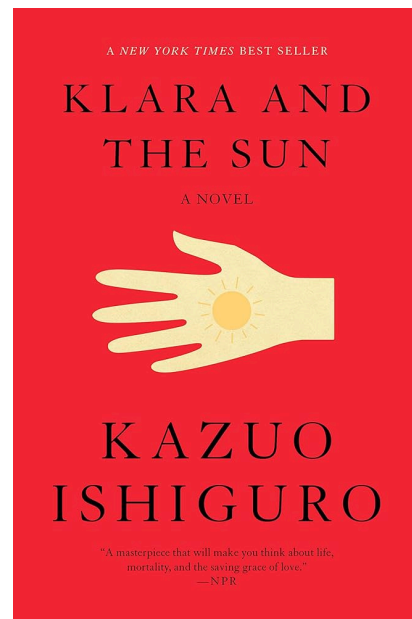


2025 PCDS Summer Reading: Incoming Ninth Graders

Welcome to high school and to English I!

One of the themes we will explore this year is the role of storytelling in the human experience. To jumpstart our conversations, please read and annotate Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*.

The novel is set in a dystopian future (the date is never specified) where artificial intelligence and human relationships intertwine. The story follows Klara, an Artificial Friend (AF) with exceptional observational abilities, who is designed to keep children company and be their companion. The novel is narrated from Klara's perspective, giving insight into her thoughts and feelings as she navigates her role in the world. Because Klara is an artificial intelligence algorithm, she has to *learn* about the world through experience, and discover through observation the complexity of human relationships and emotions. The novel explores fundamental questions, among them: what does it mean to live, to love, to be human?



Assignment 1: Reading and Annotating *Klara and the Sun*

Read and annotate Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*. By “annotating,” we mean writing directly on the pages: not only marking up words, sentences, and passages, but also recording your ideas in the margins.

As you read:

- Mark your confusion. If there are moments in the text where you struggle with understanding or feel confused, tag that section and write any questions you have, or even just add a question mark in the margin.
- Dot down *aha!* moments. These are moments in the text that seem meaningful to you in some way or another. For example, you might be struck by passages about other themes in the novel, including the nature of love, grief, and human intelligence.
- Circle unfamiliar words. Use context clues (e.g., the other words in the passage) to form an educated guess about the word's meaning, then check your guess by looking up the word. (We recommend [vocabulary.com](https://www.vocabulary.com) for its explanations, review games, and collections of words' recent appearance in print and digital media.)

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Assignment 2: Quotations & Essential Questions

1. After you finish reading *Klara and the Sun*, review the notes you made in the book.
2. Create a new Google Document.
3. Select five (5) short quotations from the book in which you found a significant, thought-provoking, or valuable idea.
4. Type these quotations into the Google Doc, including the page numbers.
5. Under each quotation you choose, generate and type at least three (3) essential questions the quotation makes you think about, and which you would genuinely be interested in thinking about further.

Your essential questions should be

- open-ended (that is, there will not be one right answer)
- thought-provoking and intellectually engaging (can spark discussion)
- able to be applied to other books
- understandable to someone who hasn't read *Klara and the Sun* (that is, there shouldn't be references to specific characters; instead, focus on general character types, symbols, recurring images, and potential themes)

Please look at the following example for guidance on the level of abstraction we are aiming for with your essential questions:

EXAMPLE Quotation 1

"Our generation still carries the old feelings. A part of us refuses to let go. The part that wants to keep believing there's something unreachable inside each of us. Something that's unique and won't transfer. But there's nothing like that, we know that now. You know that. For people our age it's a hard one to let go" (Ishiguro 175).

EXAMPLE Questions

1. What kinds of feelings do people our age hold onto? Is it different for each generation?
2. Is there anything truly unique about individual people? What is it and how do we define it?
3. Is loneliness created by this need to feel unique or special?

Please note: Use of AI is not accepted on this assignment (except as basic grammar and spell check). If you are unsure about this, please send us an email.

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So, to recap: on the first day of class, please bring your annotated copy of *Klara and the Sun*, and have Assignment 2 completed on its original Google Doc.

We look forward to meeting you in August!

Mr. Colavita & Mx. Hogan