example: “I love baking chocolate cakes.”Second-Person Narration:The narrator addresses the reader directly using “you.”Example: “You need to add sugar to balance the bitterness of the chocolate.”Third-Person Narration:The narrator tells the story from an outsider’s perspective.Example: “David baked a chocolate cake for his friend.”What is Direct and Indirect Speech?Direct SpeechDefinition: Direct speech quotes the speaker’s exact words, typically enclosed in quotation marks.Example:Sarah said, “I am learning Spanish.”Indirect SpeechDefinition: Indirect speech reports the speaker’s words without quoting them verbatim.Example:Sarah said that she was learning Spanish.Rules for Converting Direct to Indirect SpeechConverting direct to indirect speech involves some key rules depending on pronouns, tenses, sentence types, and adverbs.1. Pronoun ChangesPronouns shift based on the speaker and listener.Examples:Direct: “I love apples,” said John.Indirect: John said that he loved apples.Direct: “Can you help me?” she asked.Indirect: She asked if I could help her.2. Tense ChangesTenses usually move one step back in time.Examples:Present Simple → Past SimpleDirect: “I enjoy reading,” said Emma.Indirect: Emma said that she enjoyed reading.Present Continuous → Past ContinuousDirect: “I am cooking dinner,” he said.Indirect: He said that he was cooking dinner.Past Simple → Past PerfectDirect: “I visited Paris last year,” she said.Indirect: She said that she had visited Paris the previous year.Exception: If the fact is universally true, the tense doesn’t change.Direct: “The Earth revolves around the sun,” he said.Indirect: He said that the Earth revolves around the sun.3. Sentence Typesa. Interrogative SentencesYes/No Questions → Use “if” or “whether.”Direct: “Are you coming?” he asked.Indirect: He asked if I was coming.WH-Questions → Use the question word directly.Direct: “Where are you going?” she asked.Indirect: She asked where I was going.b. Imperative SentencesAdd “to” or “not to” before the verb.Direct: “Close the door,” she said.Indirect: She told me to close the door.c. Exclamatory SentencesReplace interjections with appropriate reporting verbs.Direct: “Wow! That’s amazing,” she said.Indirect: She exclaimed that it was amazing.4. Adverbs and DemonstrativesTime and place expressions change to reflect the context.Examples:Direct: “I will meet you here tomorrow,” he said.Indirect: He said that he would meet me there the next day.Direct: “I saw him yesterday,” she said.Indirect: She said that she had seen him the day before.Examples and ExercisesExamplesDirect: “I will call you later,” she said.Indirect: She said that she would call me later.Direct: “What are you doing?” he asked.Indirect: He asked what I was doing.Direct: “Don’t touch that!” the teacher warned.Indirect: The teacher warned me not to touch that.ExercisesConvert the following sentences into indirect speech:Direct: “I am working on a project,” he said.Direct: “Did you finish your homework?” she asked.Direct: “Please pass me the salt,” he requested.Direct: “Hurray! We won the match,” they exclaimed.Direct: “We are planning a trip to Europe,” they said.AnswersHe said that he was working on a project.She asked if I had finished my homework.He requested me to pass him the salt.They exclaimed with joy that they had won the match.They said that they were planning a trip to Europe.Common Mistakes to AvoidForgetting Pronoun Shifts: Ensure pronouns match the subject and listener in the reported speech.Incorrect Tense Changes: Check if the original statement is a universal truth before changing the tense.Misusing Reporting Verbs: Use verbs like “asked,” “told,” “requested,” or “exclaimed” appropriately based on the sentence type.FAQs About the Definition of Narration types of Narration1. What is narrative definition and types?Narrative is a story or account of events. Types of narration include:First-Person: Narrator is a character using “I.”Second-Person: Narrator uses “you.”Third-Person: Narrator is outside the story using “he,” “she,” or “they.”Omniscient: Narrator knows all characters’ thoughts.Limited: Narrator knows only one character’s thoughts.2. What is the short definition of narration?Narration is the act of telling a story or describing events.3. How many types of narration sentences are there?Three types:Direct Narration: Direct quotes.Indirect Narration: Paraphrasing.Free Indirect Narration: Mixing both direct and indirect speech.4. What are the different types of narrators?Types of narrators include:First-Person: Character in the story.Third-Person Limited: Knows one character’s thoughts.Third-Person Omniscient: Knows all characters’ thoughts.Unreliable: May mislead the reader.Objective: Only describes actions and dialogue.Learning narration, particularly the art of converting direct speech into indirect speech, is