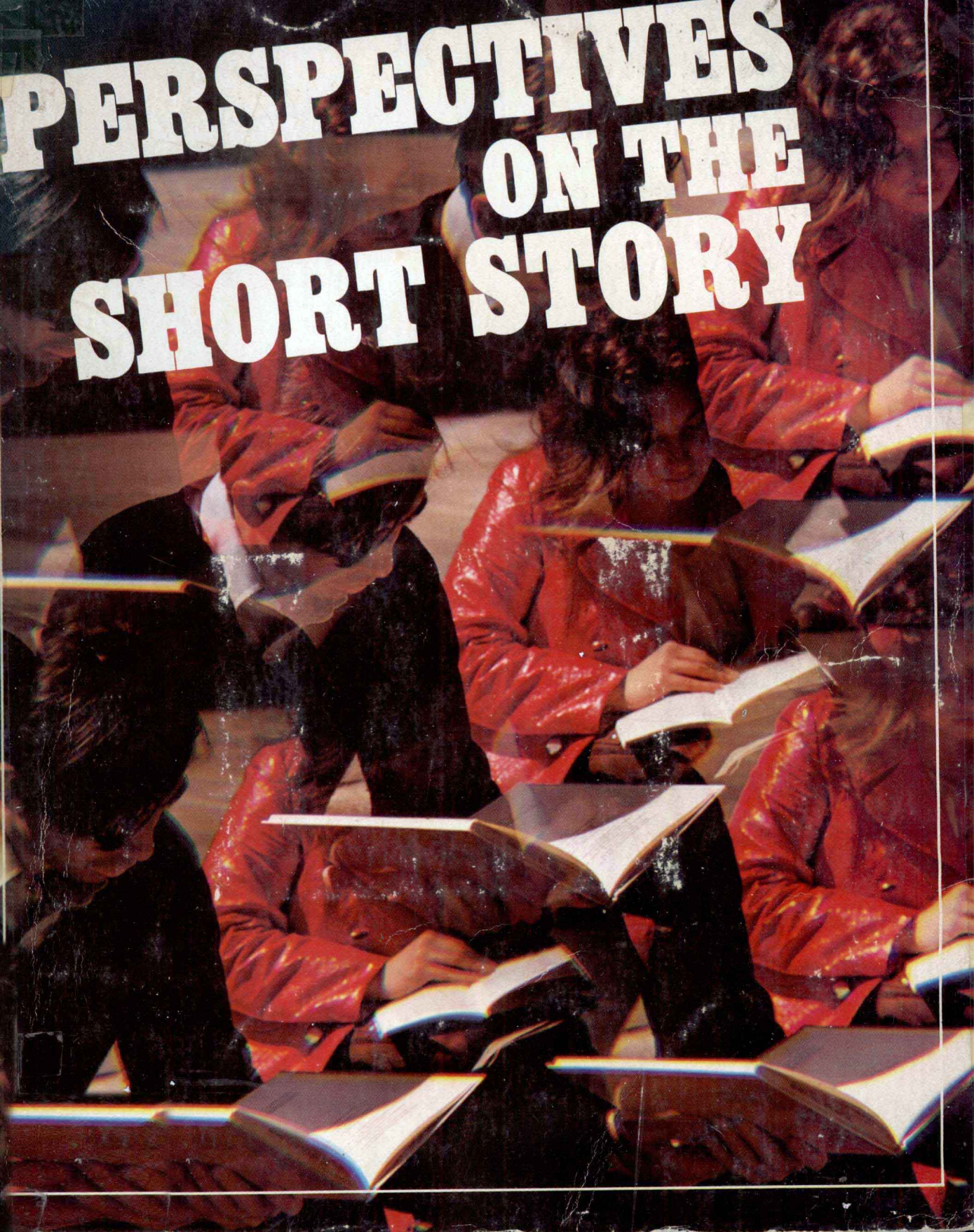


PERSPECTIVES ON THE SHORT STORY



PERSPECTIVES ON THE SHORT STORY

ALBERT R. KITZHABER
General Editor

STODDARD MALARKEY
Literature Editor

BARBARA DRAKE

HOLT, RINEHART AND WINSTON, INC.
New York • Toronto • London • Sydney

Copyright © 1974 by Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
All Rights Reserved
Printed in the United States of America
ISBN: 0-03-010946-9

