

# ***FAHRENHEIT 451***

## **Interpretation Basics**

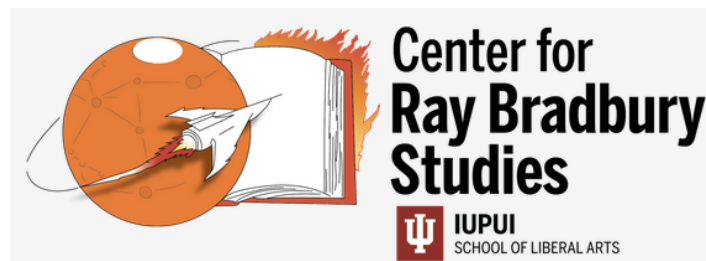
**A CENTER FOR RAY BRADBURY STUDIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT**

DESIGNED FOR GRADES 9 & 10

### INCLUDES:

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# INTERPRETATION

## WHAT IS IT?

### Welcome students!

After completing this lesson you will be able to interpret how *dynamic characters* develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, advance the plot, and develop the theme.

But first - what does it mean to "interpret" something?

**Step 1:** Locate a dictionary.

*In print is preferred, but digital is acceptable.*

**Step 2:** Look up "interpretation." Write the definition below.

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**Step 3:** Compare definitions with your classmates. How many did you find?

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**Step 4:** Investigate! How many different interpretations of *Fahrenheit 451* can you find?

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# REVIEW

## FICTION, PLOT, THEME, & DYNAMIC CHARACTER

Take turns reading the descriptions of the four literary devices listed below.

Split into groups. Use the **Artivive** App to uncover how each literary device applies to *Fahrenheit 451*.



### Fiction

Imaginative works of prose, like a novel or short story.

Although fiction draws on actual events and real people, it springs mainly from the imagination of the writer.

The purpose is to entertain as well as enlighten the reader by providing a deeper fiction understanding of the human condition.



### Plot

The action or sequence of events in a story.

The plot includes exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement (ending).



### Theme

The underlying meaning of a literary text.

Sometimes a theme is directly stated in a text, and sometimes it is indirectly stated.

There can be more than one theme in a text.



### Dynamic Character

A character who develops or changes over the course of the text.

For example: Guy Montag from *Fahrenheit 451*.

# CONNECT

## HOW DOES IS CONNECT TO FAHRENHEIT 451?

Fiction, plot, theme, and dynamic character are four literary devices that help us categorize and understand works of literature.

These literary devices can help us analyze and interpret works of literature like *Fahrenheit 451*.

Take turns reading how each literary device connects out loud:



### Fiction

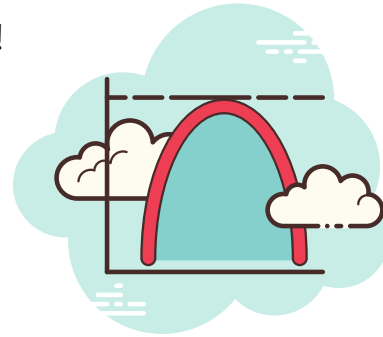
Published in 1953, *Fahrenheit 451*, is a novel by American author Ray Bradbury. It is a work of Science Fiction, has been published in over 60 different versions, and remains Bradbury's best known work of literature.

Bradbury's idea of a world in which books are illegal started in a short story he wrote titled "The Fireman."



### Plot

Class Exercise: Plot Diagram!



### Theme

1. **Censorship**
2. **Anti-Intellectualism**



### Dynamic Character

**Page 8:** "Happy! Of all the nonsense." He stopped laughing. He put his hand into the glove hole of his front door and let it know his touch. The front door slide open. Of course I'm happy. What does she think? I'm *not*?"


**Page 49:** "Let you alone! That's all very well, but how can I leave myself alone? We need not to be let alone. We need to be really bothered once in a while. How long is it since you were *really* bothered?"



# Dynamic Words:

## Who said **what**?

Look at the text below and match the character with the quotation that belongs to them.

Who:	What:
 Clarisse	 <p>"But that would just nibble the edges. The whole culture's shot through. The skeleton needs melting and reshaping. Good God, it isn't as simple as just picking up a book you laid down half a century ago. Remember the fireman are rarely necessary. The public itself stopped reading of its own accord."</p>
 Montag	 <p>"Oh, you were scared silly...for I was doing a terrible thing in using the very books you clung to, to rebut you on every hand, on every point! What traitors books can be! you think they're backing you up, and they turn on you. Others can use them, too, and there you are, lost in the middle of the moor, in a great welter of nouns and verbs and adjectives."</p>
 Captain Beatty	 <p>"How did it start? How did you get into it? How did you pick your work and how did you happen to think to take the job you have? You're not like the others. I've seen a few; <i>I know</i>. When I talk, you look at me. When I said something about the moon, you looked at the moon, last night. The others would never do that. The others would walk off and leave me talking. Or threaten me. No one has time any more for anyone else. You're one of the few who put up with me. That's why I think it's so strange you're a fireman, it just doesn't seem right for you."</p>
 Faber	 <p>"You weren't there, you didn't <i>see</i>...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."</p>



# LET'S ELABORATE

Which characters are dynamic? Which are static? List each character in the proper column. (Characters: Clarisse, Montag, Captain Beatty, Faber)

Dynamic	Static

Pick one of the dynamic characters and explain how they are dynamic. You may use your own words as a summary, or you can provide direct quotations in comparison.

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Open *Fahrenheit 451* and turn to **Page 59**. Read the quote in the middle of the page.

*"One last thing," said Beatty. "At least once in his career, every fireman..."*

Turn to **Page 113**. Read the quote in the second paragraph.

*Beatty grinned his most charming grin. "Well, that's one way to get an audience..."*

Split up into groups of two or three and discuss these two quotes. What does it say about Captain Beatty? Is he a dynamic character, or is he static?

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# RESEARCH EXERCISE

The Center for Ray Bradbury Studies is a museum, library, and research archive.

One of the first goals of the Center was to produce **new research** about the life and works of Ray Bradbury. The archive contains over 100,000 pages of Bradbury's manuscripts, typescripts, teleplays, screenplays, and correspondence!

**Step 1:** As a class, go to [www.bradbury.iupui.edu](http://www.bradbury.iupui.edu). Locate the tab *Bradbury Archive*, listed under the *Collections* tab. Look over the different types of material the archive contains. Brainstorm some potential research questions as a class.

**Step 2:** Split into groups.

**Step 3:** With your teammates, formulate a research question.

**Step 4:** With the assistance of the Center for Ray Bradbury Studies staff members, search the archive for sources that could help answer your question. Use the space below for notes.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

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## NOTES

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## USEFUL MATERIAL

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