

English

TED ED

## Why you should read Fahrenheit

### 1. Warmer

Read the following quotes from the novel Fahrenheit 451

*'There must be something in books, things we can't imagine, to make a woman stay in a burning house; there must be something there. You don't stay for nothing.'*

*'What is there about fire that's so lovely? No matter what age we are, what draws us to it?' Beatty blew out the flame and lit it again. 'It's perpetual motion; the thing man wanted to invent but never did.'*

*'To everything there is a season. Yes. A time to break down, and a time to build up. Yes. A time to keep silence and a time to speak. Yes, all that.'*

*'Stuff your eyes with wonder,' he said, 'live as if you'd drop dead in ten seconds. See the world. It's more fantastic that any dream made or paid for in factories. Ask no guarantees, ask for no security, there never was such an animal. And if there were, it would be related to the great sloth which hangs upside down in a tree all day every day, sleeping its life away. To hell with that,' he said, 'shake the tree and knock the great sloth down on his ass.'*

- What do you think each one means?
- Do you agree with them or not? Why?
- What kind of person do you think would say or believe this?

**2. Guess what the following might refer to in the video. Make notes.**

- 451                      The temperature paper burns
- 1953                    The year Fahrenheit got published
- Cold War                Bradbury wrote the book in response to the Cold War
- Montag                 Guy Montag is the protagonist of this novel
- Black butterflies        Whilst burning books the flames appeared to look like black butterflies

**3. Understand the introduction**

Read the first 9 sentences from the introduction. They are not in the right order. Mark them from 1 to 9. The first sentence has been done already.

But as his pleasure gives way to doubt, the story raises critical questions of how to preserve one's mind in a society where free will, self-expression, and curiosity are under fire. 5

At work, the smell of kerosene hangs over Montag's colleagues, who smoke and set their mechanical hound after rats to pass the time. 9

The protagonist, Montag, is a fireman responsible for destroying what remains. 4

On the subway, ads blast out of the walls. 7

It was a pleasure to burn. It was a special pleasure to see things eaten, to see things blackened and changed. 1

In Montag's world, mass media has a monopoly on information, erasing almost all ability for independent thought. 6

At home, Montag's wife Mildred listens to the radio around the clock, and three of their parlor walls are plastered with screens. 8

Ray Bradbury's novel imagines a world where books are banned from all areas of life - and possessing, let alone reading them, is forbidden. 3

Fahrenheit 451 opens in a blissful blaze - and before long, we learn what's going up in flames. 2

Now watch the first part of the video (0.00 – 1.18) and see if you got the right order.

<https://youtu.be/YMZcp0EQO2s>

**4. Find words in the introduction that mean the same as the following:**

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| a. Extremely happy, full of joy             | _____ <b>blissful</b> _____        |
| b. Leading character in a play, film, novel | _____ <b>protagonist</b> _____     |
| c. Maintain something in its original state | _____ <b>preserve</b> _____        |
| d. Expression of one's feelings             | _____ <b>self-expression</b> _____ |
| e. Exclusive possession                     | _____ <b>monopoly</b> _____        |
| f. Light fuel oil                           | _____ <b>kerosene</b> _____        |

**5. Watch the whole video and answer following questions**

1. What is the protagonist of Fahrenheit 451 employed to do?

- a. Fight the evil
- b. Burn books**
- c. Destroy the wildlife
- d. Burn bridges

2. Montag's fire engine is shaped like a

- a. Cow
- b. Salamander**
- c. Lizard
- d. Bat

3. Bradbury wrote Fahrenheit 451 in response to

- a. The Cold War
- b. World War 2
- c. Historic Censorship
- d. Both The Cold War and Historic Censorship**

4. What kind of fiction is Fahrenheit 451?

- a. Contemporary
- b. Dystopian
- c. Crime
- d. Historic

6.

Fahrenheit 451 is a 1953 **dystopian** novel by American writer Ray Bradbury.

**What does 'dystopian' mean? Please explain in your own words.**

(adj) relating to an imagined state or society where there is great suffering or injustice.

(noun) a person who imagines or foresees a state or society where there is great suffering or injustice.

**Can you give more examples of dystopian novels?**

1984, The Handmaid's Tale, The Hunger Games, The Maze Runner

7. **Bannings and burning of books/ literature throughout history. Can you think of more?**

**1983:** Members of the Alabama State Textbook Committee called for the rejection of The Diary of Anne Frank because it was "a real downer." It was also challenged for offensive references to sexuality.

**1980s:** During its examination of school learning materials, the London County Council in England banned the use of Beatrix Potter's children's classics The Tale of Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny from all London schools. The reason: the stories portrayed only "middle-class rabbits."

**1954:** Mickey Mouse comics were banned in East Berlin because Mickey was said to be an "anti-Red rebel."

**1929:** The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was banned in the Soviet Union because of “occultism.”

**1929:** Jack London’s popular novel Call of the Wild was banned in Italy and Yugoslavia. In 1932, copies of this and other books by London were burned by the Nazis in Germany.

**1788:** Shakespeare’s King Lear was banned from the stage until 1820—in deference to the insanity of the reigning monarch, King George III.