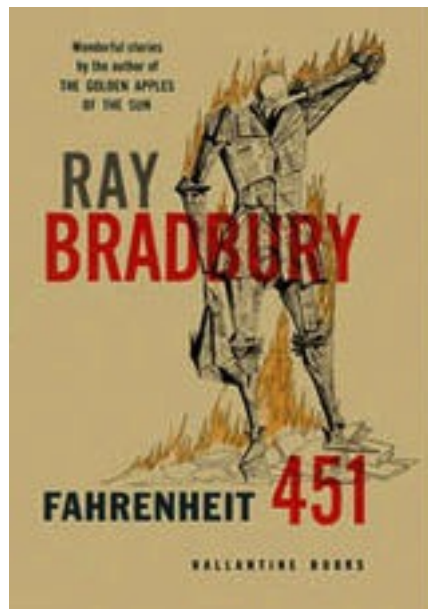


The American Place Theatre  
*Literature to Life*

Teacher's Resource Guide

A companion guide to the *Literature to Life* production of:

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury



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## ***Literature to Life @ Educator's Guide to Performances***

Thank you for choosing *Literature to Life* to help enrich your students learning experience and foster their understanding of great theatre and the power of the written word. Here at The American Place Theatre, we have a long history of bringing great writers to the stage, and we believe that teachers sharing this information with their students prior to attending a show will greatly maximize the theatrical experience. To that end, please review the following notes with your class before coming to the theatre!

### **What is different about a *Literature to Life* Production:**

A Literature to Life Performance is a verbatim theatrical adaptation of significant American literature brought to life by a solo professional actor. Our shows are generally performed in small theatres, intimate settings where the audience is uniquely engaged with the literary work. Due to the close quarters we perform in, it is crucial for teachers to review *Theatre Etiquette* with their students prior to seeing a show. Performance includes the following:

- 15-minute pre-show interactive discussion
- 1-hour performance (Actual length may vary slightly.)
- 15-minute post-show interactive discussion
- Teacher's Resource Guide

### **What to do before AND after the performance:**

Follow this companion guide to find exercises that will both prepare your students for seeing the performance and will extend the learning after they've experienced the adaptation. The guide is divided into pre-show preparation exercises and post-show follow-up exercises, although many will work interchangeably. These exercises should be applicable whether or not your students have read the book— you may have to modify some content for relevance.

## Pre- Show Preparation

### Pre-Show Activity # 1: The Life and Times of Ray Bradbury

**Bookmark:** Ray Bradbury & Literature

**Objectives:** Students will familiarize themselves with the life and work of Ray Bradbury. The students will practice identifying key information in a piece of text. They will explore their own dream careers and aspirations by writing their own autobiographies from a projected eighty-year old first-person voice.

**Educational Standards Addressed:**

NYS ELA Standard 3: *Performance Indicator- Understand that within any group there are many different points of view depending on the particular interests and values of the individual*

NYS ELA Standard 2: *Performance Indicator-Write stories/literary essays that observe the conventions of genre and contain interesting and effective language and voice*

**Instructions:** Make copies of Ray Bradbury’s biography below—either by photocopying this article, or cutting and pasting the biography into a Word Document from <http://www.raybradbury.com/bio.html>. Distribute a copy of this biography to each student.

Have the students take turns reading paragraphs of the biography aloud or read silently to themselves. While listening/reading, the students should be instructed to circle key information about the writer on their copy of the bio. Once the students have finished reading, ask the students a few focusing questions such as:

- What was Ray Bradbury’s first achievement as a writer?
- Was he formally educated? How might education affect people’s perceptions of a writer’s work?
- What might it mean to be a writer of “courage and vision?”
- What does it say about Bradbury that he did not confine himself to one medium/genre (novels, stories, screenplays) of work?
- How does one measure their lives’ achievements? Does that differ from person to person?

- What sorts of achievements do you think were most meaningful to Bradbury based on his biography?

Once the students have engaged in dialogue, have them take out writing paper or a notebook. Read aloud the following instructions: Close your eyes and take a deep breath.. I want you to imagine your dream home. It doesn't have to be a mansion or anything fancy; it can be, but it could also be a cabin by a lake or a nicely furnished apartment in a city. It can be clean or messy. It can be anything you want it to be. Now imagine that you're sitting in your favorite chair in that home, in front of a computer. You're sitting at the keyboard, getting ready to write the biography of your life. You are eighty years old. Very slowly I want you to move through those eighty years of life and think of what brought you to that place, that dream home— and try answering the following questions (Educators, feel free to add/improvise your own/Teachers may post the questions above on the board or chart paper so that the students have access to them throughout the writing of their autobiographies):

- What goals have you achieved?
- What was your career/job?
- Were you a leader in your field?
- Were you married/Do you have any children?
- Is there anything you wished you'd done that you haven't yet accomplished?
- What sorts of awards or honors have you won?
- What are you most proud of?

### **Ray Bradbury, Biography**

Ray Bradbury, American novelist, short story writer, essayist, playwright, screenwriter and poet, was born August 22, 1920 in Waukegan, Illinois. He graduated from a Los Angeles high school in 1938. Although his formal education ended there, he became a "student of life," selling newspapers on L.A. street corners from 1938 to 1942, spending his nights in the public library and his days at the typewriter. He became a full-time writer in 1943, and contributed numerous short stories to periodicals before publishing a collection of them, *Dark Carnival*, in 1947.

