

7-2-2008

Fahrenheit 451 [9th grade]

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UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN

Unit Cover Page

Unit Title: Fahrenheit 451

Grade Level: 9th

Subject/Topic Area(s): English I Pre-AP

Designed By: Alice Rasmussen

Time Frame: 10 days

School District: NEISD

School: Robert E. Lee High School

School Address and Phone: 1400 Jackson Keller
San Antonio, TX 78213

Brief Summary of Unit (Including curricular context and unit goals):

This unit is designed for the beginning of the school year in an English I Pre-AP classroom. It assumes that students have completed their summer reading of *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury. Overarching themes for the year are “Why do people read?” and “Why do people write?” Thus, students will begin to explore one of the reasons we read and write fiction: insight about human experience. More specifically related to the themes of *Fahrenheit 451*, students will see the importance of reading, writing, and enriching our brains as a species. By reading the novel, students will see an example of a society without books and the implications and consequences thereof. Students will also understand that a society’s rules affect the development of its citizens and that there are both good and bad ways to protest. Hopefully, by completing this unit, students will further their appreciation for learning and enrichment, and also discover appropriate ways to have a voice in society. At the end of the unit, students will be assessed on their understanding by creating a letter, song, or short story to protest and hypothetical situation provided for them. The hope is that they will use their understandings from the unit in order to formulate an appropriate, logical, and powerful argument for a sensible outcome.

Unit: Fahrenheit 451
Grade: 9

Stage 1: Desired Results

Understandings

Students will understand that...

- We read fiction for insight about human experience.
- A society’s rules affect the development of its citizens. (burning books = zombie-like citizens)
- Protest can be positive or negative.

Essential Questions

Knowledge & Skill

- Can fiction reveal truth?
- How are stories from different times and places about me?
- What is society’s role in framing its own rules?
- Is censorship necessary?
- Is protest good or bad?

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

9.1 Writing/purposes. The student writes in a variety of forms, including business, personal, literary, and persuasive texts, for various audiences and purposes. The student is expected to:

(A) write in a variety of forms using effective word choice, structure, and sentence forms with emphasis on organizing logical arguments with clearly related definitions, theses, and evidence; write persuasively; write to report and describe; and write poems, plays, and stories;

(B) write in a voice and style appropriate to audience and purpose; and

(C) organize ideas in writing to ensure coherence, logical progression, and support for ideas.

9.4 Writing/inquiry/research. The student uses writing as a tool for learning. The student is expected to:

(A) use writing to formulate questions, refine topics, and clarify ideas;

(B) use writing to discover, organize, and support what is known and what needs to be learned about a topic.

9.8 Reading/variety of texts. The student reads extensively and intensively for different purposes in varied sources, including world literature. The student is expected to:

(C) read world literature, including classic and contemporary works; and

(D) interpret the possible influences of the historical context on a literary work.

9.10 Reading/literary response. The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts. The student is expected to:

(A) respond to informational and aesthetic elements in texts such as discussions, journals, oral interpretations, and dramatizations;

(B) use elements of text to defend his/her own responses and interpretations

9.11 Reading/literary concepts. The student analyzes

literary elements for their contributions to meaning in literary texts. The student is expected to:

(A) recognize the theme (general observation about life or human nature) within a text;

(B) analyze the relevance of setting and time frame to text's meaning;

(C) analyze characters and identify time and point of view;

(D) identify basic conflicts;

(E) analyze the development of plot in narrative text;

(F) recognize and interpret important symbols

9.12 Reading/analysis/evaluation. The student reads critically to evaluate texts. The student is expected to:

(A) analyze characteristics of text, including its structure, word choices, and intended audience

Stage 2: Assessment Evidence

Performance Task:

Ray Bradbury said that by writing *Fahrenheit 451* he was trying to “prevent the future,” not predict it. As our society continues to get smarter, more technological, and more advanced, there are elements that have the potential of becoming eliminated, much like books were in the novel. Choose one of the following elements we rely on and have become accustomed to in our society. Your task, in protest, is to write a letter to your congressperson, a song, or a short story which addresses the problems and consequences of eliminating the element.

