*Monster* by Walter Dean Myers is constructed in a style that may seem unordinary compared to many other young adult novels. Myers writes *Monster* in a first person perspective through an African American teen, Steve, who is on trial for supposedly being involved with murder. However, many parts of the book are written in the form of a screen player written by the main character Steve. The screen play adds a unique look into the book because it is read as if everything is being seen through a camera lens: angles, smaller details, lighting.

The first person narrative is important because readers are able to see the story from Steve’s perspective as he analysis his part in the crime he is on trial for. His analysis provides readers with a peek at Steve’s thoughts on whether he is guilty, his reflections back on the past year, and his experiences while in jail; this obviously gives readers a good insight on the character. On the other hand, the movie script in the book shows readers the trial from a realistic perspective rather than clouding it with Steve’s personal thoughts and reactions. Although Steve is the writer of this script he is honest in the composition.

I think that students can find *Monster* as a helpful tool in creating their own writing as well as giving them exposure to the reasons why authors use first person perspective. Authors use first person perspective as a tool for readers to look into the character who is telling the story because the character reveals his/her thoughts to the reader. If students were to write their own part of this story or compose a similar text as a an assessment for a lesson they would learn the rhetoric behind a first person narrative and learn how to write something that appeals to the audience who is reading. Also, students might end up learning something about themselves, especially if they are asked to design their own character. This experience would not only give them practice using rhetorical pedagogy but they might also get some practice with creative writing!

Within a lesson such as this, I would probably require students to make a list of what they think makes a good a character interesting when the author is writing in first person. After this, I would have them create their own character and have them develop a brief amount of dialogue or narrative about that character’s experiences. Asking the students whether or not they like first person stories and explaining why is important as well because this would have an effect on how they were able to interact with the text *Monster*. Students should be able to work from the list that we worked on together as a class that focuses on good aspects of first person story-telling and develop over time what they find important in narratives.

Identifying good writing and different types of writing serves as models for students’ writing. Through the analysis of different character perspectives ranging from first person to third person narration students are able to identify what type of narrative appeals to them and why. Also, this allows students to see if there is any weakness in different types of writing. Why do some authors use first person while others do not? What motivates the author’s decision? These are all important questions for readers to consider when approaching a text.