His reputation as a writer of courage and vision was established with the publication of *The Martian Chronicles* in 1950, which describes the first attempts of Earth people to conquer and colonize Mars, and the unintended consequences. Next came *The Illustrated Man* and then, in 1953, *Fahrenheit 451*, which many consider to be Bradbury's masterpiece, a scathing indictment of censorship set in a future world where the written word is forbidden. In an attempt to salvage their history and culture, a group of rebels memorize entire works of literature and philosophy as their books are burned by the totalitarian state.

Ray Bradbury has never confined his vision to the purely literary. He has been nominated for an Academy Award (for his animated film *Icarus Montgolfier Wright*), and has won an Emmy Award (for his teleplay of *The Halloween Tree*). He adapted sixty-five of his stories for television's *Ray Bradbury Theater*. He was the creative consultant on the United States Pavilion at the 1964 New York World's Fair. In 1982 he created the interior metaphors for the *Spaceship Earth* display at Epcot Center, Disney World, and later contributed to the conception of the *Orbitron* space ride at Euro-Disney, France.

Married since 1947, Mr. Bradbury and his wife Maggie lived in Los Angeles with their numerous cats. Together, they raised four daughters and had eight grandchildren. Sadly, Maggie passed away in November of 2003.

On the occasion of his 80th birthday in August 2000, Bradbury said, "The great fun in my life has been getting up every morning and rushing to the typewriter because some new idea has hit me. The feeling I have every day is very much the same as it was when I was twelve. In any event, here I am, eighty years old, feeling no different, full of a great sense of joy, and glad for the long life that has been allowed me. I have good plans for the next ten or twenty years, and I hope you'll come along." <http://www.raybradbury.com/bio.html>

## **Pre-Show Activity #2: Time Warp- America in the 1950's**

**Bookmark:** America in the 1950's

**Objective:** Students will consider crucial historical events in American culture and politics in the 1950's and draw parallels to the text.

**Educational Standards Addressed:**

NYS SS Standard 1: *Performance Indicator-Investigate key turning points in United States history and explain why these events or developments are significant.*

NYS ELA Standard 2: *Performance Indicator- Recognize different levels of meaning.*

**Instructions:** Print out copies of the pictures with descriptions (labeled 1 through 6) below, and distribute them to the students. Have a single copy of quotes from the text (labeled A through E). Choose six student volunteers for reading. Have students examine the photos as the volunteers read the explanatory paragraph for each picture. When the students have concluded their reading, tell them you are going to read a quote from the text of Fahrenheit 451. Each quote somehow correlates to one (or more) of the pictures/events. There are no "wrong answers." Repeat the quote twice and ask the students to identify which photo/event they believe the quote corresponds to. Ask focusing questions such as: "how did you know?" or "what led you to that answer?" When you've gone through all six, follow up with the discussion questions below.

(*Literature to Life* correlates the pictures with quotes as follows: Pic #1/Quote B, Pic #2/Quote D, Pic #3/Quote E, Pic #4/Quote A, Pic #5/Quote C)



### **1. The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945)**

The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were nuclear attacks near the end of World War II against the Empire of Japan by the United States at the executive order of U.S. President Harry S. Truman on August 6 and 9, 1945. The bombs killed as many as 140,000 people in Hiroshima and 80,000 in Nagasaki by the end of 1945. Since then, thousands more have died from injuries or illness attributed to exposure to radiation released by the bombs. In both cities, the overwhelming majority of the dead were civilians.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atomic\\_bombings\\_of\\_Hiroshima\\_and\\_Nagasaki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atomic_bombings_of_Hiroshima_and_Nagasaki)



## 2. Television Broadcasts/The First Color Television Set (1954)

Perhaps the most far-reaching change in communications worldwide was the advancement in the area of television broadcasting. During the 1950's, television became the dominant mass media as people brought television into their homes in greater numbers of hours per week than ever before. What was portrayed on television became accepted as normal. People began to accept what was heard and seen on television because they were "eye witnesses" to events as never before. Programs such as *You Are There* brought historical events into the living rooms of many Americans. And then, in 1954, black and white broadcasts became color broadcasts. -

<http://kclibrary.lonestar.edu/decade50.html>





### **3. Levittown Houses (1948)**

The building firm, Levitt and Sons, headed by Abraham Levitt and his two sons, William and Alfred, built four planned communities called "Levittown" (in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Puerto Rico), but Levittown, New York was the first. Levittown was built on what used to be potato farms in an area previously known as Island Trees. Levitt and Sons built the community with an eye towards speed, efficiency and cost-effective construction, which methods led to a production rate of 30 houses a day by July of 1948.



#### **4. Interstate Highways (1956)**

The Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, commonly called the Interstate Highway System, is a network of limited-access highways (also called freeways or expressways) in the United States that is named for President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who championed its creation. It is both the largest highway system in the world and the largest public works project in history. Being freeways, Interstate Highways usually have the highest speed limits in a given area.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate\\_Highway\\_System](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate_Highway_System)



#### **5. Senator Joseph McCarthy and The Red Scare (McCarthyism) (1948)**

McCarthyism is the politically motivated practice of making accusations of disloyalty, subversion, or treason without proper regard for evidence. The term originated with the period in the United States known as the Second Red Scare, lasting roughly from the late 1940s to the late 1950s and characterized by heightened fears of Communist influence on American institutions and espionage by Soviet agents. During the post-World War II era of McCarthyism, thousands of Americans were accused of being Communists or communist sympathizers and became the subject of aggressive investigations before government or private-industry panels, committees and agencies. The primary targets of such suspicions were government employees, those in the entertainment industry, educators and union activists. Suspicions were often given credence despite inconclusive or questionable evidence. The most famous examples of McCarthyism include the speeches, investigations, and hearings of Senator McCarthy himself; the Hollywood blacklist, associated with hearings conducted by the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

#### **Corresponding Quotations**

**A.** “Did you know that once billboards were only twenty feet long? But cars started rushing by so quickly they had to stretch the advertising so it would last.”