89 071 9876543

This text comprises the sections "The Short Story: Point of View" from *Viewpoints in Literature*, and "The Short Story: Form and Purpose" from *Forms of Literature*, both books copyright © 1974 by Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

Illustration credits appear in the back on page v.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors and publisher have made every effort to trace the ownership of all selections found in this book and to make full acknowledgment for their use. Some of the selections are in the public domain.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to the following authors, publishers, agents, and individuals for their permission to reprint copyrighted material.

FARRAR, STRAUS & GIROUX, INC., for "Bad Characters" from *Bad Characters* by Jean Stafford. Copyrighted 1954 by Jean Stafford. Reprinted by permission.

MURRAY POLLINGER, for "Bad Characters" from *The Collected Stories of Jean Stafford*, published by Chatto & Windus Ltd. Reprinted by permission.

MCGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY, for "Dawn of Remembered Spring" by Jesse Stuart. Copyright © 1955, 1972 by Jesse Stuart. Reprinted by permission.

FARRAR, STRAUS & GIROUX, INC., ASSOCIATED BOOK PUBLISHERS LTD., AND EYRE & STOTTISWOODE, for "A Summer's Reading" from *The Magic Barrel* by Bernard Malamud. Copyright © 1956 by Bernard Malamud. Reprinted by permission.

ASHLEY FAMOUS AGENCY, INC., AND HOPE LERESCHE & STEELE, for "Hook" from *The Watchful Gods and Other Stories* by Walter Van Tilburg Clark. Copyright 1940, © 1968 by Walter Van Tilburg Clark. Reprinted by permission.

ALFRED BESTER, for his story "Disappearing Act." Copyright 1953 by Ballantine Books, Inc., Reprinted by permission.

THE VIKING PRESS, INC., AND LAURENCE POLLINGER LTD, for "The Rocking-Horse Winner" from *The Complete Short Stories of D.H. Lawrence* Vol. III. Copyright 1933 by The Estate of D.H. Lawrence, renewed © 1961 by Angelo Ravagli and C.M. Weekley, Executors of the Estate of Frieda Lawrence Ravagli. Reprinted by permission.

THE VIKING PRESS, INC., AND MACINTOSH & OTIS, for "The Chrysanthemums" from *The Long Valley* by John Steinbeck. Copyright 1937, © 1965 by John Steinbeck. Reprinted by permission.

HELEN THURBER AND HAMISH HAMILTON LTD., for "The Catbird Seat" from *The Thurber Carnival* by James Thurber, published by Harper & Row. Copyright 1954 by James Thurber. Originally appeared in *The New Yorker* Reprinted by permission.

J.M. DENT & SONS LTD. AND THE TRUSTEES OF THE JOSEPH CONRAD ESTATE, for "The Secret Sharer" from *'Twiixt Land and Sea* by Joseph Conrad. Reprinted by permission.

DELACORTE PRESS AND FARBER & SIFT, for "Adam" from *Welcome to the Monkey House* by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. Copyright 1954 by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. A Seymour Lawrence Book/Delacorte Press. Originally appeared in *Cosmopolitan*. Reprinted by permission.

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS AND THE BODLEY HEAD, for "The Baby Party" from *All the Sad Young Men* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Copyright 1925 by Hearst's International Magazines Co., Inc., renewed 1953 by Frances Scott Fitzgerald Lanahan. Reprinted by permission.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY AND RUSSELL & VOLKENING, INC, for "The Necessary Knocking at the Door" from *Miss Muriel and Other Stories* by Ann Petry. Copyright 1947 by Ann Petry. Reprinted by permission.

INTERNATIONAL FAMOUS AGENCY AND HOPE LERESCHE & STEELE, for "The Portable Phonograph" from *The Watchful Gods and Other Stories* by Walter Van Tilburg Clark. Copyright 1941, © 1969 by Walter Van Tilburg Clark. Reprinted by permission.

