 Ray Bradbury listening grid

Questions

You will view and listen to a discussion with Ray Bradbury concerning the novel Fahrenheit 451. Complete the listening grid as you view the short clip. You may need to add to different sections at various times (it’s not all in order).

[Discussion with Ray Bradbury on YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FL_y6gtxLvQ)

| Question | Answer |
| --- | --- |
| Events leading up to Ray Bradbury writing Fahrenheit 451 |       |
| Inspiration of Ray Bradbury writing *Fahrenheit 451* |       |
| Original publication of Fahrenheit 451 |       |
| Describe Ray’s early childhood and how this impacted his novel |       |
| What did Bradbury wonder about the future of firemen? |       |
| How did Bradbury come up with a title for his novel? |       |
| ‘Anything that touches libraries touches me.’ Bradbury describes himself as a self-educated man who was vitally concerned and upset at what was going on in the world. What historical references does Bradbury make in explaining this? |       |
| What is Fahrenheit 451 firmly based in? |       |
| What was happening in the 1950s that inspired the novel? |       |

Suggested answers

| Question | Answer |
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| Events leading up to Ray Bradbury writing Fahrenheit 451 | * Living in Venice with his wife
* Had no money, wife got pregnant
* Writing short stories including one called ‘The Pedestrian’
* The book was a long time coming to birth, going back to great-great-great-grandmother Mary Bradbury who was tried as a witch in 1580, while she escaped she is in books about witch burning
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| Inspiration of Ray Bradbury writing Fahrenheit 451 | * Ray Bradbury had an encounter with a police officer while walking with a friend. When asked what he was doing, Ray replied ‘putting one foot after the other.’
* This was apparently the wrong answer and he appeared suspicious. The policeman reprimanded Ray, who promised to ‘never walk again.’ He then wrote ‘The Pedestrian’.
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| Original publication of Fahrenheit 451 | * Ray Bradbury wrote the novel in nine days, after being inspired from his story ‘The Pedestrian’.
* Fahrenheit was originally published in Galaxy Magazine, a Science Fiction Magazine.
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| Describe Ray’s early childhood and how this impacted his novel | * Grew up in Illinois, would walk down to the beach and on the way he would stop at the fire station with his dad, where friends and relatives worked.
* Bradbury had an intimate knowledge of fireman. One of his uncles was a fireman who was killed falling off of a truck.
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| What did Bradbury wonder about the future of firemen? | * Bradbury noted that the time will come when all the houses are fireproofed. So, a lot of firemen will be without jobs and what will they do?
* This led Bradbury to think you could reverse it, have firemen start fires instead of put them out.
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| How did Bradbury come up with a title for his novel? | * Originally he was going to call it ‘The Fireman’. Then he got curious at the temperature at which a book would burn. He contacted a number of universities who couldn’t help him and eventually contacted a fire chief who told him that book paper burns at 451 degrees Fahrenheit.
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| ‘Anything that touches libraries touches me.’ Bradbury describes himself as a self-educated man who was vitally concerned and upset at what was going on in the world. What historical references does Bradbury make in explaining this? | * Libraries of Alexandria 3000-4000 years ago,
* China, rumours of book burnings
* Early 1930s Hitler burning books
* Joseph McCarthy- rumours of burning books
* Book burnings and censorship in Russia
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| What is Fahrenheit 451 firmly based in? | * Technology
* What we are doing ourselves with television
* Can foresee the day when we have wall-to-wall television
* ‘Seashells, the thimble radios’ - Japanese film makers making the first Walkman- Bradbury inspired the invention of the Walkman
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| What was happening in the 1950s that inspired the novel? | * The Cold War
* 4-5years after Hiroshima, people were living in fear of being destroyed
* Bradbury wrote the book under the cloud of this context- atomic bomb
* Bradbury didn’t explicitly use the atomic bomb in the novel but instead the real threat of ignorance and lack of education
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