**B.** “They held to the earth as children hold to familiar things, no matter how cold or dead, no matter what has happened or will happen, their fingers were

clawed into the dirt, and they were all shouting to keep their eardrums from bursting, to keep their sanity from bursting...”

C. “...they’re sniffing for a scapegoat to end things with a bang...Don’t think the police don’t know the habits of queer ducks like that, men who walk mornings for the hell of it... Never know when that sort of information might be handy.”

D. “The living room; what a good job of labeling that was now. No matter when he came in, the walls were always talking to Mildred.”

E. “He imagined thousands on thousands of faces peering into yards, into alleys, and into the sky, faces hid by curtains, pale, night-frightened faces, like gray animals peering from electric caves...”

### **Discussion Questions:**

- Of these historical moments, which do you think most influenced Bradbury’s writing?
- Are there any other elements about the 1950’s that you know of that were also present in the story?
- What are some of the positive/negative effects of each of these historical happenings and why is it important for us to learn about them now?
- Why do you think Bradbury set his story in a futuristic world instead of just writing directly about what was happening at the time he was writing?

### **Pre-Show Activity # 3: CENSORED**

**Bookmark:** Censorship

**Objective:** Students will discuss the First Amendment and how it relates to their lives. Students will explore what it means to work with censored material and will discuss the ramifications of censorship. Students will work with text from Fahrenheit 451 to create tableaux.

**Educational Standards Addressed:**

NYS SS Standard 1: *Performance Indicator- Understand how different experiences, beliefs, values, traditions and motives cause individuals and groups to interpret historic events and issues from different perspectives.*

NYS ELA Standard 2: *Produce interpretations of literary works that identify different levels of meaning and comment on their significance and effect.*

NYS ARTS Standard 1: *Use language, voice, gesture, movement and observation to create character and interact with others in improvisation, rehearsal and performance.*

### **Instructions:**

1. Read the First Amendment aloud to the class, and lead a discussion about how this amendment applies to their own lives. How would our nation be different if we didn't have free speech? If we didn't have freedom of the press? How do you exercise your First Amendment rights? Why do you think books are censored? Did you know that Fahrenheit 451 is a book that has been censored? Can you think of any other books that you know of that may have been censored? (i.e.: Harry Potter, The Bluest Eye, Frankenstein, etc...)

THE FIRST AMENDMENT: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

2. Make two copies of each of the paragraphs below these instructions. One copy should be a clean copy—with the entire text visible. The second copy should be a “censored” copy, with key information blacked-out of the text (at your discretion).

3. Divide the students up into five groups. Give each group a “clean” paragraph and ask them to find a space in the room to work. Have each group create a tableau, or a silent picture (it can be abstract- there are no wrong answers!) representing what they read in the paragraph. Have the students rehearse moving in and out of their tableau and encourage them to make bold choices.

4. Each group will perform their tableaux while the remainder of the class watches as audience. When the group is ready, the audience should say: “One, two, three—freeze!” and the group performing should step into their tableaux. As they hold the frozen picture, encourage the other students to walk around it, taking in all the dimensions and finding the characters. As each group

performs, have the student audience reflect on what they believe the paragraph was about. After all the groups have taken their turn, hand each group their censored paragraph and give them a few minutes to work on a revised tableau that will reflect the changes.

6. Repeat the same sharing process. Have the students freeze in their initial “clean” tableau one more time and then present the censored version. Ask for some brief peer feedback about what the visible differences are. Then have someone from the performing group read their paragraphs aloud, clean version first, censored version second.

**Discussion:** What was it like creating the first tableaux? The second? Was it harder working with the censored material? What happens when something is censored? What changed in the images you saw? What do you think happens to student’s experiences when they read books after they’ve been censored?

### **Paragraphs for Censoring (with Activity #3)**

1. The impersonal operator of the machine could, by wearing a special helmet, gaze into the soul of the person who he was pumping out. What did the Eye see? He did not say. The entire operation was not unlike the digging of a trench in one’s yard. The woman on the bed was no more than a hard stratum of marble they had reached. Go on, anyway, shove the bore down, slush up the emptiness...

2. Laughter blew across the moon-colored lawn from the house of Clarisse and her father and mother and the uncle who smiled so quietly and earnestly. Above all, their laughter was relaxed and hearty and not forced in any way, coming from the house that was so brightly lit this late at night while all the other houses were kept to themselves in darkness. Montag stood outside the talking house in the shadows, thinking he might even tap on their door and whisper, “Let me come in. I won’t say anything. I just want to listen.”

3. They crashed the front door and grabbed at a woman, though she was not running, she was not trying to escape... Her tongue was moving in her mouth and her eyes seemed to be trying to remember something and then they remembered and her tongue moved again: “Play the man, Master Ridley; we shall this day light a candle, by God’s grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out.”