a valuable skill in communication. With the rules, examples, and exercises provided here, you’re well-equipped to confidently use both forms of speech. Now, it’s your turn—practice these conversions and see how you can make your communication smoother and more effective. Shift TensesWhen converting direct speech to indirect speech, verbs usually shift one step back in time. Example:Direct: “I am reading a book,” said Sarah.Indirect: Sarah said that she was reading a book. Adjust Time ExpressionsPay attention to words like “today,” “tomorrow,” and “yesterday” as they change in indirect speech. Example:Direct: “I will call you tomorrow.”Indirect: She said that she would call me the next day. Use Reporting VerbsReporting verbs like “said,” “told,” “asked,” and “suggested” are often used in indirect speech. Be mindful of the verb choice to maintain the intended meaning. Example:Direct: “Please help me with this task,” said Tom.Indirect: Tom asked me to help him with the task. By understanding and practicing these conversion rules, you can smoothly switch between direct and indirect speech without losing the message’s integrity. Common Mistakes in Narration and How to Avoid Them When it comes to narration, whether in direct or indirect speech, there are some common mistakes that many learners of English make. These errors can undermine the clarity and accuracy of your communication. By understanding and avoiding these common pitfalls, you can significantly improve your use of narration in grammar. Let’s take a look at some of these frequent mistakes and how to avoid them. 1. Incorrect Use of Tenses in Indirect Speech One of the most frequent mistakes when converting direct speech to indirect speech is failing to shift the tense correctly. As we discussed earlier, when converting from direct to indirect speech, the tense usually shifts one step back in time. For instance, the present tense becomes past tense. Common Mistake:Direct: “She is working late tonight.”Indirect: She said that she is working late tonight. Correction:The correct conversion should be:Indirect: She said that she was working late tonight. The key here is to remember the basic rule of backshifting, which means that the present tense should change to the past tense when moving from direct to indirect speech. 2. Omitting “That” in Indirect Speech While it’s common to omit “that” in indirect speech (especially in informal language), it’s important to remember that the word “that” serves as a connector between the reporting clause and the reported speech. In more formal or precise contexts, omitting “that” can lead to confusion or ambiguity. Common Mistake:Direct: “I will attend the meeting tomorrow,” he said.Indirect: He said he would attend the meeting tomorrow. Correction:While the sentence above is understandable, it is always a good practice to include “that” in more formal contexts:Indirect: He said that he would attend the meeting tomorrow. Including “that” ensures clarity, particularly in more complex sentences. 3. Failure to Change Pronouns Another common mistake occurs when the pronouns in direct speech are not adjusted in indirect speech. Remember, when you switch from direct to indirect speech, pronouns must align with the perspective of the reporting speaker. Common Mistake:Direct: “I will help you with the homework,” said Lucy.Indirect: Lucy said that I would help you with the homework. Correction:Indirect: Lucy said that she would help me with the homework. Here, the pronouns “I” and “you” must change to “she” and “me,” respectively, to reflect the proper perspective. 4. Incorrect Word Order in Questions In direct speech, questions often have an inverted word order (e.g., “What is your name?”). However, in indirect speech, the word order must be changed to a normal declarative structure. Common Mistake:Direct: “What time does the train leave?” he asked.Indirect: He asked what time does the train leave. Correction:Indirect: He asked what time the train left. When converting questions to indirect speech, remember to eliminate the inversion (e.g., “does” becomes “did,” and the question mark is no longer needed). 