You may find it useful to carry out your own research into de Clerambault’s Syndrome and use the notes below to add to any notes you have made as a result of your own research.

McEwan uses de Clerambault's Syndrome as central to 'Enduring Love.'

His appendices to the novel, which are concerned with the syndrome, are fictional, but de Clerambault's Syndrome is an important psychiatric syndrome and it will be worth while for you to give some further consideration to it. This should provide you with a greater understanding of stalking in general, and of Parry's behaviour in the novel in particular.

Parry displays many of the classic characteristics of de Clerambault sufferers but in some respects his characteristics differ.

- He does show a real potential for violence when his love is persistently unrequited.

- Classically, de Clerambault sufferers become aware of their victims from a distance through various forms of the media (cinema, TV, newspapers etc.) Parry is different in this respect.

- Frequently sufferers’ fantasies can be of an extreme sexual nature. This is not the case with Parry. The driving force for his love being the desire to bring Joe to God.

- Again, frequently, the sufferer believes the victim is communicating with him or her using a secret code that only they know the meaning of. Parry is usual in this respect.

- Usually, victims will be rich and famous. Joe is neither, but, as McEwan says in his appendix, he could have represented the ideal man for Parry.

The recent past has shown a much greater interest in stalking and the problems and potential dangers it presents than was the case. The attitude towards it was, usually, that typified by Inspector Linley in the novel; loving someone to the point of obsession, who doesn't return that love, can be unfortunate but it is not a crime. Recently, the law has become much clearer that obsessive stalking can constitute a crime. Stalking can be conveniently categorised into six different forms:

1. Simple obsession - the ex-partner.
2. Love obsession - love at first sight.
3. De Clerambault's Syndrome - erotomania.
5. Serial stalker - obsessed with the act of stalking.
6. Organised harassment - those with something to gain.
De Clerambault's Syndrome is a type of delusional (paranoid) disorder. Parry is typical of its sufferers in that he doesn't believe he needs treatment. He is certain that there is nothing wrong with him. He, like his fellow sufferers, is dangerous to himself and to others and needs hospitalisation. Again, as is the case for many other sufferers hospitalisation hasn't brought about his recovery.

Laura Miller, the editor of the magazine 'Salon', wrote an article on September 21st, 1999, explaining how McEwan had tricked 'the chaps in white coats', the sober editors of 'The Psychiatric Bulletin', a sister publication to the 'British Journal of Psychiatry'.

She says, at the end of his novel - as you already know - McEwan produces an Appendix which reports a case of de Clerambault's syndrome from the 'British Review of Psychiatry', written by Doctors Robert Wenn and Antonio Cania.

Neither the 'British Review of Psychiatry' nor the study's authors exist. (Again, as you will have already noted the last names of the doctors are an anagram for Ian McEwan). Both are inventions of McEwan's imagination based on his knowledge of the essential characteristics of de Clerambault's syndrome.

However, Ronan McIvor, a consultant psychiatrist at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in London, was tricked by McEwan. Reviewing the novel he described it as, 'Based on a published case report.'

Laura Miller continues, 'The shrinks weren't the only ones taken in'. In the USA Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, one of the daily book reviewers for the New York Times, complained that, 'When you discover at the end of the book an appendix documenting the case-history on which 'Enduring Love' is based, you think you know what is wrong. Mr McEwan has simply stuck too close to the facts and failed to allow his imagination to invent.'

Chapter 11

Task One - How does your research of de Clerambault's syndrome link to Parry's actions and expressed emotions?

Task Two - Discuss the frightening depths of Jed Parry's obsessions that are revealed by the letter he writes, which constitutes the whole of this Chapter.