



LICEO SCIENTIFICO “G. SEGUENZA”, MESSINA

Project: Handbook- RSP Readers

Book: *The Diaries of Adam and Eve* by Mark Twain

School: Liceo Seguenza – Messina (Italia)

Class: 2E

Teacher: Antonia Nuccio

Workshop n. 1

The listening reader

Motivation:

Listening to stories is one of human beings' primordial pleasures, an enjoyable activity that was also used to escape dramatic reality, just as the clever Sherazade did... but it is also divine pleasure! Elie Wiesel wrote that «*God created man because He likes stories*». The narrating activity links us to the ancient civilisations, when writing didn't exist, or it was used for practical purposes, and literary works used to be handed down orally, they were not read. “*Tell me a story...*” this is what children usually ask their grandparents, who have more time, attention and imagination than young people or adults. Therefore, we wanted our students to experience that ancient charm of listening to someone narrating a story as well as the pleasure of feeling the power of the enchantment of the story-telling, when narrating tales.

* (An American writer, who won the Nobel prize for peace in 1986. The quotation is from the novel *The Gates of the Forest*)

Time: a workshop divided into two moments

Activities:

1. *The listening reader*: listening to an audio-book
2. *The performing reader*: reading out some parts of the book
3. *The story-teller-reader*: telling the plot



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Handbook for reluctant, struggling and
poor readers

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Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Exercise n.1

The students will listen to “The diaries of Adam and Eve” read by an actress. An audiobook or an Internet site will be used

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2YxSlhFTwp8>

Exercise n. 2

The students will choose a passage from the book and will read it out

Exercise n. 3

The students will have to tell the story of a book so as to persuade those who still haven't known it to read it!



LICEO SCIENTIFICO “G. SEGUENZA”, MESSINA
PROJECT:ERASMUSPLUS HANDBOOK FOR RSP READERS
PRE-READING ACTIVITIES RELATED TO FAHRENHEIT 451
WORKSHOP
TITLES, BOOK COVERS.....AND BEGINNINGS

Class: 2E

Teacher: Antonia Nuccio

Workshop n. 2

Titles, book covers

... and beginnings

Motivation: Titles, book covers and beginnings of books are crucial elements for any reader who is looking for a story to read: above all, young readers often choose novels when driven by emotional curiosity, by suggestions evoked by the title or by the graphic layout of a book cover

The following workshop is made up of two steps: pre-reading activity(the reader who has expectations about the book: Shall I like it?) and follow-up activity (the reader who becomes aware of his choice- Yes, I like it)

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The reader who has expectations about the book

“Shall I like it?”



Activities to be carried out before reading the book:

1

- The students will have to look for the original title of the novel, compare it with the title of the Italian version and try to tell what it suggests, namely which kind of story it may represent.

2

- The students will have to search for the original cover of the novel and collect the covers of its various editions (including the Italian editions).
- The students will have to prepare a billboard and/or a Facebook page and/or a multimedial product with all the covers of the novel.
- The students will have to vote for the most significant cover among those shown on their billboard.

3

- The students, after reading the novel at first in silence and then aloud, will have to discuss in class about the beginning of the novel (how it begins?, what type of narrative agreement is proposed) and about the effects caused by the reading of the novel.
- The students will have to fill in a worksheet, listing the similarities, the images, the style... employed by the author in the first page of the novel.

similarities	images	adjectives	style
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The informed reader

“Yes, I like it!”

Activities to be carried out after reading the novel:

The reader as a publisher

- Each student will have to indicate whether the title is appropriate or it is better to change it. In the latter case, they will have to choose another title.

The creative reader

- The students will have to create a cover for the novel they have just read, when helped by their art teacher.

The informed reader

- The students will have to write a text where they will point out whether the author uses the visionary vein and the power of first-page images throughout the whole novel or he employs several registers in the story.

The educated and open-minded reader

- The students, helped by their teacher, will be invited to make an “improbable but possible comparison” between the narrative meanings of an *ouverture* of classical symphony and the first paragraph of the novel.

The writer reader

- The students, after choosing a precise kind of novel, will have to write the *beginning* of a possible story. All beginnings will then be read in class and the best of them will be selected as the beginning of a class novel.

Link

www.ilpost.it/2012/06/06/ray-bradbury-fahrenheit-451/

Fahrenheit 451 Copertina - Immagini

Materials:

1. Example of exercise n. 2 (classwork)





Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
School: Liceo Seguenza – Messina (Italia)
Class: 2E
Teacher: Antonia Nuccio

Bums on the outside, libraries inside!

“You are Ecclesiastes”

"Thousands on the roads, the abandoned railtracks, tonight, bums on the outside, libraries inside. It wasn't planned, at first. Each man had a book he wanted to remember, and did. Then, over a period of twenty years or so, we met each other, travelling, and got the loose network together and set out a plan. The most important single thing we had to pound into ourselves was that we were not important, we mustn't be pedants; we were not to feel superior to anyone else in the world. We're nothing more than dust-jackets for books, of no significance otherwise.

“We'll pass the books on to our children, by word of mouth, and let our children wait, in turn, on the other people” says one of the roamers to Montag, the protagonist, because he thinks it is precious and worth being remembered. Remembering entails passing on memory in order to prevent dust and oblivion from burying volumes. Therefore, it could be meaningful and crucial to involve students in an performing workshop based on the texts selected by them so that they could rediscover the ancient/primordial long-lasting power and beauty of memory, which is frequently forgotten nowadays. And, meanwhile, getting to the aim of the activity, that is, helping students grasp and retain memory and knowledge, thus preventing some sand from sifting through the sieve

Introduction: *Everyone had a book to remember, because he thought it was precious and worth to be transmitted. Remembrance is important to transmit memory, to forbid that “dust” and forgetfulness bury volumes. I thought it was important to lead students in a workshop where they could act out extracts chosen by them to rediscover the ancient*



power and beauty of memory. And at the same time, make some *granello di sabbia potesse rimanere nel loro crivello*. Who knows ...

Timing: workshop in four steps

Activities:

4. *The conscious reader:* reading, re-reading, selecting a text
5. *The actor-reader:* reading/acting out
6. *The thoughtful reader:* production of schemes, class debate, essays
7. *The well educated reader:* researches of sites and programmes dedicated to books
8. *The creative and multimedial reader:* creation of a video.

