

Compare contrast point of view in "the short happy life of francis macomber" and ...

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Point of View There are several perspectives from which an author can write a story. However, at this time we will only focus on the third person point of view. An omniscient view is told by a narrator whose knowledge is unlimited or it is told by going into the minds of all the characters, as in "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" (rpt. in Thomas R. Arp and Greg Johnson, Perrine's Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense, 8th ed. [Fort Worth: Harcourt, 2002] 77). An objective point of view is told from any angle, but only provides the reader with what is seen and heard, such as in "The Lottery" (rpt. in Thomas R. Arp and Greg Johnson, Perrine's Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense, 8th ed. [Fort Worth: Harcourt, 2002] 263).

Omniscient and objective viewpoints can be compared by what is revealed to the reader, angles from which the story is told, and through insight into the characters. From an Omniscient viewpoint the author reveals as much or as little as he wants to the reader. In The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber, Ernest Hemingway reveals everything to the reader. He takes the reader into the minds of all the characters, even into the mind of a hunted lion. The objective view used in Shirley Jackson's The Lottery tells the story as though it is told through the lens of a camera; "What you see is what you get." The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber is told through the eyes of Francis, Margot, Wilson, the lion, and even from the narrator. This point of view is very appropriate for this story because it allows the reader to see what the characters without giving away the ending. The Lottery is similar in the fact that what is revealed does not ruin the surprise ending. However, much less is revealed; instead of going into the minds of the characters it only provides the reader with what is heard and seen at certain parts of the town.

Objective view works for this story because if we knew what the actual lottery was it would reveal the mystery. There is much character insight in *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber*. It takes us into the minds of the characters and lets the reader know what the character is thinking or feeling. Hemingway does a good job of taking the reader into the mind of Francis Macomber and revealing his fear when he hears the lion roaring at night. He also takes the reader into the mind of the lion after it gets shot and describes the pains the lion goes through. Wilson's mind is another mind ventured into; it is usually things he is thinking about Francis. However, we are not taken into the mind of Margot Macomber very much. This in turn is a good thing or we might have concluded that she is going to shoot him long before she does. On the other hand, Shirley Jackson does not take the reader into the mind of any characters in *The Lottery*. If we knew what the townspeople are thinking it would basically ruin the whole story. Both points of view work very well for the stories they represent. The omniscient point of view works in *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber* because it lets the reader better understand how the characters feel about each other. Likewise, the objective view provides the reader with everything he needs to know to understand the situation. It just does not reveal the reason for the situation, which adds to the mystery.