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Chapter Seven

Standards Focus: Point of View

Point of View is the perspective from which a story is told. The three most common types of point of view are:

􀂾 First person- the narrator is a character in the story; tells the story using the first person pronouns “I”, “me”

and “my”.

􀂾 Third person limited- the narrator is an outside observer of the action; is able to tell the reader about only

one person’s views, thoughts, and perspective.

􀂾 Third person omniscient- the narrator is an outside observer of the action; is able to tell the reader the

thoughts, feelings, and perspectives of many characters in the story.

Their Eyes Were Watching God is told from the third person limited point of view, although it is Janie’s story. While the story is of Janie’s journey, told by Janie herself to her friend Phoebe, the narrator steps away from Janie’s voice, becoming an outside observer. Because it is third person limited, we are privy to the thoughts, feelings and

observations of Janie herself.

Directions: Take a moment to look around you. Find any object in your classroom and study it closely. Follow

directions for each example below.

1. Using specific and powerful details, describe everything you observe about the object. Describe its color,

shape, weight, height, texture, smell, taste, etc., using as many details as possible.

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2. Now, imagine that object had a life of its own. Use your imagination to come up with a story of the object’s

journey to your classroom. First, is it male or female? Where does it come from? What is it used for?

Does it like its “job”? Why or why not? Write with as many details as possible, using personification and

other imagery to tell your object’s story. This section will demonstrate the use of third person limited point

of view.

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3. Using the same object as above, write a first person account of the same object. In this case, you will

become the persona of the object, explaining the same passage as above, only using the first person point of

view.

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