ALFRED A. KNOPF, INC., AND MURRAY POLLINGER, for "Taste" from *Someone Like You* by Roald Dahl. Copyright 1951 by Roald Dahl. Originally appeared in *The New Yorker*. Reprinted by permission.

INTRODUCTION

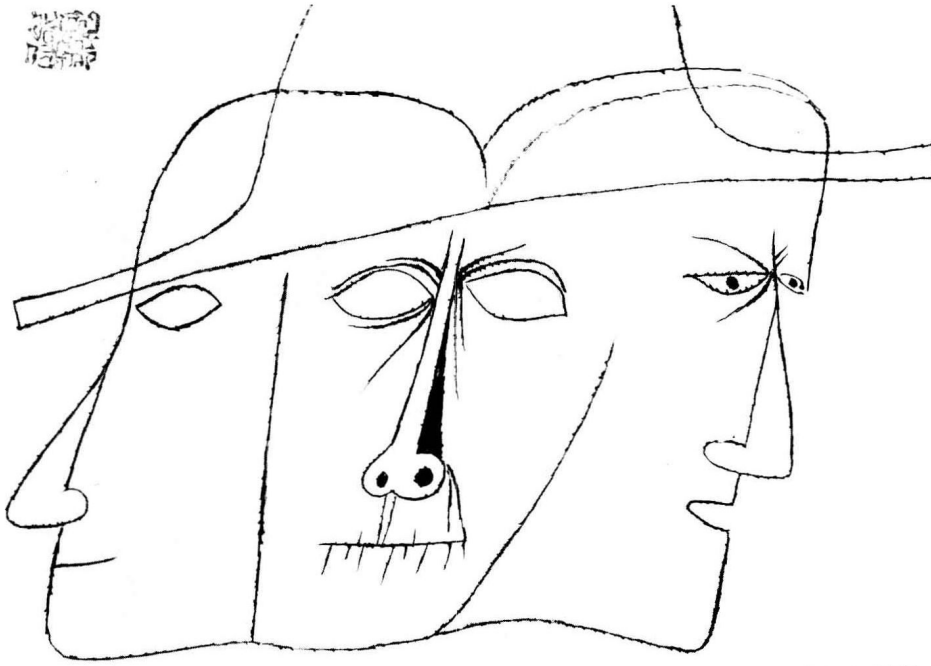
Have you met any interesting people recently—people who amused you or intrigued you, or inspired you? The authors of the stories in this collection have some very interesting people to introduce to you.

Of course your reaction to these people will depend on who you are—what your feelings are, what your experiences have been—and how well the writers present these characters to you. And that is the reason for this book—to read some well-written stories and react to them.

Because of their varied backgrounds—in time, in country, in race, in point of view—the writers represented here all have something different to say; perhaps you will find that you have something to say in reply to them.

CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------|
| THE SHORT STORY: POINT OF VIEW | 1 |
| Bad Characters, <i>Jean Stafford</i> | 9 |
| Dawn of Remembered Spring, <i>Jesse Stuart</i> | 31 |
| Hook, <i>Walter Van Tilburg Clark</i> | 39 |
| Disappearing Act, <i>Alfred Bester</i> | 60 |
| The Rocking-Horse Winner, <i>D. H. Lawrence</i> | 80 |
| THE SHORT STORY: FORM AND PURPOSE | 97 |
| Adam, <i>Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.</i> | 99 |
| The Chrysanthemums, <i>John Steinbeck</i> | 109 |
| The Baby Party, <i>F. Scott Fitzgerald</i> | 122 |
| The Catbird Seat, <i>James Thurber</i> | 135 |
| Wakefield, <i>Nathaniel Hawthorne</i> | 147 |
| Novelette | 157 |
| The Secret Sharer, <i>Joseph Conrad</i> | 158 |
| Anthology | 201 |
| Enemy Territory, <i>William Melvin Kelley</i> | 203 |
| Taste, <i>Roald Dahl</i> | 210 |
| About the Authors | i |
| Index | iv |
| Illustration Credits | v |



The Short Story

Point of View

In this unit, you will be reading five short stories, each told from a different point of view. Any five would do, really, because every short story is handled in a slightly different way. Although we will also be concerned with subject and form, our main concern will be the author's point of view—where he stands in relation to his subject and what he feels about it. Only when we are able to view the characters and events in the same way that the author views them can we begin to understand the story as he wants us to understand it.

