Avoiding 1st and 2nd Person Point-of-View

Writing in third person is the preferred point of view for most academic situations. Avoid the first person unless you are specifically asked to give personal examples or write about yourself. Avoid phrases like "I think," "I believe," and "In my opinion" because they weaken your argument. Avoid words like "you" and "your" because they are considered informal and can sound harsh. For example, writing "When you do not pay your taxes, you are cheating the government," sounds accusatory. Revising to use the third person is often a good choice. For example, instead of writing, "You notice the irony in the story," write, "The reader notices the irony in the story."

First Person Point-of-View

From the standpoint of the writer

- I
- Our
- Me
- Mine
- We
- Ours
- Us
- My

Second Person Point-of-View

Addresses the reader

- You
- Your
- Yours

Third Person Point-of-View

Focuses on others or a subject

- He
- She
- It
- Their
- Her
- His
- Theirs
- They

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