



INDIANA
REPERTORY
THEATRE

Ray Bradbury's
FAHRENHEIT 451
adapted by Tobias Andersen

January 26 – February 20, 2022

on the OneAmerica Mainstage

STUDY GUIDE

Indiana Repertory Theatre
140 West Washington Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Janet Allen, Margot Lacey Eccles
Executive Artistic Director
Suzanne Sweeney, Managing Director

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RAY BRADBURY'S

FAHRENHEIT 451 ADAPTED BY TOBIAS ANDERSEN

In a dystopian future where the written word is forbidden, firemen are paid to burn books instead of fight fires. But when Montag starts to read the books he is supposed to burn, he begins to question the life he leads. Now he must choose between continuing his regimented existence or risking everything for the right to think. Published in 1953, this science fiction classic is even more relevant today.

Recommended for students in grades 7-12

CONTENT ADVISORY

Fahrenheit 451 is an adaptation of Ray Bradbury's science fiction classic that contains mild swearing and imagery that may frighten younger students. A script preview is available upon request.

The performance will last approximately two hours with one intermission.

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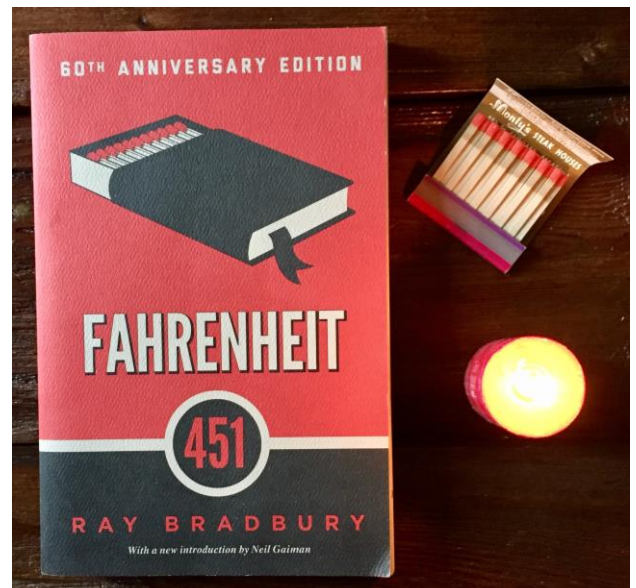
THE STORY OF *FAHRENHEIT 451*

Fahrenheit 451 is set in a not-too-distant dystopian future where books are banned. The job of a fireman, rather than to put out fires, is to start fires, burning books. One late night Montag, a fireman, meets Clarisse, his new next door neighbor, and they walk together. She is different from other people in his world. She thinks; she asks questions; she doesn't watch television all the time. She asks Montag, "Are you happy?" The question puzzles and confuses him. Arriving home, Montag discovers that his wife, Mildred, has overdosed again on sleeping pills. Medics pump her stomach, and the next morning she remembers nothing. On his way to work, Montag again encounters Clarisse. The local Citizen's Committee has ordered her to see an analyst because they consider her "anti-social." When she asks Montag how he came to be a fireman, again he feels uncomfortable.

At the firehouse, the station's mechanical Hound waits to be programmed with coordinates for prey that needs killing, whether cat or rat or human. Montag feels that the Hound doesn't like him. That night the firemen go to burn books that have been hidden at the home of a Mrs. Hudson. She defies the firemen, refusing to abandon her books and dying in the blaze. Montag secretly keeps one of the books. Later that night, he once again encounters Clarisse, and for the first time he wonders about what might be in books that would make Mrs. Hudson so strong.

The next day, Montag refuses to go to work, but the station captain, Beatty, shows up at his house. Montag confesses he is hiding a book, and Beatty tells him how society began burning books and why it is so important. Beatty's point of view is full of anger and prejudice. Beatty commands Montag to come to work. At the end of the day, Beatty takes Montag to his own apartment, where he reveals a secret stash of thousands of books. Beatty tells Montag how he was once an avid reader, but he eventually came to believe that books could not help him, so he became a dedicated book burner. He claims that his collection is not illegal because he does not read the books. He gives Montag a book, warning him to keep it but not to read it. He tells Montag that Clarisse is dead.

Several weeks later, after secretly collecting a number of books, Montag begins reading them, but he doesn't understand what he reads. He goes to Faber, Clarisse's grandfather, for help. Faber gives him a small earpiece that allows him to teach Montag remotely. Beatty challenges Montag to a verbal duel and Faber helps Montag with literary quotations. When Beatty discovers the earpiece, Montag must escape. Outside the city he finds a community of book lovers who are trying to preserve something for the future.



