



Kazuo Ishiguro

Writer known for subtle and emotional storytelling.

Rank #9

Elite 10

#	Word	Definition / Example
1	unreliable	adj. something or someone cannot be trusted to be accurate or dependable "His unreliable narrators reveal themselves incrementally — each clarification quietly depositing a deeper layer of concealment beneath it."
2	reticent	adj. inclined to keep ones thoughts and feelings to oneself; quiet and reserved "Reticent interiority is his signature — characters communicate most devastatingly through what they consistently decline to articulate."
3	suppression	n. forceful prevention; putting down by power or authority "Emotional suppression in his fiction is not repression but a cultivated discipline whose cost accumulates across an entire lifetime."
4	valedictory	n. a farewell address especially one given at a graduation ceremony adj. of or relating to a leaving "A valedictory tenderness suffuses his late narrators — consciousness reviewing its own history with gentle and irreversible finality."
5	circumlocutory	using more words than necessary to say something, often to avoid being direct "His circumlocutory prose enacts the very evasions his characters perform — the style and the psychology become indistinguishable."
6	mnemonic	tricks people use to remember things "Mnemonic unreliability in his work is not failure but necessity — memory reconstructs what it cannot bear to recall accurately."
7	transience	n. the attribute of being brief or fleeting "Transience is his great subject — beauty, duty, and connection rendered precious precisely by their absolute impermanence."
8	deferential	adj. showing respect "His deferential narrators mistake self-effacement for virtue, discovering too late that it was a form of elaborate avoidance."
9	retrospective	adj. looking back on or thinking of the past; looking backward; n. an exhibition of the life's work of an artist. "Retrospective narration in his novels is always slightly distorted — shaped by the emotional needs of the teller rather than the facts."
10	disillusioned	v. to take away false beliefs or hopes; remove the illusions of. "Quietly disillusioned consciousness, too measured for bitterness and too honest for consolation, is his most characteristic creation."
11	attenuated	made weaker or less intense "His attenuated emotional register communicates more through strategic omission than the most expressively florid prose could achieve."
12	contingency	n. something that might happen "The contingency of human lives — how differently everything might have unfolded — haunts his narratives with gentle persistent sorrow."
13	existentialist	a person who believes that life is about individual choice and finding meaning "An existentialist confrontation with mortality underlies even his most formally restrained and superficially composed narrative voices."

#	Word	Definition / Example
14	postimperial	a time or condition following the end of an empire “Postimperial melancholy permeates his English settings — a civilization processing loss through elaborate performances of dignified continuity.”
15	introspectively	in a way that involves looking carefully at one's own thoughts and feelings “His characters move introspectively through their own pasts like archaeologists uncertain whether excavation brings recovery or further loss.”