Possible Eliminated Elements:

- Animals – food can be chemically and artificially produced. Pets are unnecessary and are a waste of space, food, and money. Also, animals spread disease. Furthermore, it is unimportant to continue to save endangered species.
- Plants – food can be chemically and artificially produced. Air can be purified with machines. Beautifying the earth with plants is a waste of space and money.
- Music – since any one person at any one time has the potential to be offended by music and/or lyrics of any sort, music will be written according to very strict rules for the tune, lyrics, and rhythm. Eventually, since all songs will sound essentially the same, music will be eliminated altogether.
- Art - since any one person at any one time has the potential to be offended by art of any sort, art will be constructed according to very strict rules for the shape, color, and content. Eventually, since all art will look essentially the same, art will be eliminated altogether.
- Teachers – there is no longer a need for human beings to interact with each other when it comes to learning and education. Online modules can deliver courses, and everything that anyone needs to know is accessible on the internet.

Your product must show you understand:

- that society has an important role in deciding its own rules.
- appropriate ways to protest (language, tone, and diction as well as venue, audience, and setting)

**See the attached rubrics for more specific requirements according to your product.

Other evidence:

(quizzes, tests, academic prompts, self-assessments, etc.)

note – these are usually included where appropriate in Stage 3 as well)

- Reading quizzes
- Journals
- Character charts (Guy, Mildred, Captain Beatty, Faber)
- Exit slips
- Writing activities
- Rebuilding society – essential elements (You and your partner are a part of the group of people who survived the bombing at the end of *Fahrenheit 451*. The two of you are assigned the task of making the list of things to keep in the new society and the things that should definitely be eliminated. You should also set any necessary parameters on what you are keeping/eliminating)

Stage 3: Learning Activities

(Steps taken to get students to answer Stage 1 questions and complete performance task)

Day 1 – Can Fiction Reveal Truth?

Summer Reading Comprehension Quiz – Section 1

Journal – Can fiction reveal truth? (Include 3 examples of why/why not.)

Journal Discussion – talk about examples of what they’ve read/movies they’ve seen.

Introduce EQ: Can fiction reveal truth?

Quotation & Discussion: “The writer isn’t made in a vacuum. Writers are witnesses.” - E. L. Doctorow

Activity 1: Students will create a drawing of this quotation and their interpretations of its meaning.

Activity 2: 1. What can students teach others based on a life-lesson they’ve learned?

2. How might they “disguise” their lesson and experience in a story?

Exit Slip: analogy → Stories are like _____ because _____.

Day 2 – Bradbury & the 1950s

Summer Reading Comprehension Quiz – Section 2

Share and discuss analogies from last class – comments, feedback

Bradbury’s bio, where his “fiction” comes from (notes)

Introduce EQ: What is society’s role in framing its own rules?

Brainstorm possible answers, talk about rules we have in society, at home, at school and possible reasons and evolution of those rules.

Research Project w/ computers (jigsaw)

Day 3 – The 1950s

Summer Reading Comprehension Quiz – Section 3

Finish Research Projects and present

Talk about 1950s society in comparison with today.

HW: Censorship Interviews

Day 4 – Is censorship necessary?

Talk about interviews – data collecting and analysis: trends, patterns, conclusions

Introduce EQ: Is censorship necessary?

Brainstorm possible answers, examples they know of (music, TV, etc.)

Censorship Journal

Book burning movie clips

Book burning articles (jigsaw)

Banned book lists & discussion

Exit Slip: Why are books burned and banned? Should people have the right to do this? Should authors have the freedom to write and express themselves in their own way?

HW: Symbolism in *Fahrenheit 451*

Day 5 – The Hearth and the Salamander

Symbolism – review

Firemen Journal

Section 1 Discussion Questions

Introduce EQ: How are stories from different times and places about me?

When do we relate to stories? When do we not relate?

Bradbury's World: A reflection of modern times Activity (chart)

"When did it all start, you ask?" Writing Activity

Day 6 – Who's Who of *Fahrenheit 451*

Characterization Charts: (Guy, Mildred, Captain Beatty, Faber)

Compare/Contrast Characters with self and others.

True Colors Activity

Character/Quotation Activity

Day 7 – Is protest good or bad?

"What would you be willing to die for?" Activity

Introduce EQ: Is protest good or bad?

Brainstorm examples of protests and consequences there of. Pros/Cons of protesting in general.

