
Section A

Answer **ONE** question from this section.

Ray Bradbury: Fahrenheit 451

Remember to support your ideas with relevant details from the text.

- 1 Either** (a) Explore the relationship between Montag and Beatty in Fahrenheit 451.
- OR** (b) With close reference to Fahrenheit 451, discuss how Bradbury effectively represents an oppressed society.
- OR** (c) Read this passage from Fahrenheit 451 carefully, and then answer the questions that follow it.

“Montag, up here!”

Montag’s hand closed like a mouth, crushed the book with wild devotion, with an insanity of mindlessness to his chest. The men above were hurling shovelfuls of magazines into the dusty air. They fell like slaughtered birds and the woman stood below, like a small girl, among the bodies.

Montag had done nothing. His hand had done it all, his hand, with a brain of its own, with a conscience and a curiosity in each trembling finger, had turned thief. Now, it plunged the book back under his arm, pressed it tight to sweating armpit, rushed out empty, with a magician’s flourish! Look here! Innocent! Look!

He gazed, shaken, at that white hand. He held it way out, as if he were farsighted. He held it close, as if he were blind.

“Montag!”

He jerked about.

“Don’t stand there, idiot!”

The books lay like great mounds of fishes left to dry. The men danced and slipped and fell over them. Titles glittered their golden eyes, falling, gone. “Kerosene!”

They pumped the cold fluid from the numbered 451 tanks strapped to their shoulders. They coated each book, they pumped rooms full of it.

They hurried downstairs, Montag staggering after them in the kerosene fumes. “Come on, woman!”

The woman knelt among the books, touching the drenched leather and cardboard, reading the gilt titles with her fingers while her eyes accused Montag. “You can’t ever have my books,” she said.

“You know the law,” said Beatty. “Where’s your common sense? None of those books agree with each other. You’ve been locked up here for years with a regular damned Tower of Babel. Snap out of it! The people in those books never lived. Come on now!”

FAHRENHEIT 451 - ESSAY + PBQ

(THE OLD WOMAN)



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She shook her head.

"The whole house is going up," said Beatty.

The men walked clumsily to the door. They glanced back at Montag, who stood near the woman.

"You're not leaving her here?" he protested. "She won't come."

"Force her, then!"

Beatty raised his hand in which was concealed the igniter. "We're due back at the House. Besides, these fanatics always try suicide; the pattern's familiar."

Montag placed his hand on the woman's elbow. "You can come with me." "No," she said. "Thank you, anyway."

"I'm counting to ten," said Beatty. "One. Two."

"Please," said Montag.

"Go on," said the woman.

"Three. Four."

"Here." Montag pulled at the woman.

The woman replied quietly, "I want to stay here."

"Five. Six."

"You can stop counting," she said. She opened the fingers of one hand slightly and in the palm of the hand was a single slender object.

An ordinary kitchen match.

The sight of it rushed the men out and down away from the house. Captain Beatty, keeping his dignity, backed slowly through the front door, his pink face burnt and shiny from a thousand fires and night excitements. God, thought Montag, how true! Always at night the alarm comes. Never by day! Is it because fire is prettier by night? More spectacle, a better show? The pink face of Beatty now showed the faintest panic in the door. The woman's hand twitched on the single matchstick. The fumes of kerosene bloomed up about her. Montag felt the hidden book pound like a heart against his chest.

"Go on," said the woman, and Montag felt himself back away and away out the door, after Beatty, down the steps, across the lawn, where the path of kerosene lay like the track of some evil snail. On the front porch where she had come to weigh them quietly with her eyes, her quietness a condemnation, the woman stood motionless.

Beatty flicked his fingers to spark the kerosene.

He was too late. Montag gasped.

The woman on the porch reached out with contempt to them all, and struck the kitchen match against the railing.

People ran out of houses all down the street.

- (a) With close reference to the extract, explain how Bradbury vividly conveys tension.
- (b) Explore the ways in which Montag's experiences shape his thoughts and beliefs. Refer to other parts of the novel.