

# Guided by Voice: How listening to your characters can help you find the story

By Carol Dunbar

Friday – September 30, 6:45 – 7:30 pm

## Supporting Material

The following books are suggested models to study when considering voice in your writing.

## Point of View

**FIRST-PERSON VOICE:** The “I” narrative voice.

### Model Books

Single first-person narrator:

*My Name is Lucy Barton* by Elizabeth Strout

*Charming Billy* by Alice McDermott

*The Things They Carried* by Tim O’Brien

*The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak

Rotating first-person narrators:

*The Seed Keepers*, by Diane Wilson

*The Poisonwood Bible*, by Barbara Kingsolver

**SECOND-PERSON VOICE:** The “you” narrative voice.

Model Books

*On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* by Ocean Vuong

*Bright Lights, Big City* by Jay McInerney

**THIRD-PERSON VOICE:** The “he/she/they” narrative voice.

Model Books

Third-person omniscient:

*Fates and Furies* by Lauren Groth

*Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen

Third-person close:

*The Da Vinci Code*, by Dan Brown

Third-person rotating narrative:

*Plainsong*, by Kent Haruf

*The Game of Thrones*, by A.A. Martin

Third-person rotating narrative, close:

*The Net Beneath Us*, by Carol Dunbar

Third-person close head-hopping narrative:

*Commonwealth*, by Ann Patchett

*Little Fires Everywhere*, by Celest Ng

Third-person close, single view-point narrative:

*The Road*, by Cormac McCarthy

*The Queen's Gambit*, by Walter Tevis

## Switching Voice in Novels

### FIRST-PERSON AND THIRD-PERSON MIXED

Model Books

*No Country for Old Men* by Cormac McCarthy

*Northernmost* by Peter Geye

### SECOND-PERSON AND THIRD-PERSON MIXED

Model Book

*Swimming Lessons* by Claire Fuller

## Tense

### PRESENT TENSE

Model Books

*After Francesco* by Brian Malloy

*The Witch of Cologne* by Tobsha Learner

*All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr

*The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins

### MIXED TENSE

Model Books

*Let Me Lie* by Clare Mackintosh

## Recommended Craft Books

*Steering the Craft* by Ursula Le Guin

*The Art of Fiction* by John Gardner

*The Situation and the Story* by Vivian Gornick

## About

Carol Dunbar is a former actor, playwright, and coloratura soprano who left her life in the city to move off the grid. Her writing has been published in *The New York Times*, *The South Carolina Review*, and on *Wisconsin Public Radio*. She works from a solar-powered office in a water tower in the woods of northern Wisconsin where she lives with her husband, two kids, and a giant Alaskan malamute. Her debut novel, *The Net Beneath Us*, was released this fall.