Protest video clips: Forrest Gump, The Sixties, Varsity Blues,

KLRN United Streaming Video Clips

Violent vs. Non-violent protest: pros/cons/messages/consequences Graphic Organizer (Think, Pair, Share)

Protest Songs: "Big Yellow Taxi" (Joni Mitchell), "For What it's Worth" (Buffalo Springfield),

"Pride...In the Name of Love" (U2), "The Times They Are A Changin'" (Bob Dylan), "Revolution"

(Beatles), "Fortunate Son" (CCR), "Volunteers" (Jefferson Airplane), "Turn! Turn! Turn!" (The Byrds)

Discussion/Observation: Why are so many of our examples from one particular era? What can we say about protest today as compared to previous eras? What are some current protest songs (elicit student input and examples of their music.)

HW: What might you protest? What is worth change to you? How would you go about protesting? What are the pros/cons/messages/consequences of your protest?

Day 8 – Protest in *Fahrenheit 451* and the end of the novel

Present/Discuss HW (protests)

Montag's protest: Do we agree with what he did? Was it worth it? pros/cons/messages/consequences

Hand out/Discuss Final Assessment

Burning Bright – Making predictions activity

Allusions Activity

Day 9 – Work Day

Rebuilding Society

Final Assessment work day

Review for in-class timed write

Day 10 – Assessment Day

Final Assessments Due

Fahrenheit 451 Timed Write – 60 minutes

**For more information or copies of any of the above activities, please contact me at

alice.rasmussen@alumni.trinity.edu. Thanks!

Letter to your Congressperson Instructions & Rubric

1. Choose which element you are going to protest being eliminated from the original instruction page.
2. Construct your letter. It needs to be strong and persuasive, use relevant examples and/or evidence, follow a logical sequence, and have a formal tone (remember, your audience is your congressperson!) Your letter may be typed or neatly hand-written. Your letter should be at least 500 words. Remember to write a rough draft and have it proofread by another person (teacher, parent, friend you trust, administrator, etc.)

You need to turn in your proofread rough draft and your final draft with all changes/revisions made.

	4 - Above Standards	3 - Meets Standards	2 - Approaching Standards	1 - Below Standards
Requirements	More than 500 words, rough draft is included	500 words, rough draft is included	Less than 500 words, no rough draft *will not be graded	Less than 500 words, no rough draft *will not be graded
Persuasion	The letter is very persuasive; a variety of persuasive techniques are used	The letter is persuasive. Several persuasive techniques are used.	The letter is mildly persuasive. Relies on 1 persuasive technique.	The letter is not persuasive.
Examples or Evidence	Includes many appropriate and relevant examples or evidence.	Includes appropriate and relevant examples or evidence.	Includes examples or evidence, but they are not related to the topic.	Includes no examples or evidence.
Sequencing	The letter follows a logical order and sequence. Ideas flow. Easy to read and follow.	The letter follows a logical order and sequence.	The letter is “chunky” and does not flow from easily from one thought to another.	The letter is almost impossible to read and follow. Ideas are not clear.
Tone	The tone is highly appropriate and formal.	The tone is formal and appropriate.	The tone lacks formality in some areas.	The tone is informal and inappropriate.
Spelling & Grammar	There are no errors.	There are very few errors.	There are many errors.	The paper is unreadable.
Format	Contains all parts of a formal letter, including spacing and formatting.	Contains most parts of a formal letter.	Missing some parts of a formal letter.	Not a formal letter.
Conveys the idea that society has an important role in deciding its rules	The student shows complete and in-depth understanding of the concept.	The student shows understanding of the concept.	The student minimally shows understanding of the concept.	The student does not show understanding of the concept.
Protests appropriately (language, tone, and diction)	The student shows complete and in-depth understanding of appropriate protest.	The student shows understanding of appropriate protest.	The student minimally shows understanding of appropriate protest.	The student does not show understanding of appropriate protest.

Short Story Instructions & Rubric

1. Choose which element you are going to protest being eliminated from the original instruction page.
2. Construct your story. It needs to have a clear and strong message about the element you chose, fitting characters, appropriate setting, and follow a logical sequence. Your story should be exciting to read. Your story may be typed or neatly hand-written. Your story should be at least 500 words. Remember to write a rough draft and have it proofread by another person (teacher, parent, friend you trust, administrator, etc.)

You need to turn in your proofread rough draft and your final draft with all changes/revisions made.

