

“Overcoming the Monster” Plot Pattern
***Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury**
***12 Ways Your Phone is Changing You* by Tony Reinke**

ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS (READ THESE CAREFULLY):

- Read this assignment sheet in its entirety.
- Read *Fahrenheit 451*. As you read, take notes on and mark passages regarding:
 - the “Overcoming the Monster” plot pattern *AND*
 - the effects technology has on the people/society in *Fahrenheit 451*
- Read the Preface, Introduction, five chapters of your choice, and the Conclusion of *12 Ways Your Phone is Changing You*.
 - *12 Ways Your Phone is Changing You* is written to modern-day smartphone users. Each chapter addresses one effect that smartphone use has on its users. Choose five chapter titles that address similar effects of technology that you noted while reading *F451*.
- Provide typed responses to each of the writing prompts below.
- Use MLA formatting (header, heading, spacing, in-text citations, and works cited). Your Works Cited page will only include the two books you have been assigned to read. This is not research, so you will not need outside sources; rather, this is your own critical analysis, and you will need to cite the books properly when you refer to and quote from them in your analysis.
- Be reminded that our school’s policy regarding plagiarism will be administered and applied to this and all other essay assignments throughout the year.
- Assignments are due on August 10, 2018.

Explanation of literary theory/plot patterns:

In literary theory, an **archetypal plot** is a **pattern** of telling a story. One of those patterns is the “Overcoming the Monster” pattern. *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury is a classic story which follows this pattern of development. Other stories which follow this pattern are *James Bond*, *Star Wars*, *Perseus*, *War of the Worlds*, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, *Beowulf*, and *Dracula*.

“Overcoming the Monster” Plot Pattern

1. Anticipation Stage and Call

The reader learns about the monster (not necessarily a physical monster), including its powers and reign of terror over the nearby community, and the hero accepts the call to defeat the monster. We gradually learn of the monster’s fearsome reputation and how it is casting its threatening shadow over some community, kingdom, or mankind in general.

2. Dream Stage

The hero prepares to fight the monster, and things seem promising. The danger does not seem imminent.

3. Frustration Stage

It's here! The monster! And it's even worse than we thought! The monster's power is revealed in all its terrible glory, and it looks like our hero is in way over his head. He seems tiny against such a strong opponent; indeed, it seems he is slipping into the monster's power.

4. Nightmare Stage

Cue the epic battle music, because it is ON. And it's not going well for our hero, who seems to have all odds stacked against him. But wait! Just as all hope is lost and it appears our hero is defeated, the tide of battle takes an unexpected turn in the hero's favor.

5. The Thrilling Escape from Death, and Death of the Monster

The monster is defeated, the hero emerges victorious, and the grateful people present him/her with treasure, a kingdom or something to rule over.

Note: Not every "Overcoming the Monster" story will follow the pattern perfectly. If there are deviations from the core pattern, you should definitely explain those in your response.

Works Cited

Booker, Christopher. *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*. Bloomsbury Continuum, 2016.

Bureman, Liz. "The Seven Types of Plots: Overcoming the Monster." *The Write Practice*, 2017, thewritepractice.com/7-plots/

DETAILED WRITTEN RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS:

Response #1:

Type a one-page explanation of how *Fahrenheit 451* follows the model of “Overcoming the Monster.” Be specific in your analysis of the stages. Use examples from the book with page numbers and MLA formatted in-text citations.

Responses #2-4:

Choose three of the five chapters you read. For each, write a one-page critical analysis in which you discuss the following:

- According to this chapter of *12 Ways Your Phone is Changing You*, what do modern-day smartphone users struggle with? Identify this same struggle manifested in the pre-smartphone *Fahrenheit 451* society. Provide at least three examples, cited properly, from *Fahrenheit 451* to support your answer.

Response #5:

Consider your own use of technology. Do you see where any of these things are true in your own life? What changes might the Lord be prompting you to make in your own life? Be descriptive in your answer.