1. *The Conscious reader*

The **first step** will consist in the reading comprehension of the text pp.166-180

"What have you to offer?" "Nothing. I thought I had part of the Book of Ecclesiastes and maybe a little of Revelation, but I haven't even that now." "The Book of Ecclesiastes would be fine. Where was it?" "Here," Montag touched his head. "Ah," Granger smiled and nodded. "What's wrong? Isn't that all right?" said Montag. "Better than all right; perfect!" Granger turned to the Reverend. "Do we have a Book of Ecclesiastes?" "One. A man named Harris of Youngstown." "Montag." Granger took Montag's shoulder firmly. "Walk carefully. Guard your health. If anything should happen to Harris, you are the Book of Ecclesiastes. See how important you've become in the last minute!" "But I've forgotten!" "No, nothing's ever lost. We have ways to shake down your clinkers for you." "But I've tried to remember!" "Don't try. It'll come when we need it. All of us have photographic memories, but spend a lifetime learning how to block off the things that are really in there. Simmons here has worked on it for twenty years and now we've got the method down to where we can recall anything that's been read once. Would you like, some day, Montag, to read Plato's Republic?" "Of course!" "I am Plato's Republic. Like to read Marcus Aurelius? Mr.



Simmons is Marcus."

"How do you do?" said Mr. Simmons. "Hello," said Montag. "I want you to meet Jonathan Swift, the author of that evil political book, Gulliver's Travels! And this other fellow is Charles Darwin, and this one is Schopenhauer, and this one is Einstein, and this one here at my elbow is Mr. Albert Schweitzer, a very kind philosopher indeed. Here we all are, Montag. Aristophanes and Mahatma Gandhi and Gautama Buddha and Confucius and Thomas Love Peacock and Thomas Jefferson and Mr. Lincoln, if you please. We are also Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John." Everyone laughed quietly. "It can't be," said Montag. "It is," replied Granger, smiling. "We're book-burners, too. We read the books and burnt them, afraid they'd be found. Micro-filming didn't pay off; we were always travelling, we didn't want to bury the film and come back later. Always the chance of discovery. Better to keep it in the old heads, where no one can see it or suspect it. We are all bits and pieces of history and literature and international law, Byron, Tom Paine, Machiavelli, or Christ, it's here. And the hour is late. And the war's begun. And we are out here, and the city is there, all wrapped up in its own coat of a thousand colours. What do you think, Montag?" "I think I was blind trying to do things my way, planting books in firemen's houses and sending in alarms." "You did what you had to do. Carried out on a national scale, it might have worked beautifully. But our way is simpler and, we think, better. All we want to do is keep the knowledge we think we will need, intact and safe. We're not out to incite or anger anyone yet. For if we are destroyed, the knowledge is dead, perhaps for good. We are model citizens, in our own special way; we walk the old tracks, we lie in the hills at night, and the city people let us be. We're stopped and searched occasionally, but there's nothing on our persons to incriminate us. The organization is flexible, very loose, and fragmentary. Some of us have had plastic surgery on our faces and fingerprints. Right now we have a horrible job; we're waiting for the war to begin and, as quickly, end. It's not pleasant, but then we're not in control, we're the odd minority crying in the wilderness. When the war's over, perhaps we can be of some use in the world." "Do you really think they'll listen then?" "If not, we'll just have to wait. We'll pass the books on to our children, by word of mouth, and let our children wait, in turn, on the other people. A lot will be lost that way, of course. But you can't make people listen. They have to come round in their own time, wondering what happened and why the world blew up under them. It can't last." "How many of you are there?" "Thousands on the roads, the abandoned



railtracks, tonight, bums on the outside, libraries inside. It wasn't planned, at first. Each man had a book he wanted to remember, and did. Then, over a period of twenty years or so, we met each other, travelling, and got the loose network together and set out a plan. The most important single thing we had to pound into ourselves was that we were not important, we mustn't be pedants; we were not to feel superior to anyone else in the world. We're nothing more than dust-jackets for books, of no significance otherwise. Some of us live in small towns. Chapter One of Thoreau's Walden in Green River, Chapter Two in Willow Farm, Maine. Why, there's one town in Maryland, only twenty-seven people, no bomb'll ever touch that town, is the complete essays of a man named Bertrand Russell. Pick up that town, almost, and flip the pages, so many pages to a person. And when the war's over, some day, some year, the books can be written again, the people will be called in, one by one, to recite what they know and we'll set it up in type until another Dark Age, when we might have to do the whole damn thing over again. But that's the wonderful thing about man; he never gets so discouraged or disgusted that he gives up doing it all over again, because he knows very well it is important and worth the doing."

"What do we do tonight?" asked Montag. "Wait," said Granger. "And move downstream a little way, just in case." He began throwing dust and dirt on the fire. The other men helped, and Montag helped, and there, in the wilderness, the men all moved their hands, putting out the fire together. They stood by the river in the starlight. Montag saw the luminous dial of his waterproof. Five. Five o'clock in the morning. Another year ticked by in a single hour, and dawn waiting beyond the far bank of the river. "Why do you trust me?" said Montag. A man moved in the darkness. "The look of you's enough. You haven't seen yourself in a mirror lately. Beyond that, the city has never cared so much about us to bother with an elaborate chase like this to find us. A few crackpots with verses in their heads can't touch them, and they know it and we know it; everyone knows it. So long as the vast population doesn't wander about quoting the Magna Charta and the Constitution, it's all right. The firemen were enough to check that, now and then. No, the cities don't bother us. And you look like hell." They moved along the bank of the river, going south. Montag tried to see the men's faces, the old faces he remembered from the firelight, lined and tired. He was looking for a brightness, a resolve, a triumph over tomorrow that hardly seemed to be there. Perhaps he had expected their faces to burn and glitter with the



knowledge they carried, to glow as lanterns glow, with the light in them. But all the light had come from the camp fire, and these men had seemed no different from any others who had run a long race, searched a long search, seen good things destroyed, and now, very late, were gathering to wait for the end of the party and the blowing out of the lamps. They weren't at all certain that the things they carried in their heads might make every future dawn glow with a purer light, they were sure of nothing save that the books were on file behind their quiet eyes, the books were waiting, with their pages uncut, for the customers who might come by in later years, some with clean and some with dirty fingers. Montag squinted from one face to another as they walked. "Don't judge a book by its cover," someone said. And they all laughed quietly, moving downstream. There was a shriek and the jets from the city were gone overhead long before the men looked up. Montag stared back at the city, far down the river, only a faint glow now. "My wife's back there." "I'm sorry to hear that. The cities won't do well in the next few days," said Granger. "It's strange, I don't miss her, it's strange I don't feel much of anything," said Montag. "Even if she dies, I realized a moment ago, I don't think I'll feel sad. It isn't right. Something must be wrong with me." "Listen," said Granger, taking his arm, and walking with him, holding aside the bushes to let him pass. "When I was a boy my grandfather died, and he was a sculptor. He was also a very kind man who had a lot of love to give the world, and he helped clean up the slum in our town; and he made toys for us and he did a million things in his lifetime; he was always busy with his hands. And when he died, I suddenly realized I wasn't crying for him at all, but for the things he did. I cried because he would never do them again, he would never carve another piece of wood or help us raise doves and pigeons in the back yard or play the violin the way he did, or tell us jokes the way he did. He was part of us and when he died, all the actions stopped dead and there was no one to do them just the way he did. He was individual. He was an important man. I've never gotten over his death. Often I think, what wonderful carvings never came to birth because he died. How many jokes are missing from the world, and how many homing pigeons untouched by his hands. He shaped the world. He did things to the world. The world was bankrupted of ten million fine actions the night he passed on."

