The novel is set in a dystopian future in which some children are genetically engineered ("lifted") for enhanced academic ability. As schooling is provided entirely at home by on-screen tutors, opportunities for socialization are limited and parents who can afford it often buy their children androids as companions. The book is narrated by one such Artificial Friend (AF) called Klara.

From her place in the store, Klara watches carefully the behavior of those who come in to browse, and of those who pass on the street outside. She remains hopeful that a customer will soon choose her.

She remains hopeful that a customer will soon choose her. Klara and the Sun is a thrilling book that offers a look at our changing world through the eyes of an unforgettable narrator, and one that explores the fundamental question: what does it mean to love?

“One of the most affecting and profound novels Ishiguro has written….I'll go for broke and call Klara and the Sun a masterpiece that will make you think about life, mortality, the saving grace of love: in short, the all of it.”
—Maureen Corrigan, NPR