4. He twitched the safety catch on the flame thrower. Beatty glanced instantly at Montag's fingers and his eyes widened the faintest bit. Montag saw the surprise there and himself glanced to his hands to see what new thing they had done. Thinking back later he could never decide whether the hands or Beatty's reaction to the hands gave him the final push toward murder. The last rolling thunder of the avalanche stoned down about his ears, not touching him... Beatty took one step toward Montag... "Hand it over, Guy," said Beatty with a fixed smile.

5. Granger snapped the portable viewer on... A voice cried: "The chase continues north in the city! Police helicopters are converging on Avenue 87 and Elm Grove Park!" Granger nodded. "they're faking. You threw them off at the river. They can't admit it. They know they can hold their audience only so long.... Watch..." The Mechanical Hound rushed forward into the viewer, suddenly. The helicopter lights shot down a dozen brilliant pillars that built a cage all about the man. A voice cried, "There's Montag! The search is *done*." An innocent man stood bewildered, a cigarette burning in his hand.

#### **Pre-Show Activity # 4: The Pursuit of Happiness**

**Bookmark:** Identity

**Objective:** Students will explore how the pursuit of happiness is directly connected to one's identity and how an individual's idea of happiness can be different from someone else's. Students will utilize their critical thinking, listening and public speaking skills to engage in a debate about banning something they disagree with or preserving something that makes them happy.

#### **Educational Standards Addressed:**

NYS ELA Standard 4: *Performance Indicator- Express ideas and concerns clearly and respectfully in conversations and group discussions.*

NYS ARTS Standard 1: Imitate various experiences through dramatic play, story dramatization... improvisation and guided play writing.

#### **Instructions:**

Part I: Introduce or refresh students' memories regarding the initial meeting between Montag and Clarisse. For example: "In the beginning of the book Fahrenheit 451, the protagonist, Guy Montag, meets a young girl named Clarisse McClellan. Clarisse intrigues Montag with her free-spirited ways and her inquisitive nature. At the close of their first meeting, Clarisse asks Montag, "Are

you happy?” This simple question acts as a crucial catalyst in the book, which leads Montag to re-evaluate all that he believes about his life.”

Now pass out a scrap of paper or an index card to each student. Urge the students to listen to all the instructions thoroughly before writing anything down. Ask the students to think about the things that make them happy. They can only write down one thing on the paper, so ask them to narrow it down. Explain that they should try to be specific, but in the case of naming people, they should replace names with relationships: (i.e: if you want to say: “My dog Bingo makes me happy”, you would write: “Having a dog makes me happy.” OR if you want to say “Music makes me happy,” try to be more specific by saying “Hip Hop music makes me happy.” After receiving these instructions, students should have about 90 seconds to narrow down their answer to one choice, and write it down. Once all the papers are passed to the instructor, the students should help move the desks so that there is some space to move for the next portion of the activity.

#### Part II: Cross the Room

Instructions: Equipped with all the papers the students returned, have all the students stand up on one side of the room, at point “A”. Mark a clear point “B” and show students exactly where that is. Students should be able to “cross the room” from point ‘A’ to point ‘B.’ (note: this can be done in a small space, just as long as you can distinguish between the two points—in other words, it has to be obvious when someone makes a decision to ‘cross.’)

Instruct the students that when they AGREE with a statement, they should cross the room. If what they hear also makes them happy, they should cross. If what they hear does not make them happy, or they DISAGREE, they should stay right where they are. Begin with an example of your own. Tell the students “let’s try one out: Eating ice-cream makes me happy.” Remind them that they’ll cross if they AGREE. Ask everyone to return to point A.

Using the student’s written ‘prompts’, continue the game. “xyz makes me happy.” Skip any repetitious items, and ask focusing questions (i.e.: What would happen if you couldn’t have this?, Why doesn’t this make you happy?) Keep the students moving, and set aside a few of the prompts where the students seem very divided. When you’ve gotten through all the student prompts, pick one from the “very divided” pile and tell the students you’re going to repeat the prompt again. When the students find themselves in their respective ‘agree’ or



'disagree' points, mark them as team 'A'-for agreement and team 'B'- for banning.

Explain to the students that they will now engage in a debate. Students in group 'A' will have to defend the thing that makes them happy using positive, clearly stated thoughts that promote their cause. Group 'B' wants to ban the thing that makes group 'A' happy, and they need to make clear and thoughtful arguments about why it should be banned. Give the students some chart paper and markers. They have 5 minutes to brainstorm the pros and cons of this particular item-of-happiness. Urge them to brainstorm both the pros and cons, regardless of what team they are on, in order to be more prepared for the other teams' potential arguments! The teams will then debate for 10 minutes, the starting team determined by a coin toss. The debate should occur in two-minute intervals (i.e.: if team A goes first, they have 2 minutes to promote their cause, and team B has 2 minutes to debate it, continuing until 10 minutes has elapsed.), with the teacher calling time and moderating the debate in its entirety. If possible, try moderating the students into a compromise.

**Discussion:** What did you learn from the other team about the thing that makes them happy/upset? Were there conflicts that the opposing team debated that the defending team did not anticipate? How did it make you feel to ban something that makes someone else happy? How did it make you feel to have something that makes you happy potentially banned? Do you think that one group of individuals has the right to determine what makes society happy as a whole? What does happiness mean to you?

### **Pre-Show Activity # 5: Books as Birds**

**Bookmark:** Metaphor & Allegory

**Objective:** Students will examine the use of language in Fahrenheit 451 and review the definitions of metaphor and allegory. They will write their own examples of metaphor and share them with their peers.