"Everyone must leave something behind when he dies, my grandfather said. A child or a book or a painting or a house or a wall built or a pair of shoes made. Or a garden



planted. Something your hand touched some way so your soul has somewhere to go when you die, and when people look at that tree or that flower you planted, you're there. It doesn't matter what you do, he said, so long as you change something from the way it was before you touched it into something that's like you after you take your hands away. The difference between the man who just cuts lawns and a real gardener is in the touching, he said. The lawn-cutter might just as well not have been there at all; the gardener will be there a lifetime." Granger moved his hand. "My grandfather showed me some V-2 rocket films once, fifty years ago. Have you ever seen the atom-bomb mushroom from two hundred miles up? It's a pinprick, it's nothing. With the wilderness all around it. "My grandfather ran off the V-2 rocket film a dozen times and then hoped that some day our cities would open up and let the green and the land and the wilderness in more, to remind people that we're allotted a little space on earth and that we survive in that wilderness that can take back what it has given, as easily as blowing its breath on us or sending the sea to tell us we are not so big. When we forget how close the wilderness is in the night, my grandpa said, some day it will come in and get us, for we will have forgotten how terrible and real it can be. You see?" Granger turned to Montag. "Grandfather's been dead for all these years, but if you lifted my skull, by God, in the convolutions of my brain you'd find the big ridges of his thumbprint. He touched me. As I said earlier, he was a sculptor. 'I hate a Roman named Status Quo!' he said to me. 'Stuff your eyes with wonder,' he said, 'live as if you'd drop dead in ten seconds. See the world. It's more fantastic than any dream made or paid for in factories. Ask no guarantees, ask for no security, there never was such an animal. And if there were, it would be related to the great sloth which hangs upside down in a tree all day every day, sleeping its life away. To hell with that,' he said, 'shake the tree and knock the great sloth down on his ass.'" "Look!" cried Montag.

We're book-burners, too. We read the books and burnt them, afraid they'd be found. Micro-filming didn't pay off; we were always travelling, we didn't want to bury the film and come back later. Always the chance of discovery. Better to keep it in the old heads, where no one can see it or suspect it. We are all bits and pieces of history and literature and international law, Byron, Tom Paine, Machiavelli, or Christ, it's here. And the hour is late. And the war's begun. And we are out here, and the city is there, all wrapped up in its own coat of a thousand colours. What do you think, Montag?" "I



think I was blind trying to do things my way, planting books in firemen's houses and sending in alarms." "You did what you had to do. Carried out on a national scale, it might have worked beautifully. But our way is simpler and, we think, better. All we want to do is keep the knowledge we think we will need, intact and safe. We're not out to incite or anger anyone yet. For if we are destroyed, the knowledge is dead, perhaps for good. We are model citizens, in our own special way; we walk the old tracks, we lie in the hills at night, and the city people let us be. We're stopped and searched occasionally, but there's nothing on our persons to incriminate us. The organization is flexible, very loose, and fragmentary. Some of us have had plastic surgery on our faces and fingerprints. Right now we have a horrible job; we're waiting for the war to begin and, as quickly, end. It's not pleasant, but then we're not in control, we're the odd minority crying in the wilderness. When the war's over, perhaps we can be of some use in the world." "Do you really think they'll listen then?" "If not, we'll just have to wait. We'll pass the books on to our children, by word of mouth, and let our children wait, in turn, on the other people. A lot will be lost that way, of course. But you can't make people listen. They have to come round in their own time, wondering what happened and why the world blew up under them. It can't last." "How many of you are there?" "Thousands on the roads, the abandoned railtracks, tonight, bums on the outside, libraries inside. It wasn't planned, at first. Each man had a book he wanted to remember, and did. Then, over a period of twenty years or so, we met each other, travelling, and got the loose network together and set out a plan. The most important single thing we had to pound into ourselves was that we were not important, we mustn't be pedants; we were not to feel superior to anyone else in the world. We're nothing more than dust-jackets for books, of no significance otherwise. Some of us live in small towns. Chapter One of Thoreau's Walden in Green River, Chapter Two in Willow Farm, Maine. Why, there's one town in Maryland, only twenty-seven people, no bomb'll ever touch that town, is the complete essays of a man named Bertrand Russell. Pick up that town, almost, and flip the pages, so many pages to a person. And when the war's over, some day, some year, the books can be written again, the people will be called in, one by one, to recite what they know and we'll set it up in type until another Dark Age, when we might have to do the whole damn thing over again. But that's the wonderful thing about man; he never gets so discouraged or disgusted that he gives up doing it all over again, because he knows very well it is important and



worth the doing."

They weren't at all certain that the things they carried in their heads might make every future dawn glow with a purer light, they were sure of nothing save that the books were on file behind their quiet eyes, the books were waiting, with their pages uncut, for the customers who might come by in later years, some with clean and some with dirty fingers.

"Now, let's get on upstream," said Granger. "And hold on to one thought: You're not important. You're not anything. Some day the load we're carrying with us may help someone. But even when we had the books on hand, a long time ago, we didn't use what we got out of them. We went right on insulting the dead. We went right on spitting in the graves of all the poor ones who died before us. We're going to meet a lot of lonely people in the next week and the next month and the next year. And when they ask us what we're doing, you can say, We're remembering. That's where we'll win out in the long run. And some day we'll remember so much that we'll build the biggest goddam steam-shovel in history and dig the biggest grave of all time and shove war in and cover it up. Come on now, we're going to go build a mirror-factory first and put out nothing but mirrors for the next year and take a long look in them." They finished eating and put out the fire. The day was brightening all about them as if a pink lamp had been given more wick. In the trees, the birds that had flown away now came back and settled down.

Montag began walking and after a moment found that the others had fallen in behind him, going north. He was surprised, and moved aside to let Granger pass, but Granger looked at him and nodded him on. Montag went ahead. He looked at the river and the sky and the rusting track going back down to where the farms lay, where the barns stood full of hay, where a lot of people had walked by in the night on their way from the city. Later, in a month or six months, and certainly not more than a year, he would walk along here again, alone, and keep right on going until he caught up with the people.

