

# First, second and third person - transcript

**Slide 1:** So you may have heard the term third person and you may have been told to write in the third person, but you may not be fully sure on how to do this, well you are in the right place. You can pause, rewind, fast forward or stop this presentation at any point and it is recommended that you make notes throughout to ensure that you are actively learning.

**Slide 2:** So what do they mean when they say third person? Well there are three types of 'person' if you like, first, second and third. Here are some examples of each. Mostly in higher education, you will be expected to use the third person in your writing.

**Slide 3:** You may be wondering why, after all, it is personal, it's your work. Writing in the third person makes your writing sound more assertive. Writing in the first person, you risk passive statements like 'I think' or 'I believe'. Look at the following sentences, can you identify which one is the third person? Did you guess the second one? Well if you did, you would be correct. The second sentence sets a confident tone, it is presented as fact instead of belief.

**Slide 4:** Writing in the third person makes you more credible and gives your statements validity. Look at the two examples here, which one is in the third person? If you guessed the first one, you are correct. The first sentence uses an authoritative source that is used to support your argument rather than it just being you saying what you think or believe.

**Slide 5:** And lastly, using the third person makes your work sound less conversational. Which one of these examples is correct for use of the third person? Did you guess the second one? The first sentence is much more familiar whereas the second informs the reader who may benefit from reading this sentence.

**Slide 6:** Test time, identify use of the third person in one of these sentences. If you guessed the first sentence you are correct.

**Slide 7:** Let's try another one. Did you guess the first and second? Perhaps you only chose one of them. Knowing how to spot third person writing can ultimately help you to apply this style to your own writing.

**Slide 8:** There are of course, as always, exceptions to these rules. You can use more informal, first or second person writing when completing any of these types of assignment. It is always recommended that you check with the person setting the assignment, how they would like you to write.

**Slide 9:** Always ask if you are unsure as you can end up losing marks for incorrect writing style.

**Slide 10:** So to summarise, you need to pay attention and know the difference between first, second and third person writing. You need to know when and how to use this and most importantly, ask if you are unsure. It is recommended that you try it yourself first in a small chunk of text and then run it by someone to check that you are doing it correctly, you can always ask your Academic Skills Tutors for support with this.