

Grade 9-10

Self Assessment

Fahrenheit 451 - Literature Questions

Honors Introduction to Literature

Fahrenheit 451

Discussion Questions: "The Hearth and the Salamander"

Mr. Sandoval

1. Clarisse is a foil of Montag. In the first part, she sees things differently than Montag. How do they have contrasting views of the world? Are there any aspects of their discussion that shows that Montag is about to have an epiphany?
2. Why would a society make being a pedestrian a crime? What does it say about the controlling aspect of the government? How does our government limit our freedoms?
3. Reading a novel written in 1953, it is eerie realizing the number of prophetic predictions that have occurred in our society in the 21st Century. Itemize and explain several of these predictive occurrences. Again, how do these occurrences reflect on our society?
4. One suicide and one near suicide occur in part one. One woman, who shuns books but loves watching the wall television and driving fast in her car, anesthetizes herself. "We get these cases nine or ten a night," says a medical technician. Another woman, who loves her books, self-immolates herself with her books. A fire captain says, "These fanatics always try suicide." Why would two people who have such contrasting view try to take their own lives? Why does suicide happen so frequently in Montag's society?
5. What is the role of the media in Montag's society? How is it similar to the media in 21st Century? Relate the similarities to real events in the media. Be specific and be prepared to argue your connection to real media.
6. History is constantly being written. In Montag's society, history is constantly being rewritten. Why do you think, in one instance, the fireman's history credits Benjamin Franklin as the first fireman? Where are there other instances of rewritten history?
7. For a fireman, Captain Beatty sure knows a lot about history, scripture, poetry, philosophy and books. He is a well-read man. Why has he not been arrested or punished? What are his views concerning the books and ideas which he has read? How do Beatty's ideas relate to political correctness?

8. Beatty tells Montag that firemen are "custodians of peace of mind" and that they stand against "those who want to make everyone unhappy with conflicting theory and thought." How well are the firemen accomplishing these objectives? Are conflicting ideas the only source of unhappiness in their society? What could other sources of unhappiness be? Can conflicting ideas exist even without books that have been outlawed or destroyed?

9. Explain the significance of the title of part 1, 'The Hearth and the Salamander.'

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