

## E2o8

### Summer Reading Information Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*

As a sophomore entering an E2o8 class in the fall, you will be responsible for completing summer reading assignments. The text you will be required to read over the summer is *Fahrenheit 451*. Please read through the information on this handout. If you have any questions over the summer, please contact Mrs. Serafini at [tserafini@d211.org](mailto:tserafini@d211.org), Mrs. Micheletto at [jmicheletto@d211.org](mailto:jmicheletto@d211.org), or Mrs. Strauch at [jstrauch@d211.org](mailto:jstrauch@d211.org).

Over the summer, you will complete 2 assignments; you will also take a test on the novel when school begins.

Both assignments are due the first day of class; they include -

1. Analysis Chart
2. Analytical Essay

#### **1. Analysis Chart: Due the first day of class; have an electronic copy**

While reading the novel, instead of annotating, please find **10 examples of dystopian elements** (see "Dystopias: Definitions and Characteristics" handout attached) and **20 examples of literary elements**. After choosing important and meaningful quotes, please provide deconstructive analysis pertaining to the purpose and meaning of the quote. Please follow the format below:

Samples:

Dystopian Element: Characteristic, control, etc.	Examples from <i>F451</i>	Purpose and Meaning
1. Information is restricted	Montag brags, "It's fine work. Monday burn Millay, Wednesday Whitman, Friday Faulkner, burn 'em to ashes, then burn the ashes. That's our official slogan" (Bradbury 3).	The governing body within this society restricts information with the end goal of preventing individual thought. The quote alludes to well-known authors who have influenced readers over history to demonstrate that by burning their thoughts/ideas, they are essentially destroying their influence. Ultimately, an ignorant society is a controllable society.
2.		

Literary Element	Examples from <i>F451</i>	Purpose and Meaning
1. Metaphor	“while the flapping pigeon-winged books died on the porch and lawn of the house” (Bradbury 1).	Opening the novel, Bradbury describes the books as “pigeon-winged.” Because birds symbolize freedom, the fact that the books are dying depicts the death of that freedom due to the burning of information. Additionally, the books are flapping as they die; this is connotatively showing their struggle and that their death is not an easy one. Still further, pigeons are often seen as bothersome and “flying rats.” The depiction of them as such underscores the society’s view of books as unwanted pests. Lastly, mentioning the porch of the house appeals to pathos as the porch is historically a place for contemplation and congregation; by having the books die here, a way of life is symbolically dying as well.
2.		

**2. Analytical Essay: Due the first day of class; have an electronic copy**

After reading *F451*, your assignment is to write an analytical essay.

**Prompt:** Critic Roland Barthes has said, “Literature is the question minus the answer.” After reading *Fahrenheit 451* and considering Barthes’ observation, write an essay in which you analyze a central question the work raises and the extent to which it offers answers. Explain how the author’s treatment of this question affects your understanding of the work as a whole. Avoid mere plot summary.

- MLA Format: See [Purdue OWL website](#) for specifics
- minimum of 2-3 pages typed and double-spaced
- introduction, including a thesis statement
- ACEDIT style body paragraphs with specific examples of text used as evidence
- proper internal documentation for each citation and Works Cited page (MLA Format)

**3. Objective Test: The objective test for the novel will be given the week you come back to school**

## Dystopias: Definition and Characteristics

**Utopia:** A place, state, or condition that is ideally perfect in respect of politics, laws, customs, and conditions.

**Dystopia:** A futuristic, imagined universe in which oppressive societal control and the illusion of a perfect society are maintained through corporate, bureaucratic, technological, moral, or totalitarian control. Dystopias, through an exaggerated worst-case scenario, make a criticism about a current trend, societal norm, or political system.

### Characteristics of a Dystopian Society

- Propaganda is used to control the citizens of society.
- Information, independent thought, and freedom are restricted.
- A figurehead or concept is worshipped by the citizens of the society.
- Citizens are perceived to be under constant surveillance.
- Citizens have a fear of the outside world.
- Citizens live in a dehumanized state.
- The natural world is banished and distrusted.
- Citizens conform to uniform expectations. Individuality and dissent are bad.
- The society is an illusion of a perfect utopian world.

### Types of Dystopian Controls

Most dystopian works present a world in which oppressive societal control and the illusion of a perfect society are maintained through one or more of the following types of controls:

- Corporate control: One or more large corporations control society through products, advertising, and/or the media. Examples include *Minority Report* and *Running Man*.
- Bureaucratic control: Society is controlled by a mindless bureaucracy through a tangle of red tape, relentless regulations, and incompetent government officials. Examples in film include *Brazil*.
- Technological control: Society is controlled by technology—through computers, robots, and/or scientific means. Examples include *The Matrix*, *The Terminator*, and *I, Robot*.
- Philosophical/religious control: Society is controlled by philosophical or religious ideology often enforced through a dictatorship or theocratic government.

### The Dystopian Protagonist

- often feels trapped and is struggling to escape.
- questions the existing social and political systems.
- believes or feels that something is terribly wrong with the society in which he or she lives.
- helps the audience recognize the negative aspects of the dystopian world through his or her perspective.