Lesson 18
Comparing Points of View

Learning Target
Comparing narrators and their thoughts and feelings about what happens will help you develop a deeper understanding of story characters and events.

Read
In stories, the narrator is the person who tells the story. The narrator always has a point of view, or how he or she thinks or feels about story events. Some narrators are characters in the story. They experience what happens and are called first-person narrators. Other narrators are not characters in the story. They look in from outside the story. They are called third-person narrators.

When you read, pay attention not just to what narrators say but also how they say it. Their points of view will affect the way you interpret what happens and why.

Study the cartoons below. For each one, decide who the narrator is.

As I walked down the hall, my friends stared at me, but I wasn’t at all surprised. I wanted everybody’s attention!

As Martha walked down the hall, her friends stared at her. She wasn’t at all surprised. After all, she wanted their attention!
Think  What have you learned about first- and third-person narrators? Use the Venn diagram below to compare and contrast the narrators’ points of view. Use information from the cartoons to help you.

First-Person Narrator  Third-Person Narrator

Alike

Talk  Share your Venn diagram with a partner.

• Did you and your partner identify the same similarities and differences?
• What details from the cartoons did you use to help you compare and contrast?

Academic Talk
Use these words and phrases to talk about the text.

• narrator  • point of view  • compare
• first-person  • third-person  • contrast
I was looking forward to my first field trip at my new school. We were scheduled to visit the Museum of Natural History, which sounded extremely interesting to me, that is, until my new friend Barry started complaining about it. As our bus traveled along the highway, Barry insisted, “I’m telling you, LeBron, we went last year, and it’s mostly just a bunch of boring rocks and bones. What a snoozer!”

Oh, no, I thought. There’s nothing worse than being bored, especially when I was really looking forward to something. Suddenly, the trip seemed ruined. Moments later, our bus pulled into the museum’s parking lot; we dragged ourselves outside and trudged up the museum steps.

Sweating under the hot sun, I glumly looked around. Then I noticed a statue of a small, perky dinosaur poking its head out of some bushes. Hey, I thought. This might not be so bad.

A tour guide met us and shepherded our class around the museum. Barry was right in one way. There were a lot of rocks and bones, but what rocks! We viewed cool fossils of creatures that had lived a million years ago. We also saw sparkling gemstones and meteors that had fallen from space. And the bones were even better! One gallery featured skeletons of mastodons and a saber-toothed cat. Another displayed dinosaurs, including part of a T. rex. Already I was hoping we’d come back to see more next year—but I don’t think I’m ready to tell Barry that.
How would an account of the museum trip told by a first-person narrator differ from an account told by a third-person narrator?

**Think**

1. Who is the narrator? 

2. Does the story use a first-person or a third-person narrator? Explain your thinking, and include story evidence that supports it.

3. How does LeBron’s point of view about the museum change from the beginning of the story to the end? Why?

**Talk**

4. How would the story be different if it were told by a narrator with a different point of view? Why would it be different? List some story details that might change.

**Write**

5. **Short Response** Describe how the story would have been different if it had been told by a narrator with a different point of view. Include text evidence in your response. Use the space provided on page 290 to write your response.
Hoshi stared at the clock over a panel in the spaceship. The school day was almost over, and she couldn’t wait to meet with her friend, Jeri. Their newly created visual game awaited them on Deck C. Incredibly exciting, the game made space-time seem to pass much faster.

At least the new teacher, Vox-23, was more interesting than the last class-A instructional robot. Soon it completed the lesson. Then it announced what it always said: “Enjoy the rest of your afternoon, and have another lovely day!”

Hoshi glanced out the window into the blackness of space. Every hour of every day the view looked the same. Having spent half her life traveling to a lush planet in another galaxy, Hoshi recalled little else. She would be 15 by the time they arrived at their new home.

After class, Hoshi and Jeri raced straight to Deck C and entered one of the 3-D rooms, rooms that could create any scene a person imagined. Jeri excitedly pressed some buttons and called out, “Computer: run the program ‘Old Earth School on a Big Hill.’ Make it look real!” The bare room instantly changed into an old-fashioned classroom with a dusty blackboard mounted behind an old wooden desk. Sunlight from large windows filled the dusty air. As Hoshi and Jeri looked outside, they could see white clouds, blue sky, flowering trees, green grass, and a playground. They politely asked their human teacher, Mrs. Ryant, “May we go outside for recess?”

“If only this were real, Jeri!” Hoshi said wistfully. “Maybe sometime in the future, things truly will be this good.”
**Think**  Use what you’ve learned from reading the science fiction story to respond to the following questions.

1. This passage is told by a third-person narrator. Select three sentences that indicate the narrator is a third-person narrator.
   - A  “Hoshi stared at the clock over a panel in the spaceship.”
   - B  “Incredibly exciting, the game made space-time seem to pass much faster.”
   - C  “At least the new teacher, Vox-23, was more interesting than the last class-A instructional robot.”
   - D  “Hoshi glanced out the window into the blackness of space.”
   - E  “She would be 15 by the time they arrived at their new home.”
   - F  “The bare room instantly changed into an old-fashioned classroom with a dusty blackboard mounted behind an old wooden desk.”

2. Reread paragraph 3. If the story were told in the first-person, which of the following would most likely be part of the story?
   - A  Hoshi’s thoughts and feelings about traveling through space
   - B  details about Hoshi’s and Jeri’s actions, but not their point of view about the trip
   - C  different ways multiple characters viewed the trip
   - D  more information about the 3-D rooms on Deck C

**Talk**

3. Compare the points of view of the narrators in “If Only This Were Real” and “Just a Bunch of Rocks and Bones?” Use the Venn diagram on page 291 to organize your thoughts. Explain how the points of view in the two stories compare.

**Write**

4. **Short Response**  Use the information from your discussion and diagram to compare the points of view of the narrators in “If Only This Were Real” and “Just a Bunch of Rocks and Bones?” Use at least one detail from each text to support your response. Use the space provided on page 291 to write your response.

**HINT** Compare how you learn about the thoughts and feelings of the narrator in each story.