Narration/POV Lesson Plan

Subject: Narration/Point of View

Goal: Understand that narration and pov is more than just 1st/2nd/3rd person, but is many choices that the writer makes.

Background: Wayne C Booth What every novelist needs to know about narration and some helpful googling because Wayne is a bit dense, so I don’t explain all of it. I just use the 7 main headings. Youll see.

Materials: Any prose piece, fiction or nonfiction -- I used Jamil Jan Kochai’s “Playing metal gear solid IV: the phantom pain” -- and 7 cards with questions on them taken from Booth (see below).

Directions:

1. Split class into groups.
2. Give each one of the below aspects
3. Have them discuss about the narrator in question.
4. Discuss as a class. Write down. Discuss all of these decisions and how they effect the storytelling.

Aspects of Narration summarized/adapted from Wayne C Booth *What Every Novelist needs to know about Narrators*

1. Perspective -- From what vantage point does the narrator tell/experience the story?

1st person, the narrator speaks from inside the story

2nd person, the narrator tells the story through the reader

3rd person, the narrator speaks from outside of the story

2. Agenda -- What does the narrator want?

Implied author -- Author’s agenda is different from that of the narrator or the author provides information/opinions that the narrator does not have

 Dramatized Narrator -- the narrator tells the story with an obvious agenda/bias

 Undramatized Narrator -- the narrator tells the story without an obvious agenda/bias

3. Privilege -- How much information, about the world and the other characters, does the narrator have access to?

 Disguised Narrator

 Reflector Narrator

 Limited Narrator

 Omniscient Narrator

4. Agency -- What affect does the Narrator have on events of the story?

 Observer Narrator

 Narrator-Agent

5. Awareness -- How conscious is the Narrator that they are telling a story and/or speaking to an audience?

 Self-Conscious Narrator

 Unconscious Narrator

6. Reliability -- How trustworthy or deceptive (purposefully or accidently) is the Narrator’s views of the world of the story and/or telling of the story?

 Unreliable narrator

 Reliable narrator

7. Distance -- What differences (tensions) or similarities (understanding) exist among the norms of the author, the Narrator, the characters, and the readers?

Booth says that these 4 groups are distinct entities that, basically, create the experience of the story. They can also create tension through their similarities and/or differences. (See fun chart)