

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION: FAHRENHEIT 451

Show & Theater Company:

- *Fahrenheit 451* presented by Young Audiences of New York

Art Form:

- One-person-show; it's essentially one long monologue for 60 minutes
 - ? What's the longest monologue or presentation you've ever had to remember?
- It takes verbatim portions of the book and makes them into a play.
 - ? What does "verbatim" mean? (word-for-word)
- Very few if any props
 - ? What are props
 - ? What are some ways in which the actor will represent different characters from the book?
 - Using different voices, body language, facial inflections

Context:

- Ray Bradbury, recipient of the 2000 National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters, the 2004 National Medal of Arts, and the 2007 Pulitzer Prize Special Citation. His career included short stories, novellas, novels, radio, film, television and theater that spanned over seventy years, Mr. Bradbury inspired generations of readers to dream, think, and create.
- This performance is based on the science fiction novel that was first published in 1953 by Ray Bradbury. The novel was named to represent the temperature (451 degrees Fahrenheit) at which book paper catches fire and burns.
 - ? Who knows the difference between a novel and a book? (A novel is a long written story about fictional characters and events. Books can be fiction or non-fiction.)
- This classic American story is set in the twenty fourth century in a dystopian setting where firemen don't put out fires – they start them in order to burn books because they are not to be read, but are to be destroyed without question.
- One night while returning from work, Fireman Guy Montag meets his new neighbor: a teenage girl, Clarisse McClellan, whose free-thinking ideals and liberating spirit cause him to question his life and his own perceived happiness.
- What does "dystopian" mean? (opposite of "utopian" or perfect society; a bad or unhappy society)

Main characters/concepts:

- In the performance the actor tells the story from the perspective of the protagonist, Guy Montag, and transitions between the five other primary characters.
- Main Concepts: Censorship, knowledge versus ignorance
 - ? What is censorship? Can you give examples of pros and cons for censorship?

Special things to look for:

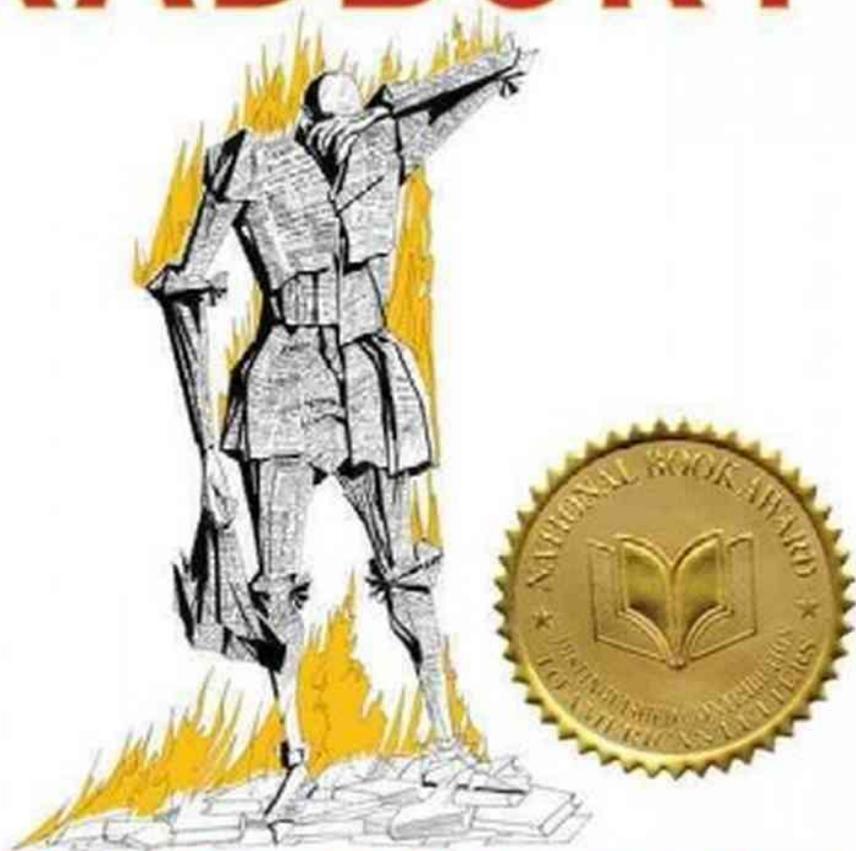
- How the actor uses different voices, body language, facial inflections to represent different characters and emotions.
 - ? Which parts of the story do they keep? Which parts do they leave out?
 - ? Why do you think they leave certain parts out? (It's only an hour show, they want to make sure the scenes they've written can be done believably by one person, etc.)

Theater Etiquette:

- Respect the theater, limit bathroom breaks, one person to a seat, do not kick the seats, no food or drink in the theater (bottled water okay), no audio, video recording or photography and remember to turn off cell phones and please no texting.
 - ? How is watching live theater different than watching a movie or TV?
 - Can't pause, rewind, or fast forward with live theater
 - Live theater is exciting, because each performance is unique
 - Students are in the same room as the performers. Every sound they make and moving around can affect the performers and other members of the audience.

Show info: *Fahrenheit 451* • Wednesday, May 3, 2017 • 9:30am & 11:30am • Grades 7-12

**RAY
BRADBURY**



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