5. Confusing “To” and “That” in Requests and Commands When converting requests or commands from direct to indirect speech, some learners mistakenly use the word “that” when they should be using “to.” Common Mistake:Direct: “Please close the door,” he said.Indirect: He said that to close the door. Correction:Indirect: He asked me to close the door. When reporting requests and commands, always use “to” to introduce the action, not “that.” Conclusion: Mastering Narration in Grammar So, there you have it! We’ve explored everything you need to know about narration in grammar, from the basics of direct and indirect speech to the rules and common mistakes that often trip people up. Whether you’re telling a story, reporting a conversation, or simply practicing your grammar skills, understanding how to use direct and indirect speech is essential for clear and effective communication. Remember, it’s all about conveying someone’s words in a way that makes sense for your audience. Direct speech keeps things exact and vivid, while indirect speech allows you to convey meaning in a more flexible, summarized way. With the rules and tips we’ve shared today, you’ll be able to use both forms of narration with ease. And, don’t forget—practice makes perfect! The more you practice converting between direct and indirect speech, the more natural it will feel. So, whether you’re writing a story, preparing for an exam, or just having a conversation, mastering narration will boost your confidence and communication skills. If you have any questions or need more tips on improving your English grammar, feel free to reach out. Remember, mastering grammar is a journey, and you’re on the right path! Let's first pin down a clear definition of what narration truly entails before looking at the different types of narration that exist.Narration is a method used in storytelling to convey a tale, idea, or message. It is the voice that brings life to a story, guiding the audience through the plot, introducing them to characters, and offering insights that might otherwise go unnoticed. The narrator can exist as a distinct, external entity, as an internal thought process of a character, or as an omnipresent voice with an all-knowing perspective. Narration shapes the way a story is perceived, setting the pace, tone, and perspective, making it an integral part of any narrative form, whether it be literature, film, theater, or even video games.Conveying a taleIntroducing charactersOffering insightsSetting the pace, tone, and perspectiveNarration comes in various forms, each with its own distinct style and effect on the story. Just as there are different ways to tell a story, there are different types of narration too. First-Person NarrationImagine sitting across from someone as they recount their life story - that's first-person narration for you. It's intimate, personal, and allows you to see the world through the character's eyes. It can also introduce the intriguing element of an unreliable narrator, adding a captivating twist to the story. Think of books like To Kill a Mockingbird or films like Fight Club and Forrest Gump.Second-Person NarrationSecond-person narration is when the narrator addresses the audience directly, using "you" as the pronoun. This style is not commonly used in traditional storytelling, but it can create a unique and immersive experience for the reader. A notable example of this is Jay McInerney's novel Bright Lights, Big City. In film, an example of second-person narration is the opening monologue in Deadpool.Third-Person NarrationThird-person narration is the most commonly used form of narration, where the story is told by someone who isn't a character in the story. The narrator is an observer, providing an objective view of events and characters. It allows for multiple perspectives and can create a more comprehensive understanding of the story. Examples include books like Pride and Prejudice and films like The Lord of the Rings.Omniscient NarrationOmniscient narration is when the narrator has unlimited knowledge and perspective, able to see into the minds of all characters and provide insight into their thoughts and emotions. This type of narration can add depth to a story by showing the audience multiple layers and motivations behind actions. A famous example is the novel The Great Gatsby.Limited Omniscient NarrationSimilar to omniscient narration, limited omniscient narration has an all-knowing narrator. However, this style limits the perspective to one character or a select group of characters. It allows for a more intimate connection with the protagonist and can be used to create suspense or surprise for the audience. An example of this is the film Gone Girl.Narration is not just a tool used to tell a story, it has a significant impact on how the story is perceived and interpreted by the audience. It sets the tone, guides the reader's emotions, and creates a connection between the audience and the characters. A well-written narration can be the difference between an audience passively watching a story versus being drawn into it. Connection with CharactersCreating a connection with characters is crucial in storytelling. It allows the audience to relate to and empathize with the characters, making the story more engaging and impactful.Guiding EmotionsGuiding emotions is another essential aspect of storytelling. By skillfully evoking different emotions in the audience, storytellers can create a powerful and immersive experience that resonates with the listeners or