

The English Teacher

Fahrenheit 451

Below are plans for teaching Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451. These plans were used for a 9th grade college prep. class. These are general plans. There are writing assignments and tests associated with them.

FAHRENHEIT 451

Part One THE HEARTH AND THE SALAMANDER

Guy Montag coming home from a satisfying day of burning houses and books, meets Clarisse McClellan. [p.6] After talking, she asks him, "Are you happy? [p.10] [Pivotal Question] He realizes that he is not happy. [p.12] His wife, Mildred, overdosing on sleeping pills as jets going overhead, 'cut Montag in half. [p.13-14] He calls for help; two men show up- pump her stomach, change her blood, nine to ten cases a night.. All his old life is collapsing. [p.18] and Mildred wakes up without remembering anything. Mildred 'lost' in wall TV's scripts. [p.20] Clarisse's dandelion shows that Montag is not in love. [p.21]

Have students write three questions they have about the book up to this point and hand them in. Discuss as a class. [THIS IS A VALUABLE ASSIGNMENT!]

##Student comment: society's weird- changed things.

Read to p. 45. Read out loud.(-- This depends on the class..)

The Mechanical Hound with eight legs and four inch needle to kill victim. Montag thinks that it doesn't like him. [p.24-28] Clarisse tells him she's different from other youth [considered antisocial] and doesn't like the violence youths do to each other. [p.28-31] Clarisse gone- when gets off his shift the next time. [p.32] Montag having doubts but the history of Firemen of America states that Benjamin Franklin was the first Fireman- to burn books. [p.34-35] They go to burn an old woman's house, and Montag steals a book. [p.35-40] But the old lady lights a match and burns up everything, including herself.

Quiz #1 3 Sentences
3 sentences into one.. [Describe the Hound??]
[Dictionary definition of Hound from 'their' time.]

Montag comes home upset and shook up and asks Millie when and where they met. [[p.42] He realizes the empty life he and Mildred especially, have, and she tells him that Clarisse is dead. [p.42-47]

Read to p. 55 Read / Notes: discuss hints of the time period.

Montag 'sick,' can't forget the old woman- father and grandfather were firemen. [p.51] Beatty visits [p.52+] and explains 'history' of thoughts going to mass media- avoid offending or disturbing minorities or society. [p. 52-62]

4 sentences

1. What does Beatty say is the purpose for the books being destroyed and how did the practice evolve or come about?
2. What problems does Beatty say that books cause? [What is he also saying, 'really' saying?

Read to p.75

Beatty leaves and Montag decides never to go again to work and shows Mildred his hidden books and begins to read to her. p. 62-68]

PART TWO THE SIEVE AND THE SAND

Montag and Millie read- and Montag starts thinking about what his society is really like. *Perhaps the Hound is at the door. He thinks he needs a teacher and remembers Faber. [p.71-77]

Montag goes on the subway, blaring ads, to Faber's apartment. -Faber calls Montag a 'hopeless romantic.' [p.82]

They consider planting books in firemen's houses.

to 85

10 things Montag realizes about himself and his society.

What Montag realizes- [by now]

1. The bombers are going over.
2. The stomach pumpers are anonymous.
3. Mildred tries to kill herself.
4. The parlor wall programs have no content.
5. He is not happy.
6. Clarisse is not sick but a misfit in a sick society.
7. No one walks anymore.
8. No one talks anymore.
9. Firemen once put out fires.
10. He was insulated from the death of those whose houses he burned.

11. They in their society are unaware of nature.

PUT HERE:??

Orally- with class, ask for two questions and two answers.

Montag rips Bible, forces Faber to help, and Faber gives Montag a radio device for his ear so he can tell Montag what to say to Beatty. [p.90]

Mrs. Phelps and Mrs. Bowles visit Mildred- [we learn about 'war conditions' and dysfunctional attitudes towards children. [p. 93+] Montag begins reading poetry to them. [p.98]

to 95 10 things student realizes about his/her society.