But now there was a long morning's walk until noon, and if the men were silent it was because there was everything to think about and much to remember. Perhaps later in the morning, when the sun was up and had warmed them, they would begin to talk, or



just say the things they remembered, to be sure they were there, to be absolutely certain that things were safe in them. Montag felt the slow stir of words, the slow simmer. And when it came to his turn, what could he say, what could he offer on a day like this, to make the trip a little easier? To everything there is a season. Yes. A time to break down, and a time to build up. Yes. A time to keep silence and a time to speak. Yes, all that. But what else. What else? Something, something . . .

And on either side of the river was there a tree of life, which bore twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. Yes, thought Montag, that's the one I'll save for noon. For noon... When we reach the city.

- Students will have to select in the extract the parts where Granger talks about the purpose that book people have in common and of the importance to remember to transmit memories to the future generations.

2. *The bum outside library inside reader*

After reading carefully the final pages in the novel (Montag and Granger's group), students will have to change into book people: they'll learn by heart and act out in front of their mates extracts from books and works they find particularly meaningful. The activity will be monthly. In the present schoolyear, each student will act out three extracts as it is shown in the scheme below:

Task n. 1 (February)

Imagine you too are one of the book people; choose, **learn by heart** and then act out in front of your mates an extract from a book you read or a work you studied at school and that you find particularly meaningful.

Task n. 2 (February - March)



Imagine you are one of the book people.; choose and **learn by heart** and act out in front of your mates an extract from the novel Fahrenheit 451

Task n. 3 (March)

Imagine you are one of the book people.; choose and **learn by heart** and act out in front of your mates an extract from one of the books (or books by authors) quoted in the novel Fahrenheit 451.

Final output: video of the students acting out the extracts.

3. The thoughtful reader

When Montag was furious about books, Faber, had told him he was a hopeless romantic. Granger and the other bums take him back to reality: they are not certain that the things they remember can make every future dawn glow with a purer light, but all the same they remember, they are ready, for the customers who might come by in later years, some with clean and some with dirty fingers.

Students write the following essays:

- The content of a book is important because it has an immediate utility, it can make every future dawn glow with a purer light. and therefore saving books means being certain to solve problems.
- Is saving books a duty towards the future generations, so that mankind has a resource of beauty and thought to draw on?

4. The well educated reader

- Student will have to surf the Internet looking for information on the Myth of Thamus and writing, as reported in Plato's *Phedro*. They will have to reflect on the importance of memory.



The Myth of Thamus and Theuth

In the writings of Phaedrus, Socrates tells his disciples this story.

Among the ancient Egyptian gods, there was one called Theuth who discovered “number and calculation, geometry and astronomy, as well as the games of draughts and dice, and above all else, writing” (Phaedrus, 274d). One day, Theuth visited Thamus, King of Egypt, urging him to disseminate the arts around Egypt. For each art that Theuth presented, Thamus offered his praise and criticism. When it came to writing, Theuth said:

O King, here is something that, once learned, will make the Egyptians wiser and will improve their memory; I have discovered a potion for memory and for wisdom.
(Phaedrus, 274e)

But Thamus replied that, as the “father of writing,” Theuth’s affection for writing had kept him from acknowledging the truth about writing. In fact, Thamus asserted, writing increases forgetfulness rather than memory. Instead of internalizing and understanding things, students will rely on writing as a potion for reminding. Moreover, students will be exposed to many ideas without properly thinking about them. Thus, they will have an “appearance of wisdom” while “for the most part they will know nothing” (Phaedrus, 275a-b).

- With the teacher’s help, students will read some extracts from *School Blues* by Daniel Pennac, dedicated to the importance of learning by heart extracts from important literary works.



**LICEO SCIENTIFICO “G. SEGUENZA”, MESSINA
PROJECT:ERASMUSPLUS HANDBOOK FOR RSP READERS**

**Once upon a time there was.....actually,there is
The Kingdom of Redonda**

While getting information about Ray Bradbury's life, students learnt that he had been appointed duke of Diente de Leon by the king of Redonda Xavier I (the Spanish writer Javier Marias) just like the Italian writers Umberto Eco, Pietro Citati e Claudio Magris. Therefore students found it interesting and stimulating to work on their own Kingdom of Redonda , which is improbable and fairy as well as real and modern

Activities

The conscious reader: information about the author and the kingdom of Redonda

the curious reader:research/in-depth research

the creative reader:students creatively imagine their own kingdom of Redonda

1. The conscious reader

While looking at atlases, enciclopedias and doing research on the Internet, students will have to pinpoint the isle of Redonda and draw a map of the place

Students will devise a poster, or create a facebook page or a multimedial output containing images, the flora and fauna of the isle of Redonda

2. The curious reader

The fairy-tale story of the Kingdom of Redonda

Students will carry out some research on the kingdom of Redonda and will have to retrace its origins and story and make a list of its dukes and kings while taking into consideration some of them with their teacher

Students will devise a poster or create a facebook page, or a multimedial output including images and explicatory notes on the current king and the appointed dukes



Students will reflect upon Ray Bradbury and his being appointed duke of the kingdom of Redonda :the year, the reason for his title...

3.The creative reader

Each kingdom has its own motto

the motto of the kingdom of Redonda is " Ride si sapis" (Laugh if you are wise)

Students will discuss this motto in class, guided by their teacher, in order to develop their ideas in a written essay on the topic

Students will devise their own Kingdom of Redonda including the authors they mostly appreciate. They will look for pictures, write factfiles about the authors and point out the reason for their choice and invent a motto. (My kingdom of Redonda)

Students will devise a poster or create a facebook page or a multimedial output with their kingdom of Redonda

Additional activity

Students may write a letter to the current king of Redonda,the writer Javier Marras, and point out the authors they would like to appoint as dukes



Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
School: Liceo Seguenza – Messina (Italia)
Class: 2E
Teacher: Antonia Nuccio

The arsonist reader

“The good writers touch life often. The mediocre ones run a quick hand over her. The bad ones rape her and leave her for the flies”

Introduction: Once in his life everybody has had the impulse to “burn a novel”, a short story, a whole book (without doing that actually, of course!). Why?.....Because it was not the right moment to read it, or it was not the “right” book, or we thought the story was silly, or it was *undeniably* (!) horrible. The books on the shelves in libraries and bookshops can be interesting or boring, beautiful or ugly, they may take us to another dimension or we can simply refuse to go on reading them; there are books we feel as ours and books that remain distant from us, well written books and horribly written books.....Therefore, let’s give voice to the critical reader!