	4 - Above Standards	3 - Meets Standards	2 - Approaching Standards	1 - Below Standards
Requirements	More than 500 words, rough draft is included	500 words, rough draft is included	Less than 500 words, no rough draft *will not be graded	Less than 500 words, no rough draft *will not be graded
Message/Theme	The story has a very strong underlying message; a variety of literary techniques are used to express the message.	The story has a strong message. Several literary techniques are used to express the message.	The story has a mild message. Not many literary techniques are used to express the message.	The story does not have a message.
Title	Title is creative, sparks interest and is related to the story and topic.	Title is related to the story and topic.	Title is present, but does not appear to be related to the story and topic.	No title.
Sequencing	The story follows a logical order and sequence. Ideas flow. Easy to read and follow.	The story follows a logical order and sequence.	The story is “chunky” and does not flow from easily from one thought to another.	The story is almost impossible to read and follow. Ideas are not clear.
Characters	The main characters are named and clearly described in text as well as pictures. Most readers could describe the characters accurately.	The main characters are named and described. Most readers would have some idea of what the characters looked like.	The main characters are named. The reader knows very little about the characters.	It is hard to tell who the main characters are.
Setting	Many vivid, descriptive words are used to tell when and where the story took place.	Some vivid, descriptive words are used to tell the audience when and where the story took place.	The reader can figure out when and where the story took place, but the author didn't supply much detail.	The reader has trouble figuring out when and where the story took place.
Problem/Conflict	It is very easy for the reader to understand the problem the main characters face and why it is a problem.	It is fairly easy for the reader to understand the problem the main characters face and why it is a problem.	It is fairly easy for the reader to understand the problem the main characters face but it is not clear why it is a problem.	It is not clear what problem the main characters face.
Spelling & Grammar	There are no errors.	There are very few errors.	There are many errors.	The story is unreadable.
Conveys the idea that society has an important role in deciding its rules	The student shows complete and in-depth understanding of the concept.	The student shows understanding of the concept.	The student minimally shows understanding of the concept.	The student does not show understanding of the concept.
Protests appropriately	The student shows complete and in-depth understanding of appropriate protest.	The student shows understanding of appropriate protest.	The student minimally shows understanding of appropriate protest.	The student does not show understanding of appropriate protest.

Song Instructions & Rubric

1. Choose which element you are going to protest being eliminated from the original instruction page.
2. Construct your song. It needs to be creative, catchy, and stick to the topic. You may either compose your own tune to put your lyrics to, OR you may put your words to a pre-existing tune. Your song may be typed or neatly hand-written. Your letter should be at least 300 words. Remember to write a rough draft and have it proofread by another person (teacher, parent, friend you trust, administrator, etc.)

You need to turn in your proofread rough draft, your final draft with all changes/revisions made, and (at the least) a recording of the music the song goes to. I would prefer a recording of the lyrics and tune combined!

****Challenge by choice – perform your song for the class!**

	4 - Above Standards	3 - Meets Standards	2 - Approaching Standards	1 - Below Standards
Length	More than 300 words	300 words	*will not be graded	*will not be graded
Title	Is creative, sparks interest and is related to the song and topic.	Is related to the song and topic.	Is present, but does not appear to be related to the song and topic.	No title.
Word Choice	Uses many vivid words and phrases that linger or draw pictures in the reader's mind.	Uses vivid words and phrases that linger or draw pictures in the reader's mind.	Uses words that communicate clearly, but the writing lacks variety, punch, or flair.	Uses a limited vocabulary that does not communicate strongly or capture the reader's interest.
Format	Uses accurate format including stanzas and a chorus.	Uses accurate format including stanzas and a chorus.	The format is not accurate in some areas.	The format does not resemble that of a song.
Sequencing	The song follows a logical order and sequence. Ideas flow. Easy to follow.	The song follows a logical order and sequence.	The song does not flow from easily from one thought to another.	The song is almost impossible to follow. Ideas are not clear.
Tune	The chosen or constructed tune perfectly fits the tone of the song as well as the lyrics.	The chosen or constructed tune fits the tone of the song as well as the lyrics.	The chosen or constructed tune somewhat fits the tone of the song as well as the lyrics.	The chosen or constructed tune does not fit the tone of the song or the lyrics.
Spelling & Grammar	There are no errors.	There are very few errors.	There are many errors.	The paper is unreadable.
Conveys the idea that society has an important role in deciding its rules	The student shows complete and in-depth understanding of the concept.	The student shows understanding of the concept.	The student minimally shows understanding of the concept.	The student does not show understanding of the concept.
Protests appropriately (language, tone, and diction)	The student shows complete and in-depth understanding of appropriate protest.	The student shows understanding of appropriate protest.	The student minimally shows understanding of appropriate protest.	The student does not show understanding of appropriate protest.