viewers.Transporting the Audience into the StoryOne of the main goals of storytelling is to transport the audience into the story's world. By effectively setting the scene, describing the surroundings, and engaging the senses, storytellers can make the audience feel as if they are part of the narrative, creating a truly captivating experience.Great narration has the power to shape our experiences with stories. However, poor narration can do the complete opposite. Without true voice and intention, narration can devolve into telling a story rather than adding to the experience of a story. So, if you’re thinking of using narration, be sure to ask yourself why you are using it and how you will use it in a unique and intentional way. Up NextWhat is Point of View?Narration has the power to shape the audience's perception and immerse them in a story. One crucial aspect that plays a significant role in this process is the point of view. Discover more about point of view in our upcoming article.Up Next: What is Point of View? → Narration is storytelling, where events are recounted by a narrator with a specific point of view.Narration can be found in both fiction and nonfiction, used to describe sequences of events.Different kinds of narration are used in literature, workplace documents, and even jokes and fables. In writing or speech, narration is the process of recounting a sequence of events, real or imagined. It's also called storytelling. Aristotle's term for narration was prothesis. The person who recounts the events is called a narrator. Stories can have reliable or unreliable narrators. For example, if a story is being told by someone insane, lying, or deluded, such as in Edgar Allen Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart," that narrator would be deemed unreliable. The account itself is called a narrative. The perspective from which a speaker or writer recounts a narrative is called a point of view. Types of point of view include first person, which uses "I" and follows the thoughts of one person or just one at a time, and third person, which can be limited to one person or can show the thoughts of all the characters, called the omniscient third person. Narration is the base of the story, the text that's not dialogue or quoted material. It's used in fiction and nonfiction alike. "There are two forms: simple narrative, which recites events chronologically, as in a newspaper account;" note William Harmon and Hugh Holman in "A Handbook to Literature," "and narrative with plot, which is less often chronological and more often arranged according to a principle determined by the nature of the plot and the type of story intended. It is conventionally said that narration deals with time, description with space." Cicero, however, finds three forms in "De Inventione," as explained by Joseph Colavito in "Narratio": "The first type focuses on 'the case and...the reason for dispute' (1.19.27). A second type contains 'a digression...for the purpose of attacking somebody,...making a comparison,...amusing the audience,...or for amplification' (1.19.27). The last type of narrative serves a different end—'amusement and training'—and it can concern either events or persons (1.19.27)." (In "Encyclopedia of Rhetoric and Composition: Communication from Ancient Times to the Information Age," ed. by Theresa Enos. Taylor & Francis, 1996) Narration isn't just in literature, literary nonfiction, or academic studies, though. It also comes into play in writing in the workplace, as Barbara Fine Clouse wrote in "Patterns for a Purpose": "Police officers write crime reports, and insurance investigators write accident reports, both of which narrate sequences of events. Physical therapists and nurses write narrative accounts of their patients' progress, and teachers narrate events for disciplinary reports. Supervisors write narrative accounts of employees' actions for individual personnel files, and company officials use narration to report on the company's performance during the fiscal year for its stockholders." Even "jokes, fables, fairy tales, short stories, plays, novels, and other forms of literature are narrative if they tell a story," notes Lynn Z. Bloom in "The Essay Connection." For examples of different styles of narration, check out the following: The Battle of the Ants by Henry David Thoreau (first person, nonfiction)"The Holy Night" by Selma Lagerlöf (first person and third person, fiction)Street Haunting by Virginia Woolf (first person plural and third person, omniscient narrator, nonfiction) The narrative story is directed at an audience who is either reading the written narration or listening to it. The narrator, or person telling doing the narration, might be named or unnamed. They might be someone in the story or an omniscient figure whose only purpose is to convey information