

## Pick a Pronoun

If you surf the Internet for very long, you're sure to come across *plenty* of informational articles—written about all kinds of topics.

However, what you may *not* have noticed is that some of these articles are written in first-person point of view—using the pronoun *I*—while others are written in third-person point of view, without the *I*.

How do writers decide which way to go? Watch as Candace Andrews, a freelance journalist, talks about how she determines which perspective she should use.

Today, I plan to write two articles—one about the movement of people from place to place, and the other about javelinas.

As I think about how to write the first article, I would first consider its goal. Of course, I want to inform my audience about the recent trends in the movements of Americans, but I also want them to find the article at least a little entertaining.

I already know that I plan to include my own personal experiences in the first article. (I frequently moved from one base to another while serving in the military.) I expect to combine my thoughts and feelings about moving with what I've learned from research. Since I want this article to be less formal than the other one, I'll use first-person point of view. I mean, it would be hard to express my own thoughts and feelings without using the pronouns *I* and *me*.

The purpose of the second article is to inform readers about the habits and characteristics of javelinas. Now, I've seen these animals before—from a distance and from the safety of a car, but I don't have any up-close, personal experiences with them. And really, who would want to? Look at those teeth!

Since the article about javelinas will be read by visitors to a national park, including researchers, I think it should be more formal. Or, to say it another way—less personal, more factual. If I use third-person point of view, I can inform my readers *and* remove myself—and my lack of experience with javelinas—from the text. So this article will not include any personal stories and will just stick to the facts—like those *really* sharp teeth!

As you can see, writers consider several factors when choosing the point of view for an informational text. They consider the purpose of the article, its audience, and also their level of personal experience with the topic.

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