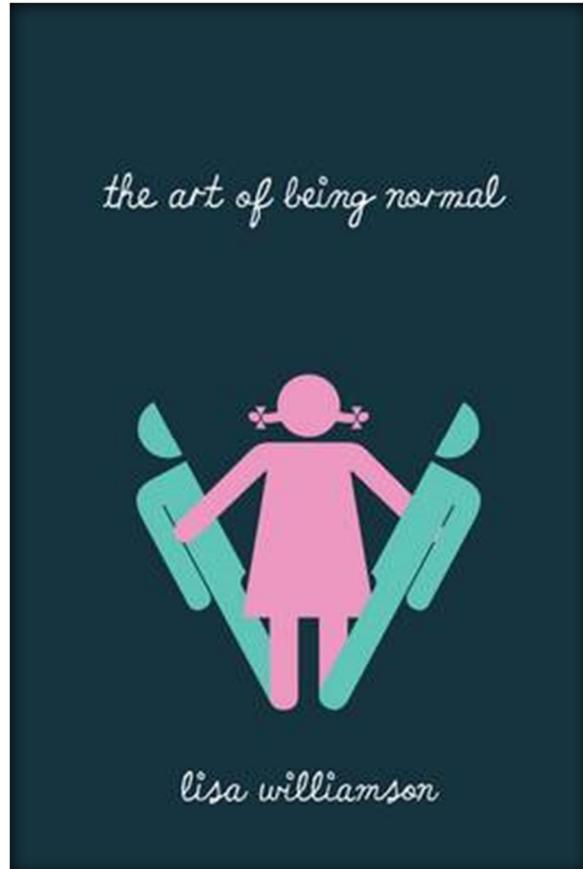


LoveReading Reader reviews of The Art Of Being Normal by Lisa Williamson

Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.

Phoebe Allan, age 14

*'The Art of Being Normal' is **one of the most brilliant books ever written** and I highly recommend it for anyone trying to delve into a new area of reading. The book is about two transsexuals, battling through each school day, escaping bullies and dealing with problematic families, all while trying to find themselves. This book, although sparking a large interest for me, originally struck me as having a strange story line - due to having not seen another book like it. I think this book would be a brilliant read for anyone, opening your eyes not only to the concept of trans-sexuality, but covering bullying, isolation and the daily battles of teenage life. I found the characters both lovable and easy to sympathize with, even without having experience in being trans-gender. **I commend Lisa Williamson on her ability to create such beautiful characters and weave such an incredible storyline. Love it! Thumbs Up!***



Michelle Toy

A perfect, important, stunning beautifully written debut from Lisa Williamson highlighting that different can be the norm and tackling transgender sensitively and honestly.

From the offset this book gave me goose bumps! Straight away I knew it was

going to be something special.

The story is about David Piper, who has always felt like the outsider and has always known that he is a transgender girl and Leo Denton the new boy in school who wants to lay low and get through the rest of school year without friends. The story is told from alternate perspectives. Both voices come across importantly and distinctively making both characters enjoyable and individual.

Lisa Williamson really gets the emotions and feelings of the characters across beautifully and sensitively.

As the story develops further the relationship that is built between David and Leo is touching and endearing.

I also loved how the book explored the rocky relationship Leo has with his mother and in contrast the close relationship he has with his sisters

This book could really help or be a support to transgender boys, girls, men and women as well as people who are trying to support or maybe understand. Or maybe to someone who is feeling confused about their gender.

I loved every single page, every single feeling, every single message. What Is Normal? Maybe everyone is normal in their own unique ways and we should stand proud. We all need to shout this from the rooftops and spread the word!

<http://talesofyesterday.co.uk/2015/01/the-art-of-being-normal-by-lisa-williamson>

Ayesha, age 17

'The Art of Being Normal' was such a refreshing read, a completely original storyline, raising the awareness of transgenderism in today's society.

Ever since David was little he's always picked up the doll or the pushchair as apposed a football. His parents think that David is gay, but David is holding a huge secret. He wants to be a girl. This story follows David's journey, the bullying, the loneliness, the discovery of himself as a person, and the friendship between himself and the new boy, Lee Denton after he unexpectedly sticks up for David in a fight.

This novel was a pleasure to read. The storyline was completely new to me, and I hadn't read anything like this before. I found myself getting quite attached to David as a character, as well as David and Lee's friendship. I loved the way the story was told in two points of view, and they came together in such an

*unexpected and eye-opening way. Not only does this story open your eyes to new issues, it also gives a realistic representation of teenage life. This is **definitely a must-read for everyone!!***

www.twinsturnpages.wordpress.com

Destiny Maraj

*'The Art of Being Normal' **was a great novel and I really enjoyed it. It has real life issues which made it even better.** I would happily recommend it to all my friends and family as I loved reading it.*

Georgina Rowe

A wonderful novel which practically forced me to carry on reading. The words jump off the page, bringing forth with them a brilliantly clear message of acceptance and respect.

The characters come alive on the page, and the themes discussed made me a weepy at certain points.

First of all, the protagonists. David was interesting to read, as he had laid his secrets bare to the reader from the first page. David is the first trans character that I have ever read the perspective of, and from my experience with this book I would say that there should be more novels like this out in the world. His inner mind was fresh and alive, and seeing him come to grips with his gender was heartwarming and inspiring.