### **Educational Standards Addressed:**

NYS ELA Standard 2: *Performance Indicator- Identify significant literary elements, (including metaphor, symbolism, foreshadowing, dialect, etc.) and use those elements to interpret the work*

NYS ELA Standard 2: *Performance Indicator- Read aloud with expression, conveying the meaning and mood of a work.*

**Instructions:** Begin by reminding students about literary techniques and literary elements such as allegory and metaphor. Similar to any other occupation that has a proper set of tools, writers, also, have literary tools they use to try and accomplish the task at hand.

Post these two definitions on the board or on chart paper where the students can read them. Ask for three volunteers to read each definition aloud:

**Allegory:** Where every aspect of a story is representative, usually symbolic, of something else, usually a larger abstract concept or important historical/geopolitical event.

**Metaphor:** A direct relationship where one thing or idea substitutes for another.  
[-http://mrbraiman.home.att.net/lit.htm](http://mrbraiman.home.att.net/lit.htm)

Now provide the students with some more context: Ray Bradbury is well-known for his inventive use of language, and for years he was science fiction's premier literary stylist. Although his heavy use of adjectives and metaphors can seem intimidating at times, he remains one of the most sophisticated users of language in the genre. In this case, the entire book is an allegory. Can someone re-read the definition of allegory out loud and discuss what makes *Fahrenheit 451* allegorical. (Once responses are heard, and parallels drawn back to the text, direct the conversation back to metaphor.)

Here's a quote from the book: "A book lit, almost obediently, like a white pigeon, in his hands, wings fluttering. In the dim, wavering light, a page hung open and it was like a snowy feather, the words delicately painted thereon." Ask the students—Can someone tell me what literary device Bradbury uses here? (The students should identify this quote as metaphor). Here's another: "He wanted, above all, like the old joke, to shove a marshmallow on a stick in the furnace, while the flapping pigeon-winged books died on the porch and lawn of the house."

**Discussion:** Consider why Bradbury creates a relationship between books and birds. What is he trying to tell the reader about the way he sees books? Why do you think metaphor and allegory are important in writing?

Ask the students to think of something that is important to them. "Take a few minutes to write down something that is important to you, and then follow that up by writing a phrase illustrating what makes it unique and special to you."

Demonstrate this to your students with your own example of a metaphor using something that is important to you. (Example: The sun-ray filled smile on my niece's face fills me with joy.)

Have the students share out their metaphors.

## **Pre-Show Activity # 6: Leaders and Followers/Colombian Hypnosis**

### **Bookmark: Conformity**

**Objective:** Students will explore conformity and it's connection to power and control through a physical exercise in pairs. They will explore their feelings about conformity by writing about their own experiences.

#### **Educational Standards Addressed:**

NYS ARTS Standard 1: *Performance Indicator- Use language, voice, gesture, movement and observation to create character and interact with others in improvisation, rehearsal and performance.*

NYS ELA Standard 4: *Performance Indicators- Express ideas and concerns clearly and respectfully in group conversations and group discussions & Use verbal and non-verbal skills to improve communication with others.*

**Instructions:** Designate student pairings and have the pairs stand, with some space between them, throughout the room. The pairs should determine who is blue and who is red. Blues will go first.

Whoever is blue holds their hand, palm forward, fingers upright, about 6 inches away from the face of their partner. Their partner, as if hypnotized, must keep their face constantly the same distance from the hand of the hypnotizer, hairline level with fingertips and chin more or less level with the base of their palm. The hypnotizer starts to move their hand up, down, right, left, backwards and forwards, and the partner must contort to maintain the 6-inch distance. The hand should never be too fast to follow and should never quickly stop. After a few minutes, blue and red will switch, and the leader will now be the follower. As you read these instructions to your students, be sure to remind them that the most important thing is to keep themselves and their partner safe.

**Discussion:** Did you prefer leading, or being led? How did it feel to have to contort your body in that way? To be controlled? To be controlling? Do you

believe this is true for other aspects of your life? How does this connect to ideas of conformity in Fahrenheit 451? Does Montag seem 'hypnotized' by anything in the beginning of the book/play? What happens when he decides not to follow? What would have happened if your partner (leader or follower) broke the connection?

**Follow-Up Writing Activity:** Have students write a short poem or free write about conformity using the prompt: **"When the hand is close..."** Left open-ended, it can be their hand or their partner's hand, or both, and they can write it as literally or abstractly as they want, relating to their experience of the exercise as it relates to conformity.

### **Pre- Show Activity # 7: What's the difference?**

**Bookmark:** Societal Expectations

**Objective:** Students will use a physical exercise to explore what it means to exclude someone from a group and/or try to fit in. Students will discuss how it feels to exclude/be excluded. Students will engage in dialogue about the societal pressures they face and how these expectations play a role in their daily lives.

#### **Educational Standards Addressed:**

NYS ELA Standard 4: *Performance indicators- Express ideas and concerns clearly and respectfully in conversations and group discussions & Use verbal and non-verbal skills to improve communication with others.*

NYS ARTS Standard 1: *Performance indicators- Imitate various experiences through pantomime, dramatic play, etc...*

**Instructions:** Clear a space in the room where the students can walk freely. Ask the students to walk at a moderate pace, making eye contact with one another. Instruct the students that they're going to be practicing handshakes. Ask the students to slow their walk down to a slower pace, and begin greeting each other with handshakes, in complete silence. After about one minute of this, ask the group to slow to a halt. Ask for two volunteers. The two volunteers will go outside the room. Tell them you will give them a signal for when they can return to the group.

