

Guided Reading Questions—Fahrenheit 451
By Ray Bradbury

“The Hearth and the Salamander” Pages 1-65 (3-68)

1. Discuss how Montag feels about his job at the beginning of the novel.

2. “He strode in a swarm of fireflies”. What are the “fireflies”?

3. Discuss who Montag meets walking at the beginning of the novel. How does she react to Montag?

4. Discuss the lies Clarisse points out Montag has been taught.

5. Explain how Clarisse upsets Montag.

6. If Clarisse reflects what Montag feels, what must Montag be feeling? Is he happy at the beginning of the novel?

7. Discuss what Montag compares his happiness to.

8. Is Montag’s wife a happy woman?

9. Explain how Montag’s wife is saved? Discuss the attitude of the people who save her.

10. Discuss the attitude Montag's wife takes the day after her suicide attempt.

11. Explain the ways in which Clarisse's family is different from other families.

12. Is Montag in love with Clarisse?

13. Explain why it is important that the Mechanical Hound rouses itself at Montag.

14. Discuss how the children in Montag's society behave and treat each other. Why are they so violent?

15. Explain how firemen are chosen.

16. What lies has Montag been told about firemen and why he would be told such things.

17. Discuss why someone might turn in a neighbor for having books.

18. Discuss how the woman acts when they come for her books. Explain why this burning is different and upsetting to Montag and the firemen,

19. Explain why Montag says he doesn't take the book, but "his hands" do it.

20. Discuss why it is important that all of the people run out of their houses to see the book burning.

21. Explain why it might be important that Beatty knows the origin of his quotes.

22. Discuss what the TV programs are like. How are they similar to modern TV's and TV shows.

23. Discuss what happened to Clarisse.

24. Explain why Mildred is so anxious for Montag to go to work.

25. Discuss what happened to books after the Civil War. What caused this?

26. Explain the changes that occur in education after books are banned.

27. Explain how minorities play a role in the dumbing down of America.

28. Explain why schools stop turning out “intellectuals”.

29. Discuss how firemen “keep everyone happy”.

30. “She didn’t want to know how a thing was done, but why.” Explain this quote in your own words.

31. “The home environment can undo a lot you try to do at school.” How does this quote explain Clarisse’s behavior?

32. Explain why there are no front porches,

33. Discuss why Montag constantly looks toward the air conditioning vent.

“The Sieve and the Sand” Pages 67-106 (71-110)

1. Discuss why Mildred begins acting strangely after Montag shows her his books.

2. Discuss what the rest of the world is like.

3. Discuss why America looks so good. How is this similar to the world today?

4. Explain who Faber is.

5. Mildred says it will either be the books or her. Explain this comment.

6. What are the sand and the sieve? What do these symbolize?

7. Discuss ways in which Faber is a coward.

8. Explain the three steps needed to use books.

9. Explain why firemen are barely needed anymore.

10. Discuss what Montag does to convince the professor to help him.

11. Discuss the purpose of the "green bullet" that the professor gives to Montag,

12. Discuss what Montag says he doesn't want to do? Why must he trust Faber?

13. Explain why people believe the war will be a quick one.

14. Discuss why the women do not want children.

15. Explain how the poem Montag reads to the women ("Dover Beach") symbolizes Montag's struggle.

16. Discuss why Mrs. Bowles is so upset by the poem Montag reads.

17. Discuss what Montag tells the women to go home and think about.

18. Discuss why Montag is a "fool" when he's collaborating with Faber over the "green bullet".

19. Explain why ignorance is good.

20. Discuss what Beatty's vast collection of knowledge and quotes that he shares during the card game suggest about him.

"Burning Bright" Pages 107-158 (113-165)

1. Explain who called in Montag's house and why.

2. Discuss reasons why Beatty would make Montag burn his own house.

3. Discuss why Montag kills Beatty. Did Beatty want to die?

4. Discuss why Montag would be in danger crossing the boulevard. Even if he weren't running, why would he be suspicious?

5. Explain who tries to run over Montag as he tries to flee after burning Beatty. What does this say about this society?

6. Discuss why Montag plants the book at Fireman Black's house.

7. Discuss how Montag plans to escape from the city. Explain why the woods might be successful.

8. Discuss what Faber will need to do in order to avoid the Mechanical Hound.

9. Explain why the police televise the Mechanical Hound's search.

10. Discuss how Montag feels when the bomb drops on his city.

11. Explain how the remaining books are being saved.

12. Discuss why the police do not pursue Montag outside the city.

13. Discuss the literature that Montag starts to quote from at the end of the novel.

14. Does the novel end with hope? Explain.

15. If Bradbury were to look at our lives today, what advice would he give us?