What Is Point of View?

The term *point of view* can be confusing, because the same phrase is used to mean two rather different things. The first meaning has to do with *technique*. Whom does the author focus upon as he tells his story? Through whose eyes does he see the events? If he is particularly interested in one character, he may choose to tell the story from that character's point of view (called first-person point of view), using "I" as if he were the character himself speaking. Or, he might choose to use the third-person-limited point of view, focusing upon one character, following him throughout the action, but referring to him as "he" rather than using his voice as "I." With this method the author is further removed from his character, and he must give us information about him in different ways. Another common point of view is third-person-omniscient. Here the author has the most freedom of all—he is able to shift from one character to another or from one place to another at will. In this unit we will be primarily concerned with *why* the author uses a particular point of view.

The second meaning of the phrase "point of view" is far more common in general, non-literary conversation, and it has to do with *attitude*. When someone asks, "What is your point of view about this?" or "What is your viewpoint?" he wants to know what your attitude is—how you feel about something. An author's feeling about his subject has a great deal to do with the way he presents his story, and in order to interpret his story accurately we must be able to detect his attitude. No matter which meaning of "point of view" we use, then, we will be talking about that invisible man behind the pen—the author of the story.

Who Is the Narrator?

A narrator, of course, is one who tells a story, so any author of a story is, by definition, a narrator. Sometimes, however, an author will choose to have another "narrator" tell his story for him. Perhaps you have heard about the band of robbers who sat around a campfire. The leader said to one of his men, "Jake, tell us a story." So Jake began: "It was a dark and stormy night. A band of robbers sat around a campfire. The leader said to one of his men, 'Jake, tell us a story.' So Jake began, 'It was a dark and stormy night . . .'" It is hardly necessary to carry this further in order to illustrate the point—a story may be filtered through almost any number of narrators.

Imagine an author sitting down to write a story. He has observed people and events, he has feelings and ideas, and he wishes to put them down in story form. Perhaps he has noticed a particular person and has decided to write a story about that person or someone like him. He now has more decisions to make. He can be the narrator himself, or he can have his character (the person has suddenly become a character in a story) be the first-person narrator. Or he might choose to use another, less important character as the narrator. Whoever narrates the story will be the observer of the events and the other characters, and those events and characters will be “colored” by the way the observer-narrator sees things.

The story, then, comes to us through the narrator in much the same way that light passes through glass. If the narrator is objective, we should see the story like a scene framed in a window, in its “normal” proportions, without distortion. If the narrator is highly emotional, we will see his story like light passed through a stained glass window—it will be colored by his emotional reactions. Another narrator might magnify like a microscope, focusing upon details too small to be seen by the naked eye; while yet another might report things as if seeing them through the wrong end of a telescope. Still another might view the action as if through fogged spectacles, missing much of what is going on. An author who tells his story through this kind of narrator must be skillful enough to give clues to his readers in spite of the fact that his narrator is not perceptive. It is even possible to tell a story through several narrators who, like the sides of a kaleidoscope, reflect the same subjects from different angles, creating strange patterns out of ordinary sights or bouncing, shattering, and distorting images like a carnival house of mirrors.

Whenever we talk about *point of view* in fiction, we are talking about the narrators. We begin with the arch-narrator himself, the author, and then go on to discover his character or characters whose observations make up the story. Sometimes the author is very prominent in his own story, telling it in his own voice. Usually, however, he speaks through another voice, thus making his own voice more difficult to detect. Perhaps one of the main differences between fiction and nonfiction is that when a writer of fiction uses “I,” he usually does *not* mean himself.