As the two volunteers wait outside, instruct the waiting group that they need to come to a consensus about a gesture they will make prior to shaking hands (i.e.: a wink). If someone tries to shake their hand without making this 'secret' gesture, they are to continue walking. It should be done as discreetly as possible. Once the students have had a minute to practice, invite the volunteers back into the room and ask them to join the group in the handshaking activity. Let them know that if they sense something is "off," they should try to figure out how to fit in. (note: don't let this go on too long--- if the volunteers don't figure out the secret gesture within a minute or so, stop the activity for a debrief.)

**Discussion:** Begin the discussion by asking the volunteers how they felt about jumping into the group. How did the dynamic change? Did they succeed in figuring out how to 'fit in?' How did they feel/how might they have felt if they hadn't figured it out? To the rest of the group: How did it feel refusing someone's handshake? Did anyone that was not a volunteer forget the secret gesture? Was it different having to exclude someone that you knew was 'in the know?'

In the book Fahrenheit 451, Captain Beatty says, "We must all be alike. Not everyone born free and equal, as the Constitution says, but everyone *made* equal. Each man the image of every other; then all are happy, for there are no mountains to make them cower, to judge themselves against." What do you think about this statement? How does it relate to the activity we just played?

(Follow-up exercise: Have student free-write, write a short play or poem for 15-20 minutes on the subject of societal expectations and the idea of what it means to fit in.)

## Post-Show Activities

**Post-Show Activity #1: Should I stay or should I go?**

**Bookmark:** Civil Disobedience

**Objective:** Students will consider the meaning of civil disobedience. Students will engage in a process drama (A process drama is a thematic exploration of a

happening or an experience which does not depend on a written script. It is concerned with participants' change in outlook—however, the outcomes are not predetermined, but are discovered in process. The leader (teacher) actively works both within and outside the drama.) where they will explore what it would be like to be ostracized from their own community. Students will review the tactics used to fight injustice in Fahrenheit 451. Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills to brainstorm potential tactics and outcomes.

**Educational Standards Addressed:**

NYS ELA Standard 2: *Performance Indicator- Present responses to and interpretations of literature, making reference to the literary elements found in the text and connections with their personal knowledge and experience.*

NYS SS Standard 5: *Performance Indicator- Value the principals, ideals and core values of the American democratic system based upon the premises of human dignity, liberty, justice and equality*

NYS ARTS Standard 1: *Performance Indicator- Imitate various experiences through pantomime, play making, dramatic play, story dramatization, role-playing, improvisation and guided play writing*

**Instructions:** Tell the students that you've just gotten a memo and you have to share it with them immediately, because it's of the utmost importance, being that all their right ears are blue. Read aloud the following:

Attention all personnel in the red/blue district:

Effective tomorrow morning at 6 AM sharp, we will begin separation of all utilities, facilities and other public buildings. All blue-ears will be required to carry documentation with them at all times. All blue-ears will be restricted to certain areas of the transportation system that will be clearly marked by zone. All blue-eared students will be re-zoned to blue-eared only schools. All blue-eared employees in red-eared companies or offices will be immediately discharged. All blue-ears will be asked to immediately turn in any periodical, book, computer, cell phone or other source of information pertaining to red-ear culture, education, politics or otherwise. We wish no harm to come to anyone, but if there is any resistance, we will use force.

Tell the students that you are in a very difficult position, being a red-eared teacher. Tell them that you disagree completely with what the government has decided to do, but that you have no choice but to uphold the new constitution.

Tell them that you do not believe it will stop at the re-zoning and you are worried for their safety. Explain to your students that there are only three choices, and they must think quickly and brainstorm about what to do next. Here are the choices:

- A. We can take a long and dangerous journey out of this land, to try and find a place where we'll be accepted.
- B. We can stay where we are, and try to hide what makes us unique and deal with the consequences of being blue-eared.
- C. We can fight back.

Going from option A to C, work with the students to brainstorm the pros and cons of each of the three options. When you get to option C, urge the students to remember points in history when someone used non-violent resistance to fight back and eventually succeeded in having an unjust ruling overturned. (i.e.: Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Jr., Mohandas Ghandhi, Nelson Mandela--- it should be something relative to student's prior knowledge and grade level.) Share the definition of civil disobedience with the students.

“Civil disobedience is the active refusal to obey certain laws, demands and commands of a government, or of an occupying power, without resorting to physical violence. It is one of the primary tactics of nonviolent resistance. In its most nonviolent form it could be said that it is compassion in the form of respectful disagreement.”

Once you've listed and reviewed all the pros and cons for points A through C, ask the students in the class to take a vote about which they believe is the best option. Majority wins. Now ask the students to come out of role with you, ending the process drama.

### **Discussion Questions:**

-- Of the choices A through C, which did Montag choose? What about Granger and the other men?

-- Who do you think is right: Granger, Montag or neither—and why? Does hearing about Granger and Montag's experience change the way you feel about the decision the blue-ears made?

-- What are other possible alternatives? What, if anything, do you believe makes civil disobedience a successful force in fighting injustice?

## Post-Show Activity # 2: A different world...

### Bookmark: Science Fiction as Genre

**Objective:** Students will consider/identify what makes the book/play science fiction. They will write their own short pieces of science fiction.

