

WHY BE HAPPY WHEN YOU COULD BE NORMAL?

STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

The novel is a memoir: it is a kind of autobiography but there are some important differences.

First of all in the memoir the writer is focusing on her personality. The point of view is the one of the narrator and he or she tells about her story thanks to memory and analyzing the fact according to her emotional status. In fact memory is principally linked to emotions and so the emotional truth is more important than the real truth.

As a consequence there wouldn't be a chronological order: events and situations are told according to memories that resurface in the mind of the narrator without a logical order.

She wrote the novel because thanks to it she is able to cross pain, and suffering and to write about the whole story about all her childhood.

In fact, when she was 25 and she wrote *Oranges are not the only fruit*, she mixed real part (the ones she could tell) to fancy things.

Focusing the attention on the title, you note that it is a question. So it could be a sentence taken from a speech in the book or an important question to understand something more.

It is built up using two adjectives: happy and normal. They are two adjectives that indicate two different emotional status. One represents a way to live life that every human being tries to reach it. The second one is another condition of life. Normality usually coincides with mass. So you can suppose that the question is directed to an unusual person and the verbs are "be" and "could" and generalize it.

Speaking about the dedication, it is referred to "my three mothers". Reading the book you understand who they are and their different relationship with Jeanette Winterson.

They are three different types of mothers for Jeanette: the first one is her adopted mother who grew her, the second one who helped her in her career and the third one who is her biological mother.

All these women played a part in her life and they are all important for her because every woman gave her something she needed in life and they are at the bases of her story.

After the reflection of the introductive part of the novel, you can focus the attention on its structure.

The memoir is organized into fifteen chapters, every one introduced by a title which reflects the topic of the text but not explicitly. The intelligent reader so, must find out where the link between the title and the text is and why it is important. What's more, generally speaking, each chapter is linked with the

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successive by the story line, which sometimes follow the chronological sequence. Perhaps some chapters are independent and concern the lyrical I's thoughts and feeling in a specific situation, which emerges from an action happened in the previous chapter.

For example the chapter "the wrong crib" is about her relationship with her adopted mother since the childhood. The title reflects the feeling and the words of Mrs Winterson.

As already said, the relationship between the characters is most important than the story line. In the novel there are two main characters: Jeanette, the narratore and her mother. Other characters are her father, her girlfriends and her biological and literary mother.

Concerning Mrs Winterson, she is described in the particulars: both physically and psychologically.

You can find her characterization right from the beginning of the book, in the first chapter but her description is probably subjective because there is not an omniscient narrator but the text is written using the first person narrator.

On the contrary, Jeanette is not well described. She writes about herself so she doesn't need to introduce the character. In fact, in the book, you can not find her physical description but you can know her way of thinking, her behaviours, her thoughts and relationship with the other characters thanks to different situations.

Affecting the setting, the novel is not so dynamic. The story takes place in Accrington, a small town in the north of England. She describes the city using a historical introduction and speaking about the citizens.

So she tells about Manchester and the difference between the city and the country where she lived and the different behaviours of people too. So she can reflect on the meaning of the place you were born in the character of a person.