Time: 1 lesson

Activity

1. *The arsonist reader (just jocking, of course)*
2. *The self-directed reader*

“Do you love me?” she asked

“Of course” he answered

“Do you really love me?” she asked

“But of course” he answered

“Do you really, really love me” she asked

"No " he answered

"Do you love me?" she asked

"Of course" he answered

She asked nothing else.



Dear contributor,

We find your last short story amazing

We are going to publish it in our next issue and you'll be paid one thousand dollars for it!

P.S. Fool's Day!



“Dear contributor...”

“Thanks for submitting your novel to us”

“We are sorry it does not meet our present requirements”

“If it does in the future, it means we’ll be in trouble”

“Dear contributor, we received your manuscript on the race”

“It does not meet our present requirements”

“However we’d like to thank you for taking us into account”

“But we don’t”



"Sometimes I find you really naive"

"No one will ever pay you for those stupid short stories!"

"Wahh!!"

And it's no use crying...publishers do not pay authors not to make them cry...."

Why do they behave like this?



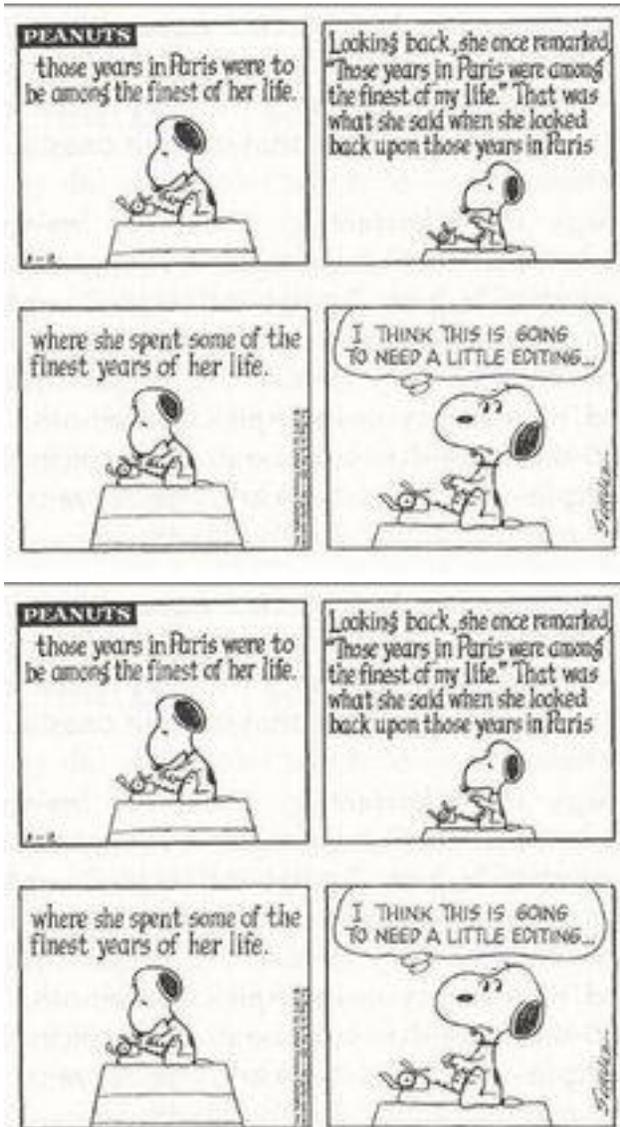


Dear participant, we are sending you back your stupid short story

You are a horrible writer, why do you keep annoying us? We would never buy one of your stories, even if you paid for that.

Leave us alone, get lost, go to hell

It is probably a standard refusal form



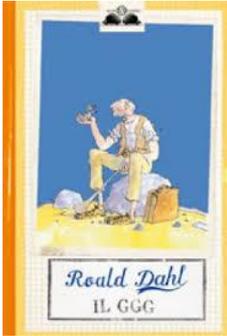
- For a while and only metaphorically students will change into an arsonist fireman and will pretend to set fire to a maximum of five books or extracts or tales they found boring or did not teach them anything or they find horrible in content and form

Literary Work	It is set on fire because...

- While working in groups, students will update their Facebook page on *Fahrenheit 451*, uploading a list of the can't-miss books with images and a brief comment (link: *The can't-miss books*)

Example

The can't-miss books

<p>The BFG by Roald Dahl</p> 
Brief motivation
<p>Eye of the Wolf by Daniel Pennac</p>



- With their teacher's help, students will search the Internet for interesting sites, links or blogs on historical Italian and European libraries and bookshops. During the school year, then, they'll have to show the images and write the links on their Facebook page *Fahrenheit 451*.

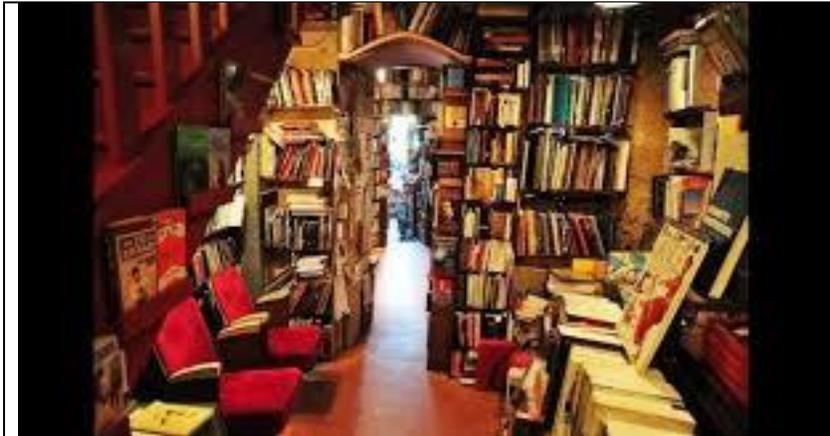
Example:

The Bookshop Lello and Irmão - Oporto



Harry Potter Bookshop

the Shakespeare and Company Bookshop- Paris



- *The self directed reader*

Students will have to find and suggest their teachers effective strategies to motivate young people to read books (and not to burn them!)



Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
School: Liceo Seguenza – Messina (Italia)
Class: 2E
Teacher: Antonia Nuccio

Who is afraid of books?

"So now do you see why books are hated and feared? They show the pores in the face of life. The comfortable people want only wax moon faces, poreless, hairless, expressionless.

And for the first time I realized that a man was behind each one of the books. A man had to think them up. A man had to take a long time to put them down on paper. And I'd never even thought that thought before."

