

Why be happy when you could be normal?

By Jeanette Winterson

STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

Text types: Memoir

A **memoir** is a literary genre.

Memoir is different from autobiographical writing because in the memoir the writer is focusing on **her personality**.

The chronological sequence is not so important and so it is flexible.

In fact, memory is principally linked to emotions and so the emotional truth is more important than the real truth.

The writer can piece together different elements of her life without been worried about a logical order or the historical truth and in this way, **find a deeper meaning**.

The title \Rightarrow expectation

WHY BE HAPPY WHEN YOU COULD BE NORMAL?

- **Happy**: a way to live life. Every human being try to reach it.
- **Normal**: another condition of life. Normality coincides with mass. So the question is directed to an unusual person.
- The title is written as a **question**. So it could be a sentence taken from the book or a quotation. But I think the book will be about the life of a person who is different form the other.
- The use of “**be**” and “**could**” might generalize the sentence. It could refer to any person.

Dedication

“To my three mothers” ⇒ who are they?

- Constance Winterson
- Ruth Rendell
- Ann S.

They are three different types of mothers for Jeanette: the first one is her adopted mother who grown 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.

Chapters

- The book is organized into **fifteen chapters**.
- Every chapter has **its own title** which reflects the topic of the text but not explicitly.
- Each chapter is linked with the successive by the **story line**, which follows the chronological sequence. But, sometimes, 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.

Characters: the protagonist

The book is a **memoir** so the protagonist is the writer, Jeanette Winterson.

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.

Characters: the mother

On the contrary, **the character of the mother is perfectly described**, both physically and psychologically.

You can find her characterization right from the beginning of the book, in the first chapter. So you can assume that she will be one of the most important characters in the book.

Her description probably is subjective because there is not an omniscient narrator but the text is written using the first person narrator.

Settings

Manchester and Accrington

The novel starts (the second chapter) with a description of England, in particular the north, during the Industrial revolution until the years of the writer's childhood.

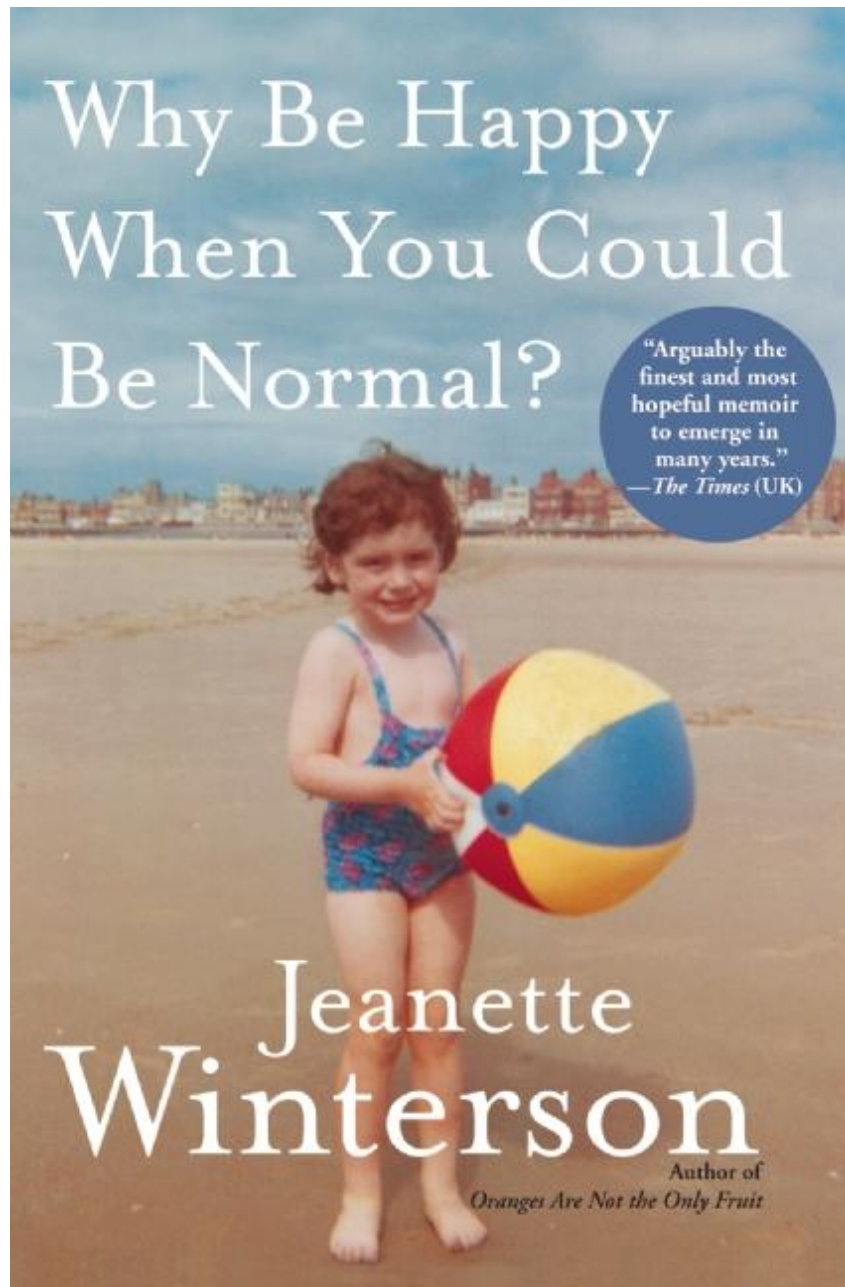
She tells about **Manchester** and the difference between the city and the country where she lived (**Accrington**) and the different behaviours of people too. So she can reflect on the meaning of the place you were born in the character of a person.

Why does Jeanette Winterson write?

She writes to reappear to the suffering.

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.



Alice Romano
5 A
a.s. 2012/2013