

Monologues

Monologues and streams of consciousness

Point of view of the narrator: first person

First person narration – dynamic and effective

- The story is told from the PoV of an “I”, who is describing and **experiencing the world from his/her perspective.**
- **The events and the story are limited** to what the ‘I’ can know about the surroundings and the world.
- When a first person narrator describes the events of the story and the other characters from his/her perspective, the reader also learns a lot about **the narrator’s personality and attitudes.** (Catcher in the Rye!)
- *“If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you’ll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don’t feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth.”*

Monologue - getting inside someone's head

When writing monologue you show

- the character's thoughts
- what the character thinks of others

However

- first person narrators should be considered “unreliable” because they are subjective
- In diaries, letters, blogs and social media - gilded version of ourselves
- Novels with an unreliable narrator are effective!
- Different kinds of unreliability: the narrator may be a child / a liar / mad
- Can you think of examples from books, films or television?
- Nabokov: Lolita / Kafka: Metamorphosis / Hawkins: The Girl on the Train / Martel: Life of Pi / Flynn: Gone Girl

Inner monologue

- Note the difference between
monologue = other characters hear everything that the character says
the narrator may be aware of the audience
inner monologue = the whole monologue is private, almost dialogue

- How the character perceives themselves and the world around them.

“How much better is silence; the coffee cup, the table. Let me sit here for ever with bare things, this coffee cup, this knife, this fork, things in themselves, myself being myself. Do not come and worry me with your hints that it is time to shut the shop and be gone. I would willingly give all my money that you should not disturb me but let me sit on and on, silent, alone.”

- the character's inner conflicts – internal **dialogue** ↔

When preparing for a job interview:

“He lifted his chin, pulling the knot in his tie a little tighter.

You’ve got this. He winked.

Stop, definitely don’t wink at them. He pulled a stern face.

No, you look like you’re interviewing to be someone’s damn body guard.”



Assignment

Write

- 1) a 1st person narrative (= the character monologizes for an audience) OR
- 2) an inner monologue (= others do not hear the character's thoughts) OR
- 3) a combination of the first two where the inner monologue is *italized*.

If you want to

- Bring structure to your text by letting an outsider, e.g. a police officer, a psychiatrist, a parent, a journalist, a potential employer) ask questions. Then your character can talk to others + have less censored private thoughts.
- Because the inner monologue, in its naked honesty, shows how wretched and unkind we/a person can be, you can choose to write using the voice of an unpleasant character.

Deadline

- Turn in your own text by 23.55 on Mon 7 Nov. comment by 23.55 on Tues

Plan your character

- Backstory:
 - Name
 - Place of residence/home town
 - Characteristics
 - Psychology: hopes, fears, ambitions, what they like and hate
 - Education
 - Profession/job
 - Hobbies/interests
- Present your character to the group
- Why had the character come to the psychiatrist/
why is the character being questioned by the police/
or why is the character talking to themselves