

Normal People

By Sally Rooney, Faber and Faber, 2018

WINNER OF THE 2018 COSTA NOVEL AWARD

Structure

January 2011	Three months later July 2012
Three weeks later February 2011	Six weeks later September 2012
One month later March 2011	Four months later January 2013
Six Weeks later April 2011	Six months later July 2013
Two days later April 2011	Five months later December 2013
Four months later August 2011	Three months later March 2014
Three months later November 2011	Four months later July 2014
Three months later February 2012	Five minutes later July 2014
Two months later April 2012	Seven months later February 2015

First chapter

January 2011

- **Function:** Introduction of two protagonists⇒ Connell and Marianne (Connell's mom Lorraine, secondary character)
- **Setting:** Marianne's kitchen → closed space, anticipation of an intimate relationship
- **Narrative tools:** Body language (mainly Connell's one), Telling and Showing techniques

Second chapter

Three weeks later February 2011

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** Relationship between Marianne and her brother Alan
- Marianne's attitude and weaknesses
- **Setting:** Marianne's house and school football field
- **Narrative strategy :** shift of point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling

Third chapter

One month later March 2011

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** revelation of Connell's insecurities and Marianne's influence on him.
- **Theme:** Reflection on future, University application
- **Setting:** Marianne's bedroom, on the bed (intimate dimension)
- **Narrative strategies :** Shift point of view (interior monologue) showing and telling

Fourth chapter

Six Weeks later April 2011

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** theme of domestic violence in Marianne's life
- **Setting:** School party
- **Theme:** School bullying and peer pressure
- Apparent change in Marianne's attitude
- **Narrative strategies:** Shift of point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling

Fifth Chapter

Two days later April 2011

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** Connell's family situation is told
- **Theme:** different social classes, family weaknesses
- Presentation of Connell's grandmother and their cold relationship
- Further reasons for Connell's insecurities
- **Narrative strategies:** shift of point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling

Sixth chapter

Four months later August 2011

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** raise hypothesis about Marianne's new life in Dublin
- **Theme:** school final grades
- **Narrative strategies:** shift point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling
- **Setting:** Marianne's garden

Seventh chapter

Three months later November 2011

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** to show the overturning of the two main characters' role at Trinity College
- **Setting:** Gareth's house (Marianne's boyfriend)
- **Theme:** past memories
- **Narrative strategies:** Shift point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling

Eighth chapter

Three months later February 2012

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** focus on Marianne's desire to be at the centre of Connell's attention again and to play a central role in his every day life
- **Theme:** young people bad habits and friendship
- Presentation of two of Marianne's friends → Joanna and Peggy
- **Narrative strategies:** Shift point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling

Ninth chapter

Two months later April 2012

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** focus on Marianne's strange attitude toward violence
- **Theme:** violence, prejudices and sense of protection
- **Setting:** Dublin
- **Narrative strategies:** Shift of point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling, flashback

Tenth chapter

Three months later July 2012

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** to underline the relevance of communication in relationships
- **Theme:** Connell's insecurity and confusing step in the two protagonists' relationships
- **Setting:** Dublin
- **Narrative strategies:** Shift point of view (interior monologues), showing and telling, flashback

Eleventh chapter

Six weeks later September 2012

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** Marianne's relationship with violence
- Marianne's weaknesses
- **Theme:** violence
- **Setting:** Dublin
- **Narrative strategies:** shift point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling, flashback

Twelfth chapter

Four months later January 2013

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** Marianne's esteem of her relationship with Jamie
- **Theme:** Connell and Marianne's jealousy
- Argument Peggy and Marianne
- **Narrative strategies:** Shift point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling, flashback

Thirteenth chapters

Six months later July 2013

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** to show the growth process of the two main characters and their acceptance of mutual weaknesses and flaws
- **Theme:** trip and friendship
- **Narrative strategies:** Shift point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling, flashback

Fourteenth chapter

Five months later December 2013

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** to show Marianne's attitude of submission
- **Theme:** Marianne's change
- **Narrative strategies:** Shift point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling, flashback

Fifteenth chapter

Three months later March 2014

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** reflection on the deep connection past and future(linear concept of time)
- **Theme:** hope and Connell's mental illness \Rightarrow his old friend suicide
- **Narrative strategies:** shift point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling, flashback

Sixteenth chapter

Four months later July 2014

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** reflection about women's and men's differences related to life experiences
- **Setting:** Connell's bedroom
- **Narrative strategies:** Shift point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling, flashback

Seventeenth chapter

Five minutes later July 2014

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** to express Marianne's desire to be free from Alan
- **Theme:** facing between Marianne and his brother, representation of Connell's insecurities
- **Setting:** Marianne's house
- **Narrative strategies:** Shift point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling, flashback

Eighteenth chapter

Seven months later February 2015

- **Narrator:** third person narrator
- **Function:** focus on two main characters contribution to their partner's change and to renounce to the illusion of an everlasting happy ending in real life
- Marianne and Connell's unstable relationship
- **Setting:** Marianne's house
- **Narrative strategies:** shift point of view (interior monologue), showing and telling, flashback