Introduction:

Reading the various dialogues between Montag and Beatty and Montag and Faber makes us reflect upon the theme of the “need” for reading and the importance of books in the life of individuals and of the whole society. Freedom also derives from substance, awareness, confrontation and intellectual curiosity. *“Non c'è un solo libro fra questi che sia d'accordo con gli altri”*, Beatty says to an old lady. Luckily, we dare say! History has taught us all that the first thing that dictatorships cancel or censor is plurality of voices, that is to say, culture. But the problem is not only external. Everyday experience also teaches us that readers, as Faber says, are not so many and *“e lo stesso pubblico ha cessato di leggere di sua iniziativa!*

Timing: the workshop is divided in 5/6 steps



Activities:

1. *The conscious reader*: reading, re-reading, text analysis
2. *The thoughtful reader*: observing and producing texts
3. *The writer-reader*: rebuilding parts of a text
4. *The curious reader*: researches
5. *The multimedial reader*: searching for sites related to reading and to “reading places”
6. *The creative reader*: production of drawings/images
7. *The imaginative reader – in the story*: selection of music pieces
8. *The conscious reader*: reading, re-reading, text analysis

The **first step** refers to the first and second dialogue between Montag and Beatty, and to Faber’s discourse.

Beatty- Montag

When did it all start, you ask, this job of ours, how did it come about, where, when? Well, I'd say it really got started around about a thing called the Civil War. Even though our rule-book claims it was founded earlier. The fact is we didn't get along well until photography came into its own. Then--motion pictures in the early twentieth century. Radio. Television. Things began to have mass." Montag sat in bed, not moving. "And because they had mass, they became simpler," said Beatty. "Once, books appealed to a few people, here, there, everywhere. They could afford to be different. The world was roomy. But then the world got full of eyes and elbows and mouths. Double, triple, quadruple population. Films and radios, magazines, books levelled down to a sort of paste pudding norm, do you follow me?" "I think so." Beatty peered at the smoke pattern he had put out on the air. "Picture it. Nineteenth-century man with his horses, dogs, carts, slow motion. Then, in the twentieth century, speed up your camera. Books cut shorter. Condensations, Digests. Tabloids. Everything boils down to the gag, the snap ending." "Snap ending." Mildred nodded. "Classics cut to fit fifteen-minute radio shows, then cut again to fill a two-minute book column, winding up at last as a ten- or twelve-line dictionary resume. I exaggerate, of course. The dictionaries were for reference. But many were those whose sole knowledge of Hamlet (you know the title certainly, Montag; it is probably only a faint rumour of a title to you, Mrs. Montag) whose sole knowledge, as I say, of Hamlet was a one-page



digest in a book that claimed: 'now at least you can read all the classics; keep up with your neighbours.' Do you see? Out of the nursery into the college and back to the nursery; there's your intellectual pattern for the past five centuries or more." Mildred arose and began to move around the room, picking things up and putting them down. Beatty ignored her and continued

"Speed up the film, Montag, quick. Click? Pic? Look, Eye, Now, Flick, Here, There, Swift, Pace, Up, Down, In, Out, Why, How, Who, What, Where, Eh? Uh! Bang! Smack! Wallop, Bing, Bong, Boom! Digest-digests, digest-digest-digests. Politics? One column, two sentences, a headline! Then, in mid-air, all vanishes! Whirl man's mind around about so fast under the pumping hands of publishers, exploiters, broadcasters, that the centrifuge flings off all unnecessary, time-wasting thought!"

"School is shortened, discipline relaxed, philosophies, histories, languages dropped, English and spelling gradually neglected, finally almost completely ignored. Life is immediate, the job counts, pleasure lies all about after work. Why learn anything save pressing buttons, pulling switches, fitting nuts and bolts?"

"The zipper displaces the button and a man lacks just that much time to think while dressing at. dawn, a philosophical hour, and thus a melancholy hour."

Life becomes one big pratfall, Montag; everything bang; boff, and wow!"

"Empty the theatres save for clowns and furnish the rooms with glass walls and pretty colours running up and down the walls like confetti or blood or sherry or sauterne. You like baseball, don't you, Montag?" "Baseball's a fine game." Now Beatty was almost invisible, a voice somewhere behind a screen of smoke. You like bowling, don't you, Montag?" "Bowling, yes." "And golf?" "Golf is a fine game." "Basketball?" "A fine game."

"Billiards, pool? Football?" "Fine games, all of them." "More sports for everyone, group spirit, fun, and you don't have to think, eh? Organize and organize and superorganize super-super sports. More cartoons in books. More pictures. The mind



drinks less and less. Impatience. Highways full of crowds going somewhere, somewhere, somewhere, nowhere. The gasoline refugee. Towns turn into motels, people in nomadic surges from place to place, following the moon tides, living tonight in the room where you slept this noon and I the night before."

"Now let's take up the minorities in our civilization, shall we? Bigger the population, the more minorities. Don't step on the toes of the dog?lovers, the cat?lovers, doctors, lawyers, merchants, chiefs, Mormons, Baptists, Unitarians, second?generation Chinese, Swedes, Italians, Germans, Texans, Brooklynites, Irishmen, people from Oregon or Mexico. The people in this book, this play, this TV serial are not meant to represent any actual painters, cartographers, mechanics anywhere. The bigger your market, Montag, the less you handle controversy, remember that! All the minor minor minorities with their navels to be kept clean. Authors, full of evil thoughts, lock up your typewriters. They did. Magazines became a nice blend of vanilla tapioca. Books, so the damned snobbish critics said, were dishwater. No wonder books stopped selling, the critics said. But the public, knowing what it wanted, spinning happily, let the comic?books survive. And the three?dimensional sex?magazines, of course. There you have it, Montag. It didn't come from the Government down. There was no dictum, no declaration, no censorship, to start with, no! Technology, mass exploitation, and minority pressure carried the trick, thank God. Today, thanks to them, you can stay happy all the time, you are allowed to read comics, the good old confessions, or trade?journals."

"Yes, but what about the firemen, then?" asked Montag. "Ah." Beatty leaned forward in the faint mist of smoke from his pipe. "What more easily explained and natural? With school turning out more runners, jumpers, racers, tinkerers, grabbers, snatchers, fliers, and swimmers instead of examiners, critics, knowers, and imaginative creators, the word `intellectual,' of course, became the swear word it deserved to be. You always dread the unfamiliar. Surely you remember the boy in your own school class who was exceptionally 'bright,' did most of the reciting and answering while the others sat like so many leaden idols, hating him. And wasn't it this bright boy you selected for beatings and tortures after hours? Of course it was. 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. So! A book is a loaded gun in the house next door. Burn it. Take the shot from the weapon. Breach man's mind. Who knows who might be the target of the well? read man? Me? I won't stomach them for a minute. And so when houses were finally fireproofed completely, all over the world (you were correct in your assumption the other night) there was no longer need of firemen for the old purposes. They were given the new job, as custodians of our peace of mind, the focus of our understandable and rightful dread of being inferior; official censors, judges, and executors. That's you, Montag, and that's me."

