



NARRATIVE AND NARRATORS

The representation of a story

THE
SUSPENSION
OF DISBELIEF

“But what does Shakespeare say? Put but money in thy purse.”

– *Iago**, Stephen murmured.”

-From James Joyce’s
Ulysses

(*The line ‘put but money in thy purse’ is Iago’s. Iago is one of Shakespeare’s greatest villains. In the play *Othello*, we’ll meet him next semester.)

What are the implications of Stephen’s one word correction?



IN *THE DIALECTIC*

3rd person narrator

‘Close’ to mother (we can see her thoughts)

Narrator might be more articulate than the character

Questions:

Does the narrator = Smith?

What is gained by this technique?

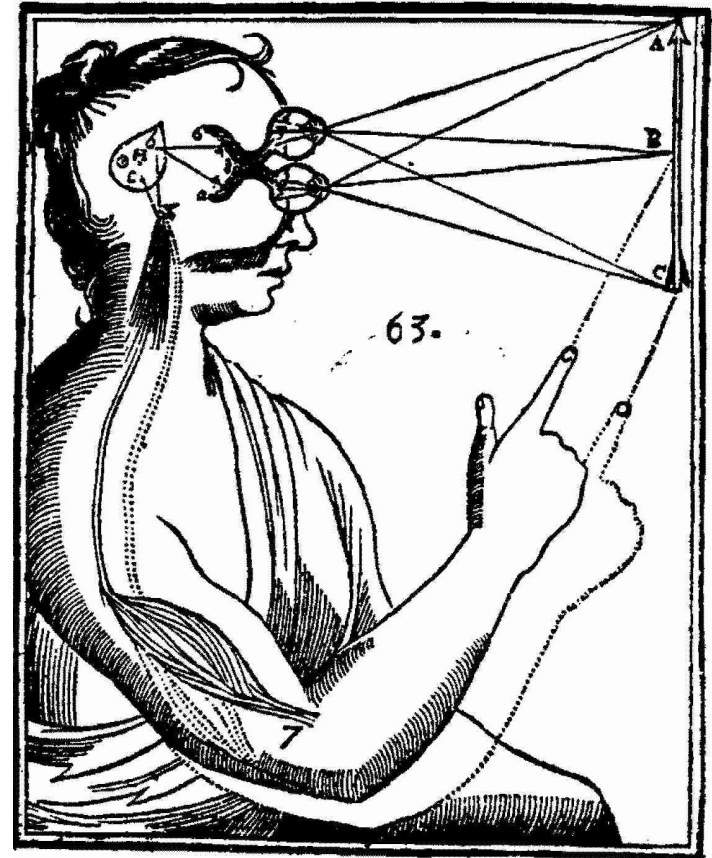
How does this affect how we see characters?

Does it have any limitations?



THE 'I' & FIRST PERSON NARRATION

- Just like an author makes choices, so does the narrator
- Understanding these choices are important for understanding the story, how it is constructed, its biases, & its thematic concerns, etc.



QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT EACH NARRATOR

**Why is the narrator telling the story?
(Motivation)**

**How does the narrator see the world?
How does the narrator see him/herself?**

Why does the narrator see the world that way?

- Cultural background?
- Family background?
- Personal experiences?

What ISN'T being told and why is it left out?

Are there inaccuracies in the narrative? If so, are they intentional or not?

HOW DOES THE NARRATOR TELL THE STORY?

How is it told in terms of time?

- Past? (near past? Distant past? Present? Move back and forth?)
- Implications for memory & motive

Narrator's use of dialogue

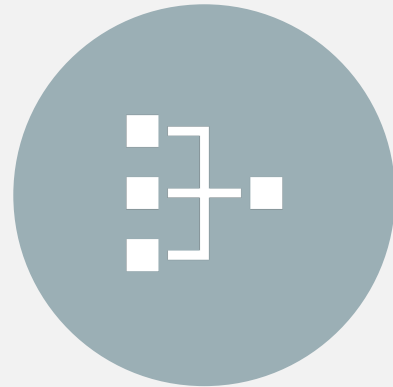
Narrator's use of symbols

Narrator's patterns of thought

Exaggerations

Relations with others

DOUBLE FOCUS FOR THE READER



UNFOLDING OF THE PLOT /
NARRATIVE



DEVELOPMENT AND
INSIGHT INTO NARRATOR'S
PSYCHOLOGY

HOW MUCH SHOULD I TRUST THE
NARRATOR? IS HE/SHE **RELIABLE OR
UNRELIABLE?**

And how important is
trust to the story?

Why would the
AUTHOR
(potentially) want you
to question / trust the
NARRATOR?

‘IN A BAMBOO GROVE’

- The issues of truth and reliability are central
 - Thematic importance
- How is Masago characterised by narrative?
 - What kind of person is Masago?
 - Is she a saintly victim or a Lady Macbeth?
 - What are her biases?
 - What is the significance of her character to the deeper meaning of the story?
 - How is this characterisation **SIMILAR / DIFFERENT** from that of the mother in ‘The Dialectic’?

ASSIGNMENT

- We've now read two short stories, each with a different narrative technique. In two well-developed paragraphs, **compare and contrast** the ways Smith and Akutagawa use **narrative techniques to reveal character** (one character for each story.)

Point of View / Purpose Rubric [Levels 7 & 8]

Analyses author's/ speaker's **point of view**, including its **development, limitations, biases, impact on the meaning of the text**, and differences from and **responses to other points of view**. Analyses author's/ speaker's use of rhetoric [language] or **differences in point of view to create specific effects**. Analyses the effect of cultural experience on author's / speaker's point of view. [Level 7]

All of Level 7, plus: Identifies cases where the **rhetoric or the development of point of view is particularly effective** and analyses how the point of view and / or rhetoric contributes to the **power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text**. [Level 8]