### Educational Standards Addressed:

NYS ELA Standard 2: *Performance Indicator- Write stories, poems, etc.. that observe the conventions of the genre and contain interesting and effective language and voice*

NYS ELA Standard 4: *Performance Indicator-Use verbal and nonverbal skills to improve communication with others.*

NYS ELA Standard 3: Monitor and adjust their own oral and written presentations according to the standards for a particular genre.

**Instructions:** Begin the activity with the Alphabet Race. Set up two boards on opposite sides of the room with chart paper that is pre marked with the letters A through Z in two columns. Divide the class into two teams, with the students lined up one behind another, facing their chart paper. Each team gets one marker, and the members within each team can help one another if they get stuck.

Instruct the students as follows: “When I say ‘GO’, the first person will step up and write a word that begins with the letter ‘A’ relating to the book or the *Literature to Life* adaptation of Fahrenheit 451. It can be a character, an object that was important, or any word relating to the story—literally or theoretically. Be creative. The next person will write a word that begins with ‘B’ and so on. This is like a relay race, so when you’re done with your turn, you pass the marker on to the next person. There is no skipping of letters. You must go in order. Help your teammates if they get stuck. Respect each other’s answers. When your team is finished, you should all stand quietly raising your hands so I know you’re done.”

When the relay game is finished, have the students go through the list as a group and circle all the words that they believe represent a science-fictional element in the story. Have them do this quietly, amongst the groups, as you moderate and walk back from group to group asking focusing questions. (i.e.:



what makes that science fiction? What happens in the book/play that illustrates that for you?) Have the students compare their circled lists and have a brief discussion about their definition of science fiction.

**Writing follow up:** While some science fiction includes aliens and monsters from other planets/worlds, some take place with people on planets just like our own and it is the details and the timeframe of the story that make it science fiction. Tell them they are journalists from Earth, reporting as if it were the year 3010. The news story that the journalist tells can be about anything that's happening on the planet. However, in their writing, they should answer the following questions:

- Have humans discovered life on any other planets?
- What is the terrain like on Earth?
- What is the weather like?
- What is the best thing about Earth in 3010?
- What is the worst thing?
- What sort of economic/social/political systems exist on Earth?

(For advanced groups: The students should receive a homework assignment to bring to class an article or articles about something happening in current events that truly interests them. This event should be something that affects many people, as opposed to a single individual. (i.e: an article regarding the ramifications of the recession versus an article about Alex Rodriguez.) Their writing then, would be a short story about that event, written with a sci-fi spin, (just as Bradbury's book was a reaction to McCarthyism)

### **Post Show Activity # 3: The Campfire**

**Bookmark:** Literature & The Power of the Written Word

**Objective:** Students will defend their favorite books by making statements to support their preservation. Students will examine and analyze why literature is important and powerful.

#### **Educational Standards Addressed:**

NYS ELA Standard 2: *Performance Indicator- Read aloud with expression, conveying the meaning and mood of a work & Present responses to and interpretations of literature, making reference to the literary elements found in the text and connections with their personal knowledge and experience.*

NYS ELA Standard 3: *Performance Indicator- Monitor and adjust their own oral and written presentations according to the standards for a particular genre.*

NYS ARTS Standard 1: *Imitate various experiences through storytelling and role-play*

**Preparation:** Ask students the day before you plan on facilitating this activity to bring in their all-time favorite book for a fun activity the very next day.

**Instructions:** Start the students off with an introduction: We saw in the play of Fahrenheit 451 that if enough people feel strongly enough against something, it can be systematically removed from our society. In the world of Fahrenheit 451, books were burned, effectively removed from those who read them, because it was widely believed that competing ideas were a bad thing--- they kept people unhappy. Yesterday I asked you to bring in your all time favorite books. Now, I want you to take out those books and go sit in a circle in the space I've made for your campfire.

Initial discussion: If I were to tell you someone was going to come here and take away those books you love--- maybe burn them—burn every copy there is--- and destroy them forever—what would you say to convince them not to? Take a minute while sitting in the circle to find a special passage in your book— whatever your absolute favorite part is--- so you can read it aloud. Once the students are seated in the circle and you see that they're looking for passages, give them about two minutes to settle on something to read.

Have students read pieces from their books aloud, going around the circle so everyone has a turn and ask each student a focusing question corresponding to the book they've chosen, such as:

- Why do you think this book tells an important story?
- How does that passage you read make you feel?
- What do you think is good about that writing?
- When you read that passage, what images come up in your head?
- Why do you think it is important for other young people to read this book?
- Do you relate to the characters in that book? How?
- Why is this part of the story your favorite?

Debrief shortly about how it felt to answer questions about their favorite books.

**Writing Exercise:** Follow this activity by having students write a short, two or three paragraph statement about why they believe literature is powerful and

important. Below their statement, ask them to write the numbers 1 through 3 and write the title and author of three books they learned about in class that they did not know before, and are interested in reading.

#### **Post-Show Activity # 4: The Reality**

**Bookmark:** Media/Technology's Influence on Society

**Objective:** Students will present a pitch for Reality TV show about their school. Students will utilize brainstorming, critical thinking and group work to reach objectives. They will discuss the ramifications of how reality TV will effect generations to come and how it is currently documenting their generation. They will relate their work back to the text and characters of Fahrenheit 451.