to the audience. There are many different forms that narration can take, but it is a required element of all written stories. This includes poems, short stories, and novels. In other media, such as plays, films, etc, narration is optional. In these formats, narration might take away more than it adds. Definition and Explanation of Narration Narration is a crucial part of many written works. It includes who tells the story as well as how the story is told. The latter might be through a specific type of writing such as a stream of consciousness. There is no single type of narrator that fits all works. Some are more reliable than others, some fictitious, some factual, some known to the reader, and others not. When seeking to understand narration, it is important to consider the narrative mode of a written work. This is the set of choices the writer makes when crafting the narrator and their narration. There are three parts of the narrative mode. Narration Types and Narrative Modes Narrative point of view. This includes the perspective or voice of the narrator. It’s the way that the narrator refers to everyone in the story. It is used to help the reader understand whether or not the narrator is part of the story or if they’re separate and how much knowledge the narrator has about the events of the story. It includes first-person, second-person, and third-person narrations. First-person narrative point of view. The first-person narration means that the narrator is a part of the story and has relationships with the other characters in the story. It also helps bring the narrator closer to the reader. They acknowledge their existence and may or may not be able to witness everything happening in the story. Second-person narrative point of view. A second-person narrator means that the audience is involved as a character. They use pronouns like “you” and “your” and may or may not be literally addressing the audience. Third-person narrative point of viewA third-person narration involves the pronouns “he,” “she,” and “they” and never second or first-person pronouns. It is the most common narrative mode because the narrator doesn’t have to be a part of the story. They’re only there to tell it. Narrative tense. This is the choice of grammatical tense, either past or present. This established whether the narrator is looking back on events or is narrating them as they happen. Narrative technique. Other methods used to help create the narrator’s perspective. This might be the story’s setting, the themes, and storytelling devices. Examples of Narration in Literature The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger The Catcher in the Rye is a wonderful example of an unreliable, first-person narrator in the form of Holden Caulfield. Holden’s unreliability stems from the fact that he carries a great deal of anger with him throughout the narrative. He sees adults as phony, his friends as annoying and/or weak, and his life as fairly pointless. Here is a passage that demonstrates his first-person, unreliable narration: […] I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody’s around – nobody big, I mean – except me. And I’m standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff – […] In this passage, which alludes to the title of the novel, Holden contemplates childhood, adulthood, and his role in the world. Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf Woolf’s best-known novel and one of the most successful, if not the best, examples of stream of conciseness is found in Mrs. Dalloway. The novel follows Mrs. Dalloway while utilizing an omniscient third-person narration. It allows the reader to delve into the characters through dialogue, discourse, and their personal interior monologues. Here is a passage that represents this kind of narration: She had the perpetual sense, as she watched the taxi cabs, of being out, out, far out to sea and alone; she always had the feeling that it was very, very, dangerous to live even one day. The Rime of the Ancient Mariner by Samuel Taylor Coleridge In Coleridge’s most famous poem, ‘The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,’ the narrator uses the first-person past tense, within a frame narrative, to tell a harrowing story of his time at sea. Here are a few lines that demonstrate this narrative perspective: The many men, so beautiful! And they all dead did lie: And a thousand thousand slimy things Lived on; and so did I. I looked upon the rotting sea, And drew my eyes away; I looked upon the rotting deck, And there the dead men lay. Depending on how one reads the poem, the Mariner may or may not come across as an unreliable narrator whose mind has been scrambled by the loss of his crew and severe dehydration. Narration Synonyms Perspective Account Telling Recital Chronicle Tale Related Literary Terms Other Resources