



Palm Harbor University High School
International Baccalaureate Language Arts
2026 - 2027 School Year

Reading List and Summer Assignment
10th Grade Pre-IB/AP Language and Composition
Instructors: E. Hodge & E. Peluso

"The greatest adventure is what lies ahead.
Today and tomorrow are yet to be said.
The chances, the changes are all yours to
make. The mold of your life is in your
hands to break." - J. R. R. Tolkien

Class Novels

- *(Summer Assignment) Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury
 - Simon and Schuster, ISBN: 97801451673319
- *(Can purchase ahead of time for semester 2) The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald.
 - Simon and Schuster, ISBN-13: 9780743273565

***Other works will be determined or provided by instructor at the start of the school year**

"It was a pleasure to burn."

We're excited to announce the 10th grade summer novel: *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury. Blending speculative and dystopian fiction, Bradbury imagines a future society in which books are outlawed, critical thinking is discouraged, and "firemen" are tasked not with putting out fires, but with burning books instead. At its core, *Fahrenheit 451* explores the power of ideas and the dangers of censorship, conformity, and unchecked authority. Through its haunting vision of the future, the novel raises enduring questions about knowledge, morality, and the role of media in shaping society. While the world Bradbury depicts may seem extreme, his warnings were grounded in historical patterns and cultural anxieties that remain strikingly relevant today. And while some of you may have already read this work in the past, we feel that you'll approach with fresh eyes and new skills.

Engaging with Sensitive Topics (IB):

Bradbury includes some potentially sensitive topics, and it has indeed been challenged in schools in the United States for several reasons: mild profanity with words like "hell" and "damn," some violence, the negative portrayal of firemen, and references to (and the burning of) the Bible, among other books. **Of course**, Bradbury's work is a warning against all of these things.

All studies in literature courses will provide the opportunity to engage with a broad range of texts, approaches, ideas, stimuli and interpretations that address topics of personal, local and global significance. These works may challenge learners intellectually, personally and culturally, and involve sensitive and mature topics. The courses studied may explicitly address sensitive topics through texts and issues discussed while inviting students to critically reflect on various perspectives offered. Providing a safe environment in which discussion may be facilitated is an important role of the teacher. In general, approaching sensitive topics in studies in literature courses must be done through an intellectually critical lens.

Assignment Details:

Annotate *Fahrenheit 451* as you read, according to the processes you have been taught (see rubric at end of document). In the margins of the book, note significance of character development, track structure/plot/hero's journey, motifs, and literary elements such as figurative language, irony, symbols, and so on. When you get stuck, make connections between the text and your life/society (*there are so many creepy parallels to our world right now*), predict, pose questions of your own, note patterns, etc. You will have a reading test (on the novel in its entirety) on the second session upon your return. And other assessments might include a Socratic seminar and commentary essay.

Please be aware that students will be held responsible for the assignments on the first day of the fall semester. If a student chooses to change the level of course or class or program over the summer, the student will be held responsible for the summer assignments for the courses reflected on the schedule for the first day of school. If you have questions regarding which course you are enrolled in for the fall, please contact your guidance counselor. If you have any questions regarding the assignment, please contact hodgeel@pcsb.org or pelusoe@pcsb.org

Annotation Guide for Fahrenheit 451

As you read, pay attention to the items found on the Annotation Guide. No – you’re not expected to annotate for everything. No – you’re not expected to colormark an entire book the way we do for isolated passages. The simple point of annotating is interact with the text and show your thinking/engage with the text. Hopefully, you’ll reach a point where you don’t even need to look at this guide. **Use this when you feel stuck.** You should never be able to say, “I don’t know what to annotate for.”

To Sum Up: Interact with the text and think on the page (this includes marginal notes and connections). Use your annotations to fuel our future discussions, seminars, group activities, and longer commentaries. Annotation illuminates meaning! **You are not limited to this list.**

1. CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT –

- For each of the following characters, trace their 1st and other significant appearances throughout the novel. You can use the STEAL method (Speech, Thoughts, Effect on others, Actions, Looks). Of course, you can also write down how you feel toward characters on a personal level (empathy, dislike, confusion, etc.)
- As you find characterization (**direct** or **indirect**) and **character foils**.
- Keep track of how the main characters change (**dynamic**) or remain the same over time (**static**). **How** are they portrayed? Simple (**Flat**) or complex (**Round**)? **How** does Bradbury bring the characters to life? **Why** does he characterize them this way? Are they **symbolic** of something?
- What role do they play in the hero’s journey? Are they a mentor, helper, shadow, threshold guardian, scapegoat, shapeshifter?
 - Guy Montag, Mildred, Captain Beatty, Professor Faber, Clarisse McClellan, Granger, Mrs. Phelps, Mrs. Bowles

2. MOTIFS– Look for the following motifs. If they are meaningful, annotate them, and discuss what they are and how they are used

- Nature imagery, Blood, Mirrors, Books/knowledge, Water, Fire/heat/light, Coldness & darkness

3. THEMATIC Topics – *Characteristics of Dystopia*

- **Mass Media:** **Mass media** obscures real life experiences and interferes with the characters’ ability to think
- **Censorship:** By making widespread **censorship** a phenomenon that emerges from the culture itself—and not one that is simply imposed by the government—Bradbury is expressing a concern that the power of mass media can ultimately suppress free speech as thoroughly as any totalitarian regime like Hitler’s.
- **Conformity vs. Individuality:** In the society of F451, most people **conform** to a pleasure-seeking lifestyle whereby thinking and self-expression are considered dangerous to the norm. Therefore, anyone who professes his or her **individuality** is seen as a threat to society.
- **Distraction vs. Happiness:** The people of 451 equate pleasure-seeking and **distraction** with **happiness**; however, the novel makes the case that only when one pursues engaging with difficult or uncomfortable thoughts can one achieve a real and meaningful relationship with the world and with each other. These real relationships lead to true **happiness**.
- **Action vs. Inaction:** The novel is concerned with the idea of **taking action** versus **standing by** while society falters. Some characters act while others passively allow the world to happen to them.

4. Any and all connections you can make to the Professor!

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| • Intertextuality: the Bible, mythology, Shakespeare, fairytales, other literature | • Acts of Violence |
| • Hero’s Journey: Every Trip is a Quest | • Irony |
| • Geography/seasons/function of setting | • It’s All Political |
| • Illness and Heart Disease | |

Annotation Rubric

- Grade A or B: Evidence of copious, helpful annotations, a great deal of which are related to any topics specified by the assignment. **Avoids merely summarizing or term hunting. Makes connections; thinks on the page!** Difference between A and B: eye for nuance, detail, and relevance.
- Grade C: Too few annotations, or the annotations are usually vague. The most important sections of the book are not marked. Annotations are not complete enough to amount to a solid tool for the student.
- Grade D: Almost all of the annotations are highlighting, underlining, or the like. Very little marginal or interlineated writing is present.
- Grade F: Very few annotations are present, or annotations are present only at the beginning of a reading assignment