"You must understand that our civilization is so vast that we can't have our minorities upset and stirred. Ask yourself, What do we want in this country, above all? People want to be happy, isn't that right? Haven't you heard it all your life? I want to be happy, people say. Well, aren't they? Don't we keep them moving, don't we give them fun? That's all we live for, isn't it? For pleasure, for titillation? And you must admit our culture provides plenty of these."

"Yes."

"Coloured people don't like Little Black Sambo. Burn it. White people don't feel good about Uncle Tom's Cabin. Burn it. Someone's written a book on tobacco and cancer of the lungs? The cigarette people are weeping? Bum the book. Serenity, Montag. Peace, Montag. Take your fight outside. Better yet, into the incinerator. Funerals are unhappy and pagan? Eliminate them, too. Five minutes after a person is dead he's on his way to the Big Flue, the Incinerators serviced by helicopters all over the country. Ten minutes after death a man's a speck of black dust. Let's not quibble over individuals with memoriams. Forget them. Burn them all, burn everything. Fire is bright and fire is clean."

"There was a girl next door," he said, slowly. "She's gone now, I think, dead. I can't even remember her face. But she was different. How? how did she happen?" Beatty smiled. "Here or there, that's bound to occur. Clarisse McClellan? We've a record on her family. We've watched them carefully. Heredity and environment are funny things. You can't rid yourselves of all the odd ducks in just a few years. The home environment can undo a lot you try to do at school. That's why we've lowered the



kindergarten age year after year until now we're almost snatching them from the cradle. We had some false alarms on the McClellans, when they lived in Chicago. Never found a book. Uncle had a mixed record; anti-social. The girl? She was a time bomb. The family had been feeding her subconscious, I'm sure, from what I saw of her school record. She didn't want to know how a thing was done, but why. That can be embarrassing. You ask Why to a lot of things and you wind up very unhappy indeed, if you keep at it. The poor girl's better off dead."

"Luckily, queer ones like her don't happen, often. We know how to nip most of them in the bud, early. You can't build a house without nails and wood. If you don't want a house built, hide the nails and wood. If you don't want a man unhappy politically, don't give him two sides to a question to worry him; give him one. Better yet, give him none. Let him forget there is such a thing as war. If the Government is inefficient, top-heavy, and tax-mad, better it be all those than that people worry over it. Peace, Montag. Give the people contests they win by remembering the words to more popular songs or the names of state capitals or how much corn Iowa grew last year. Cram them full of non-combustible data, chock them so damned full of 'facts' they feel stuffed, but absolutely 'brilliant' with information. Then they'll feel they're thinking, they'll get a sense of motion without moving. And they'll be happy, because facts of that sort don't change. Don't give them any slippery stuff like philosophy or sociology to tie things up with. That way lies melancholy. Any man who can take a TV wall apart and put it back together again, and most men can nowadays, is happier than any man who tries to slide-rule, measure, and equate the universe, which just won't be measured or equated without making man feel bestial and lonely. I know, I've tried it; to hell with it. So bring on your clubs and parties, your acrobats and magicians, your dare-devils, jet cars, motor-cycle helicopters, your sex and heroin, more of everything to do with automatic reflex. If the drama is bad, if the film says nothing, if the play is hollow, sting me with the theremin, loudly. I'll think I'm responding to the play, when it's only a tactile reaction to vibration. But I don't care. I just like solid entertainment."

Beatty got up. "I must be going. Lecture's over. I hope I've clarified things. The important thing for you to remember, Montag, is we're the Happiness Boys, the Dixie Duo, you and I and the others. We stand against the small tide of those who want to make everyone unhappy with conflicting theory and thought. We have our fingers in



the dyke. Hold steady. Don't let the torrent of melancholy and drear philosophy drown our world. We depend on you. I don't think you realize how important you are, to our happy world as it stands now."

Beatty shook Montag's limp hand. Montag still sat, as if the house were collapsing about him and he could not move, in the bed. Mildred had vanished from the door. "One last thing," said Beatty. "At least once in his career, every fireman gets an itch. What do the books say, he wonders. Oh, to scratch that itch, eh? Well, Montag, take my word for it, I've had to read a few in my time, to know what I was about, and the books say nothing! Nothing you can teach or believe. They're about non-existent people, figments of imagination, if they're fiction. And if they're non-fiction, it's worse, one professor calling another an idiot, one philosopher screaming down another's gullet. All of them running about, putting out the stars and extinguishing the sun. You come away lost."

"Well, then, what if a fireman accidentally, really not, intending anything, takes a book home with him?" Montag twitched. The open door looked at him with its great vacant eye. "A natural error. Curiosity alone," said Beatty. "We don't get over-anxious or mad. We let the fireman keep the book twenty four hours. If he hasn't burned it by then, we simply come and burn it for him."

- After reading the text carefully, students will have to single out Beatty's reasons for burning books in order to favour the happiness of mankind.
- Students will have to discuss Beatty's opinions and single out the elements that make them surprisingly modern.

Faber- Montag

"You're a hopeless romantic," said Faber. "It would be funny if it were not serious. It's not books you need, it's some of the things that once were in books. The same things could be in the 'parlour families' today. The same infinite detail and awareness could be projected through the radios and televisions, but are not. No, no, it's not books at all you're looking for! Take it where you can find it, in old phonograph records, old motion pictures, and in old friends; look for it in nature and look for it in yourself. Books were

only one type of receptacle where we stored a lot of things we were afraid we might forget. There is nothing magical in them at all. The magic is only in what books say, how they stitched the patches of the universe together into one garment for us. Of course you couldn't know this, of course you still can't understand what I mean when I say all this. You are intuitively right, that's what counts. Three things are missing.

"Number one: Do you know why books such as this are so important? Because they have quality. And what does the word quality mean? To me it means texture. This book has pores. It has features. This book can go under the microscope. You'd find life under the glass, streaming past in infinite profusion. The more pores, the more truthfully recorded details of life per square inch you can get on a sheet of paper, the more `literary' you are. That's my definition, anyway. Telling detail. Fresh detail. The good writers touch life often. The mediocre ones run a quick hand over her. The bad ones rape her and leave her for the flies.

"So now do you see why books are hated and feared? They show the pores in the face of life. The comfortable people want only wax moon faces, poreless, hairless, expressionless. We are living in a time when flowers are trying to live on flowers, instead of growing on good rain and black loam. Even fireworks, for all their prettiness, come from the chemistry of the earth. Yet somehow we think we can grow, feeding on flowers and fireworks, without completing the cycle back to reality. Do you know the legend of Hercules and Antaeus, the giant wrestler, whose strength was incredible so long as he stood firmly on the earth. But when he was held, rootless, in mid-air, by Hercules, he perished easily. If there isn't something in that legend for us today, in this city, in our time, then I am completely insane. Well, there we have the first thing I said we needed. Quality, texture of information."