#### **Educational Standards Addressed:**

NYS SS Standard 1- *Performance Indicator- Explore the meaning of American culture by identifying the key ideas, beliefs and patterns of behavior, and traditions that help define it and unite all Americans.*

NYS ELA Standard 2- *Performance Indicator- Recognize different levels of meaning & Present responses to and interpretations of literature, making reference to the literary elements found in the text and connections with their personal knowledge and experience.*

NYS ARTS Standard 1- *Performance Indicator- Use language, voice, gesture, movement and observation to create character and interact with others in improvisation, rehearsal and performance*

**Instructions:** Break students up into small groups of 4 or 5. Groups should be equipped with paper and markers. Before the students start working in their groups, make a list together on the board or on chart paper of the first 10 reality TV shows the class can come up with. (e.g.: American Idol, Next Top Model, Wife Swap, etc...) Then urge the students to keep those shows in mind when they hear the following passages from Fahrenheit 451:

“What’s on this afternoon?” he asked, tiredly.

She didn’t look up from the script again. “Well, this is play comes on the wall to wall circuit in ten minutes. They mailed me my part this morning. I sent in some boxtops. They write the script with one part missing. It’s a new idea. The homemaker, that’s me, is the missing part. When it comes time for the missing lines, they all look at me out of the three walls and I say the lines...he says, ‘Do you agree to that, Helen?’ and I say, ‘I sure do!’ Isn’t that fun, Guy?”

He stood in the hall, looking at her.

“It’s sure fun,” she said.

“What’s the play about?”

“I just told you. There are these people named Bob and Ruth and Helen.”

Explain to the students that they are now TV Marketing Executives! Their assignment is to create a two-minute pitch for a reality TV show about their school. You, as the teacher, are the network head, and you will decide which pitch is the most effective and successfully targeted.

The groups should answer the following questions in their pitch:

What is the name of your show?

What is the target audience for the show?

What time of day should the show be aired?

What about this show will draw an audience?

Why is this school the right choice for Reality TV?

Urge the students to be as creative as possible with their pitch. In addition to answering these questions, they can decide on a niche market for their program, including potential product placement on the show that would enhance viewer-ship and increase advertising potential. Give the students at least 15 minutes to devise their pitch.

Allow each group ample time to present their pitch. Students may applaud for each other, but feedback should be held until the end.

**Discussion:** What makes reality TV appealing to viewers? What sorts of emotions are played on in the production of these shows? Was it difficult to find ways to represent the school? What was the most challenging aspect of developing the pitch? How does Mildred’s TV family/ “play” differ from today’s reality TV? How is it the same? Is Mildred’s relationship to the TV walls a familiar one? How do you think reality TV will effect future generations? How do you feel about Reality TV acting as a documentary of your own generation?

### **Activity # 5: Constantly Connected**

**Bookmark:** Machines/Technology & Industrialization vs. Nature

**Objective:** Students will explore their own use of technology. They will discuss the benefits and pitfalls of technology in both the book and in real life. They will work in groups to identify problems and then work together to develop an invention that solves the problems. Students will use their public speaking skills to promote their invention to their peers.

**Educational Standards Addressed:**

NYS SS Standard 5- *Performance Indicator- Respect the rights of others in discussions and classroom debates regardless of whether or not one agrees with their viewpoint*

NYS ELA Standard 4- *Performance Indicator-Listen attentively to others and build on others' ideas in conversations with peers and adults & Express ideas and concerns clearly and respectfully in conversations and group discussions*

NYS ARTS Standard 1- *Performance Indicator- Use language, voice, gesture, movement and observation to create character and interact with others in improvisation, rehearsal and performance*

**Instructions:**

Break the students up into four groups. Have each group brainstorm a list of 10 inventions/pieces of technology they use and what they're used for. (i.e.: a vacuum cleaner helps you to clean more efficiently.) Now have each group identify one benefit and one pitfall to each of these pieces of technology. (i.e.: I love talking to my friends on my cell phone but I dislike that my mother calls me all the time.) Briefly have the groups share out their lists. Ask them: Can we conclude that technology has its pitfalls as well as its benefits?

Combine the groups so that instead of four groups, now there should only be two. In their groups, have the students make a list of problems or issues they believe could potentially be solved by technology. Have each group narrow it down to only one problem. (Note: The students should stay away from things like "making money" or "I wish my mother would stop nagging me.") Once each group has identified a problem, they should write it clearly on a piece of paper. The teacher should then read both problems to ensure their appropriateness, and then give each problem to the opposite team.

Each group now has approximately 10 minutes (this can be modified accordingly) to come up with an invention that solves the problem posed by the opposite group. Each group is then responsible for promoting their invention to the other group through an ad campaign. Each group should have a slogan for

their invention and, if they are so inclined, can create a “live” commercial and/or a series of tableaux to demonstrate the effectiveness of their invention.

Once each group has watched the other promote their invention, they are to go back into their groups and devise a public service announcement, denouncing the other group’s invention and urging people to use that product/service as little as possible. They should present these public service announcements to their peers in earnest, with concern for the well being of the consumers using their product.

To restore harmony to your classroom after this activity, have each group say at least three positive things about the other group’s presentations before leading the discussion.

**DISCUSSION:** In the 1950’s, new technology was everywhere. Color TV sets were newly out on the market, the microwave oven was invented, and many technologies were being promoted for convenience and advertised as “making life easier.” Are there parallels we can draw between this rise in technology and what we see happening in Fahrenheit 451? What was it like trying to invent for a specific need that your peers had? Was it difficult to try and urge the public against using a product? How might Montag have argued against the TV Parlor Walls or the Mechanical Hound if he were to do a public service announcement?