

Conflict and Contradictions

Saturday is a novel full of contradictions, opposites and dichotomies. Look through the list of words and phrases below and decide which ones are contrasting, opposites or dichotomies; don't just match up what look like obvious pairs – think carefully about the links (and conflicts) between different ideas. Consider McEwan's narrative style and the structure of the novel as well as the contents. Decide where in the novel you can find evidence for each contrast you decide upon. Consider why McEwan has written the text in this way and what his intention is. Which, if any, contradictions have been missed?

Facts
Chaos
Health
War
Internal
Order
Friends
Wealth
Feelings
Knowledge
Peace
External
Illness
Colleagues
Poverty
Family
Science
Birth
Strangers
Youth
Ignorance
Creativity
Love
Sympathy
Old age
Understanding
Death
Hatred
Pacifism
Regret
Violence
Other
Expectation and hope