Leo was a whole other kettle of fish, and I will not be listing any of the spoilers associated with his character here. After all, he hides so much (even from the reader) that he reads in a completely different way to his counterpart David. I may say, his backstory was one of the parts that made me weepy, so be prepared.

Overall the pacing was quick (I read it in three solid hours) and the dialogue between characters isn't boring or monotonous. Lisa Williamson's words jump off the page, bringing forth with them a brilliantly clear message of acceptance and respect. This book does cover bullying of trans characters, so if this would trigger anything I might hold back from purchasing. However, this book has become one of my instant favourites and I would recommend this to everyone else, especially if you are trying to understand trans folk as I found that hearing David's thoughts was really helpful in explaining his gender identity to me.

www.silverdoe-isobell.tumblr.com

Amelia White, age 15

Such an amazing book a really good book for older children and made me laugh at some of the things they do. Would recommend to my friends.

I found this book different to what I thought it would be, I knew about David wanting to be a girl but never really guessed Leo's secret! I found the ending really good as well, I'm so glad both boys got what they wanted because they fought and ignored all the comments like being called 'Freak'. It makes you think about how others feel and question What is normal?! I really loved the story line to this book and how it switched from Leo's point of view to David's it helped you get to know them better because I think if it was just in one perspective then it might be difficult to get to know their characters. Leo and David start of thinking they're different but in fact they are quite similar. I felt really sorry for David especially when the "Bully" steals his book, it really does make you feel sorry for him. Why are people calling him different? After all what is normal? Everyone has their own definition!

Melanie Chadwick

The story shows how important good friends are.

The story of two boys from different backgrounds. Leo lives in a really rough estate in a one parent family- his dad walked out on them when he was a baby. David lives in a middle class area with both his parents and what looks like an easy life. Both boys have the same big secret; they are transgender and were born in the wrong sex body.

Leo was born a girl, but has been living as Leo for a few years. He is terrified that the kids at his new school will find out and humiliate him as they did in his old school. David was born a boy and dreams of being able to live as a girl, but hasn't told anyone but his two best school friends, not even his Mum and Dad as he's frightened to hurt them. When Leo and David meet at school they slowly become friends and discover each other's secret. Leo goes through a lot of rough times- from bullies at school, from rejection by a girlfriend and from his Dad who he manages to track down. David helps him through, and they both discover a lot about their families and how resilient, accepting and supportive

they can be. At first it was confusing switching between the two boys as I wasn't sure who was telling the story in each section, but I got used to it. It shows how important it is to be who you are and not just try to fit in and be normal. What is normal anyway?

Cathy McLaughlin

This book is not only a great read for the 16 age group but for adults also.

The Art of being Normal is a brilliant read for the 16+ age group, which could be enjoyed by both boys and girls of this age group. Lisa Williamson writes in a way that makes you emphasize with the characters; and really see how this life altering feeling impacts their lives. As someone who was quite ignorant about the transgender topic, this book has now changed my opinions and has made me realize how difficult it is to live with this feeling, and made me see that people have this feeling from such a young age.

Millie, age 15

The Art of Being Normal is a very thought provoking book and really helps you understand what others are going through and helps LGBTQ young people know they are not alone.

The Art of Being Normal is a very thought provoking book and really helps you understand what others are going through and helps LGBTQ young people know they are not alone. The story is relatable even if you are not transgender or part of the LGBTQ community and I am very glad I read it. It was a very emotional book and I wanted to know whether it ended ok so badly I read it in one day.

Alice D'Angelo, age 16

With its fast pace and compelling storyline, this is a book that I read as quickly as I could.

I absolutely loved reading "The Art of Being Normal". It was accessible and easy to read, without ever becoming boring or predictable in the slightest. David Piper and Leo Denton are firmly believable characters from the start, making it a definite good read.

David is in Year 10 at Eden Park School; he has two best friends and keeps an

inspection notebook of himself. David knows that he wants to be a girl, but whenever he tries to tell his parents, the words dry up in his mouth. But then Leo starts at Cloverdale, bringing a cloud of mystery that intrigues everyone, especially because they are all told that he was expelled from Cloverdale; a school on the opposite side of town and social spectrum. Gradually, the friendship between them grows.

Eden Park has a motto for “fairness and initiative”, but that promise is soon tested when the school has to decide how it is fair to treat others for their identity, and what is normal.

Kynthia Ravikumar, age 14

One of my favourite books of all time, anyone who reads this will learn to accept everyone for who they are. I have learnt so much from this book as it has inspired me to become a better person.

This book sensitively approaches the hardships of being transgender and I discovered a whole new perspective of life. I now accept everyone for who they are and if anyone says anything rude about someone, I immediately disagree because now I know that you can't help being gay or transgender etc. This story is amazing and heart-warming and really hit me like a punch to the stomach because of how realistic it is. This has the potential to become as famous as The Fault in Our Stars.

Edel Waugh <http://edelwaugh.blogspot.com>

This is a beautifully written book for all those who feel like they don't fit in or for those who know and celebrate how awesome being different really is.

This is the story about two people, Leo and David. These two meet at school where David is far from being one of the popular kids. Leo is new to the school and has a mysterious past and after an incident one day where he stands up for David these two become unlikely friends. Leo and David are both struggling with issues in their lives, growing up and feeling different and not fitting in with society's ideas of what normal is brings these two friends together in a surprising way. The story is told well, I felt like I learned something about what someone in their situation have to go through and the struggles they face on a daily basis along with the disappointments and joyous moments they encounter.

