

## Interior Monologue and Direct Thoughts

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Your character's thoughts, either as a kind of aside, or directed at someone or something, are important. Direct thoughts need italics. A character's direct thoughts or interior monologue can be indicated by tags such as, "she thought" and "he mused," etc., but it is not necessary. Style, or diction preference, plays a large part in choosing how to present thoughts, for italics tag direct thought perfectly well.

Your character's thought-life can be overdone to the point the reader lives inside the character's mind instead of encountering interesting people and happenings in his/her world. Editors also tend to dislike too much italicization, though it is needful in its place.

You can take direct thoughts and change them into either dialogue or interior monologue. If you are using direct thought to emphasize a certain action, a character's idea, or a character quirk, good, but if the thought has a mundane but necessary purpose, it would work better as monologue, or perhaps related to the reader by another character or POV. Keep direct thought to the minimum to preserve its impact.

Changing direct thought to dialogue makes your other characters aware of the speaking character's goals, etc. Of course, weaving together all three techniques; direct thought, monologue, and dialogue; adds helpful, realistic layers to your scene. Dialogue involves a lot of performance, and direct thought or monologue fills in the truth of what the character thinks. Monologue and direct thoughts can also add distance, details, and summary.

Here's an example of interior monologue that transitions into direct thought and back to monologue, from Wayne Thomas Batson's *The Door Within*.

Before he knew it, he was right in the midst of them—like swarms of stars on all sides. Aidan whooshed through them, fearfully trying to figure out what they were. Some kind of luminous stones, maybe? Sparks? Subterranean lightning bugs? Or maybe...

*Eyes! They are eyes!* Aidon could see only blurs and flashes, but he felt sure they were eyes. Hundreds, maybe thousands of them winked and blinked as Aidan slapped and scraped to keep them away.

Fed by this new terror, Aidon thought that perhaps the little glowing eyes belonged to the parasites of a gigantic beast. . . .

*In this flyer where I use block quotes (if applicable), I have changed to single-spacing for readability.*