"And the second?" "Leisure." "Oh, but we've plenty of off-hours." "Off-hours, yes. But time to think? If you're not driving a hundred miles an hour, at a clip where you can't think of anything else but the danger, then you're playing some game or sitting in some room where you can't argue with the fourwall televisor. Why? The televisor is 'real.' It is immediate, it has dimension. It tells you what to think and blasts it in. It must be, right. It seems so right. It rushes you on so quickly to its own conclusions your mind hasn't time to protest, 'What nonsense!'" "Only the 'family' is 'people.'" "I beg your pardon?" "My wife says books aren't 'real.'" "Thank God for that. You can shut



them, say, 'Hold on a moment.' You play God to it. But who has ever torn himself from the claw that encloses you when you drop a seed in a TV parlour? It grows you any shape it wishes! It is an environment as real as the world. It becomes and is the truth. Books can be beaten down with reason. But with all my knowledge and scepticism, I have never been able to argue with a one-hundred-piece symphony orchestra, full colour, three dimensions, and I being in and part of those incredible parlours. As you see, my parlour is nothing but four plaster walls. And here " He held out two small rubber plugs. "For my ears when I ride the subway-jets."

"Denham's Dentifrice; they toil not, neither do they spin," said Montag, eyes shut. "Where do we go from here? Would books help us?" "Only if the third necessary thing could be given us. Number one, as I said, quality of information. Number two: leisure to digest it. And number three: the right to carry out actions based on what we learn from the inter-action of the first two. And I hardly think a very old man and a fireman turned sour could do much this late in the game..."

"If you thought it would be a plan worth trying, I'd have to take your word it would help." "You can't guarantee things like that! After all, when we had all the books we needed, we still insisted on finding the highest cliff to jump off. But we do need a breather. We do need knowledge. And perhaps in a thousand years we might pick smaller cliffs to jump off. The books are to remind us what asses and fools we are. They're Caesar's praetorian guard, whispering as the parade roars down the avenue, 'Remember, Caesar, thou art mortal.' Most of us can't rush around, talking to everyone, know all the cities of the world, we haven't time, money or that many friends. The things you're looking for, Montag, are in the world, but the only way the average chap will ever see ninety-nine per cent of them is in a book.

"But that would just nibble the edges. The whole culture's shot through. The skeleton needs melting and re-shaping. Good God, it isn't as simple as just picking up a book you laid down half a century ago. Remember, the firemen are rarely necessary. The public itself stopped reading of its own accord. You firemen provide a circus now and then at which buildings are set off and crowds gather for the pretty blaze, but it's a small sideshow indeed, and hardly necessary to keep things in line. So few want to be rebels any more. And out of those few, most, like myself, scare easily. Can you dance



faster than the White Clown, shout louder than `Mr. Gimmick' and the parlour `families'? If you can, you'll win your way, Montag. In any event, you're a fool. People are having fun" "Committing suicide! Murdering!"

. That was the year I came to class at the start of the new semester and found only one student to sign up for Drama from Aeschylus to O'Neill. You see? How like a beautiful statue of ice it was, melting in the sun. I remember the newspapers dying like huge moths. No one wanted them back. No one missed them. And the Government, seeing how advantageous it was to have people reading only about passionate lips and the fist in the stomach, circled the situation with your fire-eaters.

- Students-readers, “silently” like Montag, will read again the two passages, noticing that the protagonists contradict their initial views on books.
- Students will find in the text the opinions of the two protagonists, and will fill in a table, to prove that they are antithetical

	Beatty’s opinions	Faber’s opinions
1.		



2. *The thoughtful reader*

II **second step** concerns the observation of present-day society and the reflection on what has been read and observed.

After reading Faber's words, (No one wanted them back. No one missed them. And the Government, seeing how advantageous it was to have people reading only about passionate lips and the fist in the stomach...) students will carry out a survey among relatives, friends, peers, teachers, to see if people around them read , how much they read, what they read...and will produce a written report an their findings.

- Students will write an **essay** on the following topic: *What would society be like without books?*
- Students will write an **essay** on the following topic: *Who is afraid of books??*
- Students will write an **essay** on the following topic: *A book cannot stop a war and literature cannot change the world alone. However, if we tried to deprive the mind and the soul of a man of all the books he has read in his life, that man would surely be different. And I still hope that literature can influence life. Nicole Krauss*

3. *The writer-reader*

Students read again the passage where Montag understands that Beatty had been determined to die; then, they will have to decide if what Montag thinks is true and to understand Beatty's reasons for dying.

In the middle of the crying Montag knew it for the truth. Beatty had wanted to die. He had just stood there, not really trying to save himself, just stood there, joking, needling, thought Montag, and the thought was enough to stifle his sobbing and let him pause for air. How strange, strange, to want to die so much that you let a man walk around armed and then instead of shutting up and staying alive, you go on yelling at people and making fun of them until you get them mad, and then

4. *The curious (and multimedial) reader*



- Students will carry on a research on book bonfires in history, starting from the Roman Times.
- Students will study with attention the Nazi **Bücherverbrennungen** creating a presentation with images, comments, dates...
- Students will have to look for the answer an American father gave his son's teachers about reading *fahrenheit 451*.

5. *The multimedial reader*

- Students will have to create a Facebook wall dedicated to the novel and to the activities they have carried out.

6. *The creative reader*. production of drawings/images

- Students will have to draw an inside cover that represents Faber's speech or that draws inspiration from the positive images linked to the books quoted in the novel.
- Students will have to choose one sentence each (or a poem) about reading, or about books, and create a poster with it. (Cfr. poster Einaudi)

9. *The reader in the story (Lector in fabula)*

- Students will have to imagine the setting of the two dialogues and choose two music pieces as soundtrack to the protagonists' words.

Link

<https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bücherverbrennungen>

https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rogo_di_libri

<https://www.usmmm.org/wlc/it/article.php?ModuleId=10007978>

www.huffingtonpost.it/2016/10/28/lettura-fahrenheit451-scuola_n_12688958.html

Materials:

1. Example of ex. N. 6 carried out by a student



Reading

“At the age of 70, those who don’t read will have led only one life: their own!

Those who read will have lived 5000 lives:

they were there when Cain killed Abel, when Renzo married Lucia

and when Leopardi admired the infinite...

because literature is backwards immortality”

Umberto Eco





Reading

You understand you read a good book, when you turn the last page and you feel
as if you had lost a friend.

Paul Sweeney

