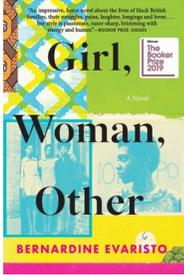


# Books by the Stack



## **Girl, Woman, Other by Bernardine Evaristo**

Evaristo gives us a poetic, centuries-spanning saga that explores the intersections of identity among an interconnected group of Black British women.

**Why you'll like it:** *Complex characters. Written in verse. Strong friendships.*

**About the Author:** Bernardine Evaristo was born in London to a Nigerian father and English mother. She is a former poet in residence at the Museum of London.

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. Evaristo says that she has no problem acknowledging herself as a Black British woman and writing from this perspective. Which fictional character in the book do you think has the most or least awareness of their own personal identity?
2. Which character in the text has the greatest sense of 'entitlement'? Why do you think this?
3. Which relationship in the book do you find most credible and why? Which relationship do you find least credible and why?
4. What 'social' or 'political' issue did you feel you became more knowledgeable about after reading the book?
5. The stories of the women in the book frequently overlap, yet it is possible to read the different sections as mini-books in the own right. To what extent do you think the whole text needs to be read to truly understand the issues explored in it?
6. How sympathetically do you think men are portrayed in the novel? Do you have any comment about whether they are under represented in the text, which is a criticism that could be made about the book.
7. Shirley's mother sleeps with her husband and is never found out. How did you respond to this?
8. The 'older generation' are often excused for not understanding transgender issues and labels such as 'binary'. Is this an acceptable position to hold?
9. Carole failed to thank her teacher for helping her 'get ahead' in life. Is there a teacher who you should have thanked and didn't in your life? What did they do to help you?
10. Dominique spends many years berating herself for 'staying in an abusive relationship' with another woman. Why do women (if they do, and if you don't think they do let's explore this) still blame themselves for the abuse imposed on them.
11. Evaristo talks about her writing style as a fusion of prose and poetry. She is free and easy in her use of capitalization and punctuation. To what extent are a traditionalist regarding spelling, grammar, and punctuation?

**12.** Can the claim that a text is a book for a female audience or a book for a black female audience ever be a legitimate one?

*(Questions provided by sallyflint.com)*



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