

Speaker

Definition of Speaker

In writing, the *speaker* is the [voice](#) that speaks behind the scene. In fact, it is the [narrative](#) voice that speaks of a writer's feelings or situation. It is not necessary that a poet is always the speaker, because sometimes he may be writing from a different [perspective](#), or may be in the voice of another race, gender, or even a material object. It usually appears as a [persona](#) or voice in a poem. Read on to learn more about *speaker* in literature.

Examples of Speaker in Literature

Example #1: *The Road Not Taken* (by Robert Frost)

The speaker in Frost's poem "The Road Not Taken" is a conflicted person, who does not tell anything about himself. However, the readers of this poem know that he is undergoing a big decision, that he has chosen a single path according to which he is directing his life, and this splits into two options ahead.

Falling leaves and yellow woods are metaphors for the speaker's life, showing the downfall of his life. At this stage of life, it is not possible to return and make a new decision, because he knows the time is gone. The speaker is impulsive and adventurous, the reason that he has chosen the less traveled path. He is feeling a little regret, while his tone is also a bit sad.

Example #2: *Ode to Nightingale* (by John Keats)

In his poem "Ode to Nightingale," the speaker is Keats himself. He has played with tricky language, which proved lucky for him. He has managed to persuade himself that he has moved to a new [setting](#) and completely new

perspective. He must have been under huge pressure that he wanted to escape into [fantasy](#) and leave this world. In fact, he is feeling down in life as a whole, and readers recognize that, at this point, he would try to end it all.

However, readers are not convinced by his conversation about death – that it would be easy – and he himself does not seem to be convinced either. It all seems merely a show. The speaker also has displayed his knowledge of the Bible and the Greek myth in this tale. He has an active imagination, is well-read, and wants his readers to know it.

Example #3: *Annabel Lee* (by Edgar Allan Poe)

The speaker in “Annabel Lee,” by Edgar Allan Poe, is the lover of Annabel Lee. The speaker seems to be engaging, charming, and someone whom a girl would meet and fall in love with right away. He is someone who would tell stories. As readers move on reading the poem, they start realizing that there is something wrong.

The readers begin to feel the speaker will return to a particular subject, and would rage about something bad that may have happened to him. They notice a little sparkle in his eyes that makes readers a bit uncomfortable, because he fascinates them, and he cannot be ignored. Also, his voice has something powerful in it that draws the reader in.

Example #4: *A Modest Proposal* (by Jonathan Swift)

In “A Modest Proposal,” Swift wants his readers to view the speaker as a reasonable and compassionate man that has a genuine interest in solving the problems and issues of the Irish people. In the first eight paragraphs, readers meet a kind and considerate man, who has keen insight into their troubles, which he will address shortly. In doing so, he moves from a rational approach to the problems, toward more sarcastic view.

Through his speaker, Swift suggests a solution to poverty that makes use of children of less fortunate and poor families as a food source. By expressing this idea through the speaker, the author uses [sarcasm](#), [exaggeration](#), and [imagery](#) to put into words his disgust for the Irish society. It is, in fact, Swift himself who speaks through the voice of a speaker. The role of Swift’s

Ireland. This gets the point across, as well as challenges the readers to think about the plight of those less fortunate, rather than thinking only of themselves.

Function

The role of a speaker is one of the most important aspects in a written work. A speaker allows a more [active voice](#), and plays the role of the mouthpiece in conveying the ideas of a writer or a poet to the [audience](#). Just like actors, a speaker tells, or acts out directly, an account of what exactly occurs. It is found in different forms of writing, but is very common in poetry and novels.