

Who Said That? (First, Second Or Third Person)

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Who Said That? (First, Second Or Third Person)

By Jeff Colburn

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I often have writers ask me which person they should write in, first, second or third. Deciding if a story should be told with "I said, you said, or he/she said" can be daunting to many writers. This question is most difficult to decide in fiction. For that reason, I will address this article to all of you fiction writers.

There are pros and cons to each person. Let me give you some examples so we are all talking about the same thing.

This example comes from a short story of mine called "First Blood."

Third Person, also called Omniscient (This is how it was written for publication.):

"Damn them all to the seven hells of Anthion," Klempf yelled, as he took another direct hit. His head throbbed from being thrown against the control panel. A small trickle of red blood ran down between his blond eyebrows.

Second Person:

"Damn them all to the seven hells of Anthion," you yelled, as your ship took another direct hit. Your head throbbed from being thrown against the control panel. A small trickle of red blood ran down between your blond eyebrows.

First Person:

"Damn them all to the seven hells of Anthion," I yelled, as my ship took another direct hit. My head throbbed from being thrown against the control panel. A small trickle of red blood ran down between my blond eyebrows.

As you can see, each paragraph has a distinctly different flavor.

Second person is very seldom used in fiction. To me, it seems to be paternal and distancing when someone keeps saying, "You, you, you." It lacks involvement of the characters in the story. Don't get me wrong, it can be used in a story, but it must be done very carefully.

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The most frequently used persons are first and third.

First person has the advantage of being very personal. "I did this. I did that." The reader will know exactly what the character is thinking and what they believe, even if the story shows the character is wrong. One of the disadvantages is that the reader doesn't know anything that the character doesn't know. If a character is standing in one room, he doesn't know what is happening anywhere else. You couldn't say, "Darek stood in the living room, unaware that Jim was in the garden, with a rifle aimed at Darek's chest." That would be third person. Now you could say, "I stood in the living room facing the bay window. A glint of light from something in the garden caught my attention. Too late, I realized the glint came from a rifle scope, the bullet ripped into my chest, and the world darkened." This would have to be the end of the story, because there wouldn't be anyone left to tell the story, unless you have the

character's ghost continue the story.

With first person you must be very careful to stay in each characters head, and know only what they know. This can be expanded if you jump from one person to another. However, you must be sure that the readers knows whose head you're in. It's easy to confuse the reader, and just a little too much of this will have your reader lost, frustrated and putting your book on the shelf forever.

Third person is the easiest to use; at least that's what many writers, including myself, think. Third person allows you to know everything. That's why it's also called the omniscient view. You are like a god, and know everything that everyone in the story knows, plus everything going on in their universe. If you want the reader to know that Jim is in the garden with a gun, you can just say so. You don't need Jim to shoot, or have someone else see Jim. It allows you to paint your story with a much broader brush.

A good writer can, with a lot of work, combine these different views, but it must be done just right and for a reason. I suggest staying with one view throughout a story, just to make things easier on you, and the reader.

Find out what voice you like to write in. Do what I did above. Write two or three pages of a story in each person, and see which you enjoy the most, and which sounds most natural to you. Which person you choose may even vary from story to story.

So go out and write. Whatever person you choose to write in is up to you, just be sure to write.

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An Extraordinary Person

By Hifzur Rehman

I am not going to tell you the story of an extraordinary person, who did remarkable things in life. Why

should I?

Are you not an extraordinary person? What do you think about yourself? You possess all the assets of an extraordinary person but, unfortunately, you are not an extraordinary person because you don't think so.

Your low belief level about your own capabilities is blocking your way in achieving extraordinary success in life. Your Creator gave you the equal opportunity of becoming an extraordinary person in your own individual manner. He equipped your body with the same tools and gadgets as he equipped the body of any other extraordinary person. No extraordinary organ has been implanted by God in the bodies of those people who are living or have lived an extraordinary life.

You must be working hard to maintain a reasonable standard of life for yourself and your family. Is it enough? Can you become an extraordinary person just by doing 9 to 5 jobs? Absolutely not! Don't walk on the off-beaten tracks paved for the ordinary people. Don't follow the crowd and don't copy others. You are not an ordinary person.

There is an extraordinary person within you. Give that person a chance to lead you. The more you seek guidance from your inner-self, the more you feel confident about your capabilities as an extraordinary person.

Being an extraordinary person, with a strong belief level, you can go to the peak of success, beyond any person's imagination. Raise up your arms in the air, smile and let the world praise you as an extraordinary person.

Do you need any extraordinary skills to become an extraordinary person? Not necessarily! A little guidance from your inner-self and the wise management of your time is all that you need to bring a positive revolution in your life. But most importantly, you must enhance your belief level to become an extraordinary person.

Are you an extraordinary person? Still undecided!

Hifzur Rehman is the author of popular articles on self-improvement. He is also the editor of his website

which is a great source of FREE self-improvement related

material, thoroughly scrutinized for its practical importance and positive impact on human life.

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An Extraordinary Person
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