

***Fahrenheit 451***  
by Ray Bradbury

**Assignment:**

Before the first day of class, read *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury (Simon & Schuster 60th Anniversary Edition / ISBN 978-1451673319) in its entirety. Read this handout and the “Introduction” in the book (pgs xi-xvi), before starting the novel. Read carefully, making sure you understand the distinctions between characters, settings, and the plot progression, and take notes as you go (I’ve provided minimal space for this in the following pages). We will briefly discuss the work in class, and you will be assessed on your understanding of the novel once the school year begins. This study guide handout will be collected and assessed for a grade; so complete it carefully and thoughtfully.

**Due:**

Wednesday, August 21 (first day of classes)

**Contact:**

Should you have any questions or concerns, you may email me (Mrs. Stanley) directly at [astanley@greenvilleclassical.com](mailto:astanley@greenvilleclassical.com). I look forward to seeing each of you in the classroom soon! Praying you enjoy the remainder of your summer break until then.

★ Happy reading ★

## Introduction (pgs xi-xvi)

This year in British Literature, we'll be kicking off the year with Bradbury's cautionary tale: *Fahrenheit 451*. It was published in 1953 as a dystopian science fiction novel. Recent events in America's history heavily influenced Bradbury, especially those which pertained to World War II, nuclear war, McCarthyism, and the rise of the television. Read the novel's "Introduction" by Neil Gaiman (April 2013) and answer the following questions:

What are some reasons why "writers write about a world that does not yet exist"?

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What are the three phrases which "make possible the world of writing about the world of not-yet"?

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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In what specific ways is *Fahrenheit 451* a cautionary tale?

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Why is the novel titled "Fahrenheit 451"?

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Complete this line from page xvi: "Fiction is a lie that tells us ..."

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**Plot, Climax, Ending**

Be able to concisely explain the novel, including the plot, climax, ending, and all important key twists/turns along the way. This knowledge will be formally assessed.

**Themes**

As you read, look for the following themes to emerge. Make note of specific examples and textual evidence to support each one; you should be able to identify and list/defend examples of each from the novel.

Censorship:

Dehumanization (Alienation & Connection):

Individuality & Conformity:

Threat of Technology:

Power of Books:

## Characters

Make sure you know the names and characteristics of all of the major characters in the novel. Jot down important information about each one below:

Montag:
Beatty:
Clarisse:
Mildred:
The Mechanical Hound:
Faber:
Granger:

## Personal Application (complete AFTER you've read the book)

Pretend you are going to write a “speculative fiction” novel of your own. Thinking through modern issues that concern you, circle one of the three phrases below and then complete it as if this were the topic of your novel.

*What if ... / If only ... / If this goes on ...*

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