How different is our society from theirs?

How is it similar?

Going along with society without even questioning.

Montag afraid to change, afraid not to change.

COMMENT:

Don't judge other cultures entirely from our standards. Notice that every society has 'strong' and 'weak' points as we view [judge] them.

Beatty [p.106] is trying to overwhelm Montag with his superior mental learning. An alarm is called in to the firehouse and Beatty drives this time and they all arrive at Montag's house. [p.108-110]

to 105

1. What kind of help does Montag want from Faber?
2. What kind of help does he get?
3. What various places could you go for help if you needed it?

PART THREE BURNING BRIGHT

to 115 2 questions and 2 things learned

Beatty had 'hinted' with the Hound. [p.113] Mildred had turned in the alarm. Montag goes into shock about her betrayal and the destruction of his house. [Dumbly innocent.] Beatty makes him destroy his own house with the flame thrower. [p. 116]

to 137 T-sheet, compare Odysseus and Montag.

Make a t-sheet Odysseus on the left, Montag on the right. Compare them in a variety of areas.. to prepare for a paper to follow.

Add in alternate paper- (FahrPap1.Cp1)

Beatty finds Faber's little radio, and Montag burns Beatty up, knocks out the other two firemen, and 'flames' the Hound nearby. [p.119-120]

Montag realizes that Beatty wanted to die. [p.122] As Montag is fleeing, war is declared. [p.126] He's almost run over by a 'beetle' as he's crossing a highway. [p. 127-128] He 'plants' books in Mrs. Black's kitchen. [p. 129-130]

Montag [p. 131] ...'the things I've done in a single week.' Faber 'You did what you had to do... It was coming on for a long time.' Montag 'Yes, I believe that, if there's nothing else I believe. It saved itself up to happen.'

Faber to deodorize the house. Montag runs for the river and the railroad tracks from the second Mechanical Hound. [NOTE: the war is to begin in an hour.] He takes some of Faber's old clothes with him. The Hound with a tv camera mounted follows him. All citizens are supposed to look.

He makes it to the river. The Hound turns away and he drifts down the river. He comes out, 'imagining' a farmhouse. The land overwhelms him and he sees a deer, thinking that it is the Hound. In the dark he is very aware of smells. He finds a railroad track and feels certain that Clarisse had been there. He finds a fire with men around, a fire that is warming, not burning. The men welcome him by name and give him a chemical that changes his odor. They watch the chase on a portable tv as the Mechanical Hound kills an innocent man as a 'scapegoat.'

to 147 Preview three part paper, with support..relating to the t-sheet that they have been keeping.

The men accept him and explain that they all have books in their heads- which can be recalled. Montag has the Book of Ecclesiastes. [p. 139-152]

Their plan is to wait [with their knowledge] until society falls apart and to help in the building, rebuilding of a new society. An important cause, to remember books and knowledge. [p.153]

to 157 Questions and discussion

to 167 5 multiple choice and 3 t/f questions

Granger tells about his grandfather [p.155-158] 'touching' things, living life without guarantees. [a THEME?]

The Bomb hits Montag's city from jets flying 5000 miles per hour. Montag sees in his 'mind's eye' the city rise up, and fall down to dust.. with Millie and others he knows.

Granger remembers the phoenix which rises from the ashes. His philosophy is to remember enough from the past to keep war from happening again. He remembers a Bible passage [*not from Ecclesiastes] which says 'And on either side of the river was there a tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.'

**That is the point that Montag was to share!

to 179 Test on Fahrenheit 451

AFTERWARD:

He wrote the novel in a basement typing room at the UCLA library. He wrote a play which varies from the book. Beatty's role is expanded and Clarisse lives. Montag was named after paper, and Faber after a pencil.

CODA:

Ray Bradbury tells how condensing books is similar to burning them, that his books have been censored, and that minority/special interest groups protested various books for various reasons. He says 'leave my books alone; write ones you like but don't alter mine.'

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