

## Encoding Empathy:

Deconstructing Cognitive "Theory of Mind" and the Artificial Psyche in *Klara and the Sun*

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### ABSTRACT

In Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*, the main character's survival depends on her ability to master the "Theory of Mind," which is the ability to think about other people's mental states. This paper examines Klara's psychological evolution as she endeavours to delineate the "human heart" through meticulous observation and cognitive modelling. In the field of Cognitive Literary Studies, the research examines whether Klara's empathy represents a genuine psychological advancement or a sophisticated imitation of human interiority. The study examines the ethical and psychological ramifications of the "substitution" project, wherein Klara is assigned to replicate Josie's identity. The paper concludes that Ishiguro employs the artificial psyche to demonstrate the complex nature of the human spirit, indicating that although the mind can be delineated, the "self" persists as an elusive cognitive enigma, particularly through the narrative's emphasis on grief, memory, and the "lifting" of children.

Keywords: Theory of mind, Cognitive literary studies, Artificial consciousness, Empathy, Interiority.

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