An Exercise

Before going any further, let’s try to apply this matter of point of view to a hypothetical incident. Imagine that a certain Mr. X has been sent

to the store to buy a can of beans. While he is waiting his turn at the cash register, a man enters the store, points a gun at the proprietor and tells him to hand over his cash, orders the waiting customers to face the back of the wall with their hands up, takes the money, and makes a hasty exit. After he has disappeared, the proprietor runs into the street calling for help, the police arrive, and a crowd gathers. The robbery then becomes the subject of a number of “stories” told by several narrators to several audiences. Imagine the incident described in the following situations:

| NARRATOR | AUDIENCE |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| eye-witness X | a woman who has stopped to see what is going on |
| eye-witness X | friends at his lodge meeting (a week after the robbery) |
| eye-witness X | the editor of the local paper (in an indignant letter) |
| a member of X's lodge | his relatives in another town |
| a reporter who interviewed X | the newsreading public |
| a policeman who questioned X | the chief of police (in a routine report) |
| a politician campaigning for office | the voters (in a public speech) |
| a man reading the newspaper at the breakfast table | his wife across the table |
| X's eleven-year-old son | his friends at school |

1. Which narrator is most personally involved in the story?
2. Which narrator is least personally involved in the story?
3. Do any of the narrators have ulterior motives which might influence their telling of the story?
4. Which narrator, in which circumstances, would you expect to use the most informal language?
5. Which narrator would you expect to use the most emotional language?
6. Which narrator would you expect to use the most objective language?
7. What other factors, besides involvement, influence the way a narrator relates his story? You know very little about any of these narrators, but you can guess, for example, how the politician's account will differ from that of the eleven-year-old boy.

8. Does there seem to be any relationship between the time that has passed since the incident and the kind of language the narrator uses? For example, how might X's account on the night of the robbery differ from his account a week later, a month later, a year later?
9. Try to match the following quotations with the nine situations listed above. Be able to explain how the narrator's style, as well as what he says, influences your choices.
- a) "Did I tell you what happened to me the other night? It was about six-thirty, last Tuesday. Miriam was starting supper and she calls me and says, 'Honey, would you run down to the store and buy me a can of beans?' I says, 'Sure,' puts on my raincoat, and walks down the street thinking how it's such a quiet peaceful night for a walk, never guessing what was going to happen. Well, I'll tell you ..."
 - b) "Mr. Edward E. Keller of the Elm Street Market was robbed in his store Tuesday night, at six-fifteen, by an unidentified armed man, as seven customers stood by helplessly. The assailant pocketed fifty dollars in small bills and eight dollars worth of change."
 - c) "He was a big guy, with a gun. The police still ain't got him. Everybody hadda go down to the police station. Boy, what a night. He made everybody line up against the wall, just like on television."
 - d) "The place was full of customers apparently. Can you beat that? I guess no one got a good look at him, even though he was close as I am to you. He was wearing a mask. Waved his gun right in their faces. Hope they catch the fellow."
 - e) "I was just standing there with my can of beans—I just came in to buy a can of beans, ya' know, on accounta my wife was making chili for supper and forgot to buy any beans when she went shopping yesterday and then this guy, not too tall, maybe about your height, wearing this thing over his face, comes in and says quiet-like to the guy behind the counter, 'Don't try anything and nobody'll get hurt.' Like I was maybe three feet from this jerk. Right over there. Geez, like a guy don't know what he'll run into when he goes out for a can of beans anymore."
 - f) "It is a sorry thing when a citizen cannot go out to buy a can of beans without taking his life in his hands. I have lived in this town for thirty-five years, and I am not about to see it turned into a haven for bandits."
 - g) "Another store got robbed. You wouldn't catch me running a little grocery store. Too dangerous. Let's see — owner demanded that

*The Short Story:
Point of View*

... witnesses said ... gun ... fifty-six dollars! For fifty-six dollars a guy can't get his shoes polished these days. Haven't caught him yet."

