

For the following quotes, assert how and why McEwan uses point-of-view, diction, syntax, and/or figurative language to characterize. DO NOT RELY ON PLOT AS AN EXPLANATION! IF YOU DISCUSS DICTION AND/OR SYNTAX, YOU MUST REFER TO SPECIFICS. Each response should be at least three to five sentences.

It should follow the following pattern:

Grace: Her good nature and her knack with the polishing--her dedication to the surface of things, was the family joke--made her popular, but it was the adoration she aroused in the six-year-old Ceilia and her eight-year-old brother Leon that was the saving of her, and the making of Robbie.

In the above quotation, the author uses a periodic structure in order to characterize Grace as a mother living her life for her son. The focus of the sentence is on Robbie, not Grace, although she is seemingly the one being characterized. Also, McEwan uses irony in that she is mentioned as "family" and her son is about to be accused of a major betrayal, underscoring that the Turners were never equal to the Tallis'.

- 1) Briony: She was like a bride-to-be who begins to feel her sickening qualms as the day approaches, and dares not speak her mind because so many preparations have been made on her behalf. The happiness and convenience of so many good people would be put at risk. These are fleeting moments of private disquiet, only dispelled by abandoning herself to the joy and excitement of those around her. So many decent people could not be wrong, and doubts like hers, she's been told, are to be expected. Briony did not wish to cancel the whole arrangement. She did not think she had the courage, after all her initial certainty and two or three days of patient, kindly interviewing, to withdraw her evidence. However, she would have preferred to qualify, or complicate, her use of the word "saw." Less like seeing, more like knowing. Then she could have left it to her interrogators to decide whether they would proceed together in the name of this kind of vision.

- 2) Leon: In Leon's life, or rather, in his account of his life, no one was mean-spirited, no one schemed or lied or betrayed. Everyone was celebrated at least in some degree, as though it was a cause for wonder that anyone existed at all. He remembered all his friends' best lines. The effect of one of Leon's anecdotes was to make his listener warm to humankind and its failings. Everyone was, at a minimal estimate, "a good egg" or "a decent sort," and motivation was never judged to be at variance with outward show. If there was mystery or contradiction in a friend, Leon took the long view and found a benign explanation. Literature and politics, science and religion did not bore him—they simply had no place in his world, and nor did any matter about which people seriously disagreed. He had taken a degree in law and was happy to have forgotten the whole experience. It was hard to imagine him ever lonely, or bored or despondent; his equanimity was bottomless, as was his lack of ambition, and he assumed that everyone else was much like him. Despite all this, his blandness was perfectly tolerable, even soothing.

- 3) Paul Marshall: Paul Marshall lowered himself into the armchair lately used by the stricken Arabella. It really was a curious face, with the features scrunched up around the eyebrows, and a big empty chin like Desperate Dan's. It was a cruel face, but his manner was pleasant, and this was an attractive combination, Lola thought. He settled his trouser creases as he looked from Quincey to Quincey. Lola's attention was drawn to the black and white leather of his brogues, and he was aware of her admiring them and waggled one foot to a rhythm in his head.
- 4) Emily Tallis: Only the truth came back to her, for what she knew, she knew. The indistinct murmur of voices heard through a carpeted floor surpassed in clarity a typed-up transcript; a conversation that penetrated a wall or, better, two walls, came stripped of all but its essential twists and nuances. What to others would have been a muffling was to her alert senses, which were fine-tuned like the cat's whiskers of an old wireless, an almost unbearable amplification. She lay in the dark and knew everything. The less she was able to do, the more she was aware.
- 5) Cecilia: More in resignation than irritation or panic, she returned to her room. There was no confusion in her mind: these too-vivid, untrustworthy impressions, her self-doubt, the intrusive visual clarity and eerie differences that had wrapped themselves around the familiar were no more than continuations, variations of how she had been seeing and feeling all day. Feeling, but preferring not to think. Besides, she knew what she had to do and she had known it all along. She owned only one outfit that she genuinely liked, and that was the one she should wear. She let the pink dress fall on top of the black and, stepping contemptuously through the pile, reached for the gown, her green backless post-finals gown. As she pulled it on she approved of the firm caress of the bias cut through the silk of her petticoat, and she felt sleekly impregnable, slippery and secure; it was a mermaid who rose to meet her in her own full-length mirror. She left the pearls in place, changed back into the black high-heeled shoes, once more retouched her hair and makeup, forwent another dab of scent and then, as she opened the door, gave out a shriek of terror.

6) Robbie Turner: He had emerged from the trees and reached the point where the path joined the drive. The falling light magnified the dusky expanse of the park, and the soft yellow glow at the windows on the far side of the lake made the house seem almost grand and beautiful. She was in there, perhaps in her bedroom, preparing for dinner—out of view, at the back of the building on the second floor. Facing over the fountain. He pushed away these vivid, daylight thoughts of her, not wanting to arrive feeling deranged. The hard soles of his shoes rapped loudly on the metaled road like a giant clock, and he made himself think about time, about his great hoard, the luxury of an unspent fortune. He had never before felt so self-consciously young, nor experienced such appetite, such impatience for the story to begin

7) Lola: Lola looked suddenly thoughtful and seemed about to tell her cousin something new. But instead she sprang away and took up Briony's hairbrush and stood in front of the mirror vigorously brushing out her hair. She had barely started when they heard Mrs. Tallis calling them down to dinner. Lola was immediately petulant, and Briony assumed that these rapid changes of mood were part of her recent upset.