

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

8. What has changed about each of the characters by the end of the book? Have they grown? Have their circumstances improved? Did you find it hopeful? Or tragic?

9. What has the book taught you? About people, technology, or love? What will you take away from it the most?

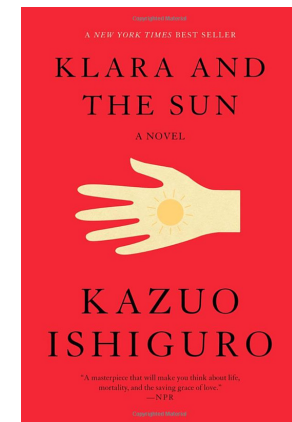
10. "There was something very special, but it wasn't inside Josie. It was inside those who loved her." Does technology change the way that we relate to one another? Does it enhance or limit our capacity for love?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



WEST BABYLON LITERARY CLUB

KLARA AND THE SUN



BY KAZUO ISHIGURO

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SUMMARY

Waiting to be chosen by a customer, an Artificial Friend programmed with high perception observes the activities of shoppers while exploring fundamental questions about what it means to love.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

KAZUO ISHIGURO was born in Nagasaki, Japan, in 1954 and moved to Britain at the age of five. His eight previous works of fiction have earned him many honors around the world, including the Nobel Prize in Literature and the Booker Prize. His work has been translated into over fifty languages, and *The Remains of the Day* and *Never Let Me Go*, both made into acclaimed films, have each sold more than 2 million copies. He was given a knighthood in 2018 for Services to Literature. He also holds the decorations of Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres from France and the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star from Japan.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did Ishiguro choose to tell the story from Klara's perspective? How would the novel have been different if Josie, or her mother, had told it?
2. Did you relate to Klara? Find her likeable? Empathize with her? What about her character or storytelling made this easier or harder?
3. Klara, a personified machine, personifies the sun. Why does she do this? What does it mean to be a person? Are all people humans? Are all humans people?
4. When Miss Helen meets Klara, she says, "One never knows how to greet a guest like you. After all, are you a guest at all? Or do I treat you like a vacuum cleaner?" What does she mean by this? How would you react upon meeting Klara?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

5. In the novel, workers have been "substituted" by machines who do their labor. At various points in the book, we hear from characters who support substitution, like Josie's father, and some who oppose it, like the woman at the theater. Why are their opinions different? Who benefits from substitution?
6. Klara is an outdated model of AF, children who haven't been "lifted" are kept from schools, and workers are dispensable and unwanted. How do you feel about this recurring theme of obsolescence? How do we treat obsolescent people and things?
7. Why do parents choose to have their children "lifted"? Is it fascistic, as Miss Helen suggests? Is it eugenics? Is there an analogous practice to "lifting" in our real world?