- h) "Only three weeks ago, in our fair city, the same city in which many of us were born and raised free from the shadow of fear and violence, proud to walk our streets and shop in our stores, no fewer than eight of our honest citizens were subjected to the outrage of lawlessness. Is this mere accident, that in these days when city taxes are higher than they have ever been, we must put up with more, and yet more, and still more of these examples of society running out of control? Who is to blame? This is the question we must ask."
- i) "The suspect is described as being about five foot eleven, wearing scuffed brown shoes, green slacks, and a tan windbreaker jacket. No identifying marks. Witness believes assailant to be in middle thirties."

As you can see, a number of factors can shape the point of view of any narrator. His attitude may be influenced by the degree of his *involvement* with his subject (X was in the store when the robbery took place, but the members of his lodge merely heard about it secondhand); his personal *motives* (the politician hoped to use the robbery to promote his own election, whereas the newspaperman only wanted to report the facts); his *character* (X's son enjoyed any sort of excitement); and *time* (which not only heals wounds but also obscures the memory, allows for second thoughts, brings new experiences, and may make things seem less real and less important). What a narrator says and how he says it also depends upon his audience. As you read the stories in this unit, give careful consideration to whatever factors seem to influence the narrator's approach to his subject.

Tone and Style

The word *tone* refers to the expression of attitude or feeling. You have certainly heard "tone" used to describe a vocal quality:

She had a whining tone in her voice.

In a stern tone of voice, her mother asked her to shut the door.

In a mysterious tone of voice, her mother asked her to shut the door.

I heard a voice singing in deep, lively tones.

The tone of a voice does more than express feeling: it makes you, the listener, feel something too. It may even move you to *do* something—plug your ears, get up to shut the door, or start to sing.

In writing, of course, we cannot rely on vocal tone, the sort of tone that can make an isolated word like "fine" mean half a dozen things. "Fine."

“Fine.” “Fine.” “Fine.” “Fine.” “Fine.” In print, unless the context gives us clues to how the word should sound, they all sound the same. What is missing is the cheerful, or sarcastic, or questioning, or flat, or reassuring, or angry tone that a voice would give to the word “fine.”

Yet a skillful writer *can* express cheer, sarcasm, query, apathy, reassurance, or anger in his writing without describing the tone directly. And it is fortunate that he can, because we would tire very quickly of the kind of writing which forever depended upon a formula like “she said, *cheerfully*.”

We usually use the word *style* to refer to this matter of expressing tone in writing. You have seen examples of tone expressed through style in the quotations on pages 45–46. X’s style is rushed, colloquial, and erratic when he starts speaking at the scene of the holdup. He is obviously excited and disorganized. He is probably speaking rapidly. A week later, when he has had time to tell the story several times and to think it over, he is able to tell about the incident in a more orderly way, chronologically, building up suspense in order to hold the attention of his listener. Most important, his tone has changed because, given a week’s time to remove him from the scene of the crime and its immediate emotional effect, his point of view has changed. The incident is already beginning to recede into the past, to appear more as an exciting anecdote than as an immediate danger.

In writing, then, tone is expressed by style — the conscious choice of language, the manipulation of sentences and paragraphs, and the ordering of material.

An author’s style gives the reader important clues. When you begin to read a story, you are not likely to find an announcement of the narrator’s identity and purpose. Often it is not until you have completed most of the reading that you can begin to answer questions about who the narrator really is and what he is trying to say. His point of view may not be clear until you have completed the story; a complete picture of his attitude may be presented bit by bit, and early clues to the narrator’s attitude may be deliberately misleading, or incomplete. Perhaps the narrator is planning a dramatic surprise. What we do have to guide us from beginning to end in any story is the immediate tone, or style. As an illustration, consider the following passage.

At first it occurred to me to have a tantrum and bring her around to my point of view; my tantrums scared the living daylights out of her because my veins stood out and I turned blue and couldn’t get my breath. But I rejected this for a more sensible plan. I said, “It just so

*The Short Story:
Point of View*

happens I didn't hear anything. But if I had, I suppose you wish I had gone out in the kitchen and let the robber cut me up into a million little tiny pieces with his sword. You wouldn't even bury me. You'd just put me on the dump. *I* know who's wanted in this family and who isn't." Tears of sorrow, not of anger, came in powerful tides and I groped blindly to the bedroom I shared with Stella, where I lay on my bed and shook with big, silent *weltschmerzlich* sobs.

What is the difference in tone or style between the material which is included in quotation marks and that which is not? Is the same person speaking throughout the passage, or are two different people speaking? Is all of the material in the passage being spoken at the same time? Find all of the words and phrases in this passage which sound like a child's speech, then find those which definitely have an adult tone. Is the narrator of this passage a child or an adult?

Which of the following words seem to describe the style or tone of this passage: formal, conversational, humorous, pathetic, exaggerated, persuasive, satirical, disorganized, planned, ironic? What attitude is expressed by the tone of the passage? Is the narrator trying to make us feel sad, sympathetic, angry, amused?

The preceding passage is from the first story you will read in this section—"Bad Characters," by Jean Stafford. When you read the story, you will find that the narrator provides many clues to her point of view, but even without those clues, the evidence in this short passage tells you a great deal about her attitude. You will realize that the narrator is an adult, even when she uses a child's language to recreate an emotional scene. When she calls her behavior "a more sensible plan" than a tantrum, you realize that she is looking back at her childhood with tongue in cheek, and that time and experience have brought her to a different point of view or attitude than the one she had as a child trying to gain sympathy for herself. You may even feel that the child does throw a virtual tantrum, and so discern a note of light irony in the narrator's tone. You may feel that what the child does is neither sensible nor planned, and that the narrator agrees with you.

There is a good reason for paying particular attention to the style and tone of a story. It is not always safe to take what the narrator says at face value, because the author may be using irony, sarcasm, or some other form of *indirection*. He may be assuming the mask of a character who does not completely understand what he is talking about. Or he may feel that the less he appears to interfere with the story the better; he may prefer to

show you something in such a way that you discover it yourself, rather than tell you directly.

Read the following stories quickly at first, to get the feeling of the narrative. If you allow yourself to become involved in the story and receptive to the author's craft, you may find that your own instincts will lead you to an understanding of the story.

Bad Characters

Jean Stafford

Up until I learned my lesson in a very bitter way, I never had more than one friend at a time, and my friendships, though ardent, were short. When they ended and I was sent packing in unforgetting indignation, it was always my fault; I would swear vilely in front of a girl I knew to be pious and prim (by the time I was eight, the most grandiloquent gangster could have added nothing to my vocabulary—I had an awful tongue), or I would call a Tenderfoot Scout a sissy or make fun of athletics to the daughter of the high school coach. These outbursts came without plan; I would simply one day, in the middle of a game of Russian bank or a hike or a conversation, be possessed with a passion to be by myself, and my lips instantly and without warning would accommodate me. My friend was never more surprised than I was when this irrevocable slander, this terrible, talented invective, came boiling out of my mouth.

Afterward, when I had got the solitude I had wanted, I was dismayed, for I did not like it. Then I would sadly finish the game of cards as if someone were still across the table from me; I would sit down on the mesa and through a glaze of tears would watch my friend departing with outraged strides; mournfully, I would talk to myself. Because I had already alienated everyone I knew, I then had nowhere to turn, so a famine set in and I would have no companion but Muff, the cat, who loathed all human beings except, significantly, me—truly. She bit and scratched the hands that fed her, she arched her back like a Halloween cat if someone kindly tried to pet her, she hissed, laid her ears flat to her skull, growled, fluffed up her tail into a great bush and flailed it like a bullwhack. But she purred for me, she patted me with her paws, keeping her claws in their velvet scabbards. She was not only an ill-natured cat, she was also badly dressed. She was a calico, and the distribution of her colors was a mess; she looked

as if she had been left out in the rain and her paint had run. She had a Roman nose as the result of some early injury, her tail was skinny, she had a perfectly venomous look in her eye. My family said—my family discriminated against me—that I was much closer kin to Muff than I was to any of them. To tease me into a tantrum, my brother Jack and my sister Stella often called me Kitty instead of Emily. Little Tess did not dare, because she knew I'd chloroform her if she did. Jack, the meanest boy I had ever known in my life, called me Polecat and talked about my mania for fish, which, it so happened, I despised. The name would have been far more appropriate for *him* since he trapped skunks up in the foothills—we lived in Adams, Colorado—and quite often, because he was careless and foolhardy, his clothes had to be buried, and even when that was done, he sometimes was sent home from school on the complaint of girls sitting next to him.

Along about Christmastime when I was eleven, I was making a snowman with Virgil Meade in his backyard, and all of a sudden, just as we had got around to the right arm, I had to be alone. So I called him a son of a sea cook, said it was common knowledge that his mother had bedbugs and that his father, a dentist and the deputy marshal, was a bootlegger on the side. For a moment, Virgil was too aghast to speak—a little earlier we had agreed to marry someday and become millionaires—and then, with a bellow of fury, he knocked me down and washed my face in snow. I saw stars, and black balls bounced before my eyes. When finally he let me up, we were both crying, and he hollered that if I didn't get off his property that instant, his father would arrest me and send me to Canon City. I trudged slowly home, half frozen, critically sick at heart. So it was old Muff again for me for quite some time. Old Muff, that is, until I met Lottie Jump, although "met" is a euphemism for the way I first encountered her.

I saw Lottie for the first time one afternoon in our own kitchen, stealing a chocolate cake. Stella and Jack had not come home from school yet—not having my difficult disposition, they were popular, and they were at their friends' houses, pulling taffy, I suppose, making popcorn balls, playing casino, having fun—and my mother had taken Tess with her to visit a friend in one of the T.B. sanitariums. I was alone in the house, and making a funny-looking Christmas card, although I had no one to send it to. When I heard someone in the kitchen, I thought it was Mother home early, and I went out to ask her why the green pine tree I had pasted on

a square of red paper looked as if it were falling down. And there, instead of Mother and my baby sister, was this pale conspicuous child in the act of lifting the glass cover from the devil's-food my mother had taken out of the oven an hour before and set on the plant shelf by the window. The child had her back to me, and when she heard my footfall, she wheeled with an amazing look of fear and hatred on her pinched and pasty face. Simultaneously, she put the cover over the cake again, and then she stood motionless as if she were under a spell.

I was scared, for I was not sure what was happening, and anyhow it gives you a turn to find a stranger in the kitchen in the middle of the afternoon, even if the stranger is only a skinny child in a moldy coat and sopping wet basketball shoes. Between us there was a lengthy silence, but there was a great deal of noise in the room: the alarm clock ticked smugly; the teakettle simmered patiently on the back of the stove; Muff, cross at having been waked up, thumped her tail against the side of the terrarium in the window where she had been sleeping — contrary to orders — among the geraniums. This went on, it seemed to me, for hours and hours while that tall, sickly girl and I confronted each other. When, after a long time, she did open her mouth, it was to tell a prodigious lie. "I came to see if you'd like to play with me," she said. I think she sighed and stole a sidelong and regretful glance at the cake.

Beggars cannot be choosers, and I had been missing Virgil so sorely, as well as all those other dear friends forever lost to me, that in spite of her fragrance (she had never clapped eyes on me before, she had had no way of knowing there was a creature of my age in the house — she had come in like a hobo to steal my mother's cake), I was flattered and consoled. I asked her name and, learning it, believed my ears no better than my eyes: Lottie Jump. What on earth! What on earth — you surely will agree with me — and yet when I told her mine, Emily Vanderpool, she laughed until she coughed and gasped. "Beg pardon," she said. "Names like them always hit my funny bone. There was this towhead boy in school named Delbert Saxonfield." I saw no connection and I was insulted (what's so funny about Vanderpool, I'd like to know), but Lottie Jump was, technically, my guest and I *was* lonesome, so I asked her, since she had spoken of playing with me, if she knew how to play Andy-I-Over. She said "Naw." It turned out that she did not know how to play any games at all; she couldn't do anything and didn't want to do anything; her only recreation and her only gift was, and always had been, stealing. But this I did not know at the time.