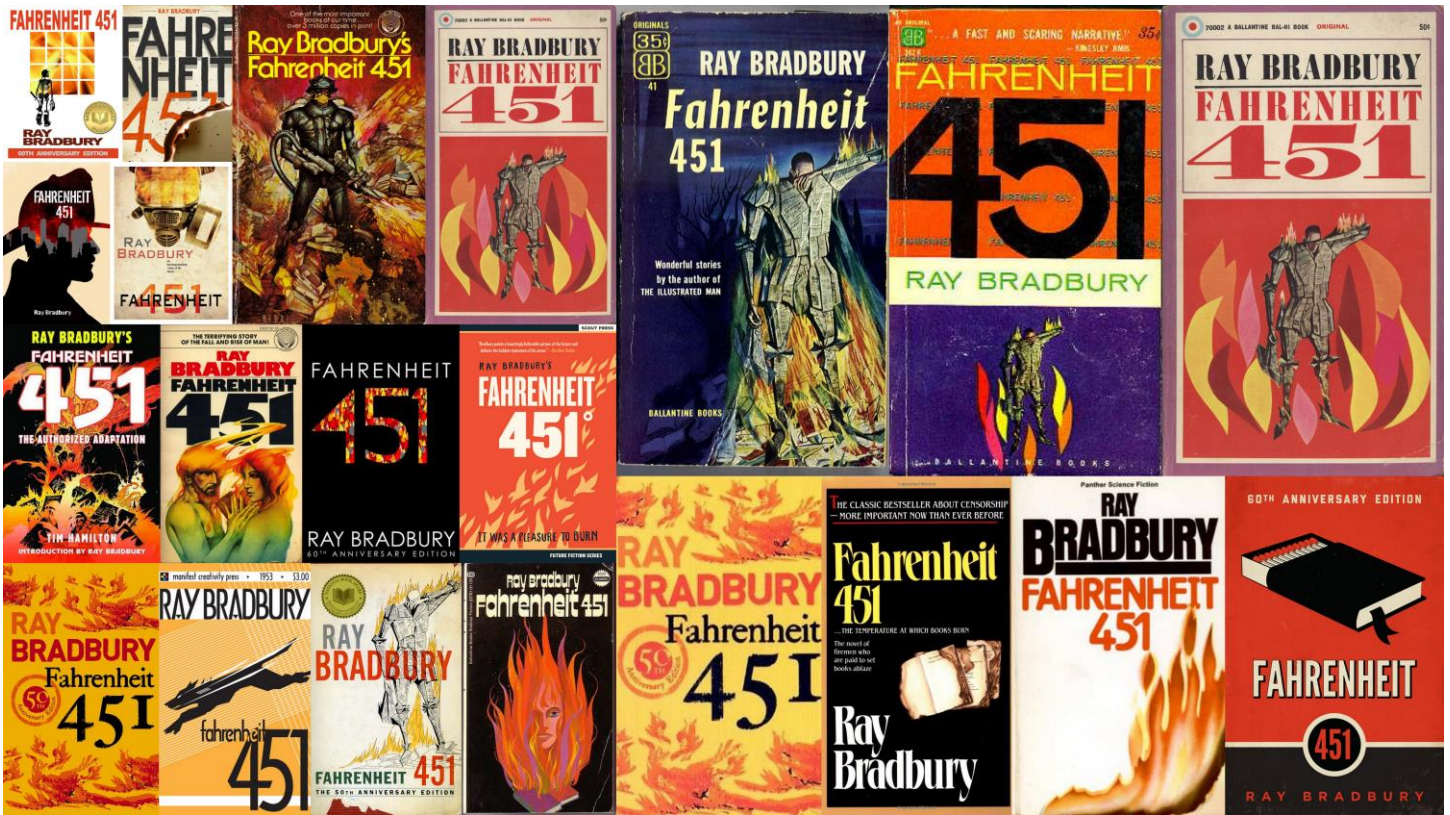
THE TRUTH OF FICTION

BY JANET ALLEN, MARGOT LACY ECCLES ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

“Fiction is a lie that tells us true things, over and over.” In the preface to the 60th anniversary edition of *Fahrenheit 451*, published in 2013, writer Neil Gaiman wrote these prescient words, echoing a sentiment that many a fiction writer has held: While fiction is by definition untrue, it is often better at telling us important things about our world than journalism or documentary. While the latter forms are truth-based, fiction imbues our senses with emotional charges that we feel deep inside us, speaking powerfully to our hearts and viscera as much as to our heads. Bradbury’s cautionary tale does just that: it imagines a world that, from his 1953 perspective, seemed like a potential future: a world where reading (and critical thinking) would be illegal, where interactive television screens would fill whole walls of houses, where tiny ear buds would deliver messages that both entertained and controlled, where walking outdoors to enjoy nature would be viewed with grave suspicion—and where firefighters would start fires rather than subdue them, destroying rather than saving.

How many of these things resonate in our current world? Not quite all—if they were, Bradbury would be a fortuneteller rather than a novelist—but the book captures a number of societal trends that frighten many of us. The intense addiction that technology holds for millions, the diminishment of





human conversation about ideas, the impulse to ban books in order to control people's thinking—these are all things we see widely practiced in our culture. There are secondary cautions as well. Drug addiction, abuse of power, excessive reliance on artificial intelligence, random acts of state-authorized violence—we don't have to look far in Bradbury's story to feel the skin on the backs of our necks creep with recognition.

This is a story that impacts us differently, as great classics do, at different points in our lives, and that's one reason we chose to produce it this year. Many of us first read this story in junior high or high school, when the awakening of Montag and the independence of Clarisse appealed to our rebellious natures. We hope that these ideas will continue to captivate today's student matinee attendees. As adults we might now find ourselves perceiving this story quite differently. We may question the roles we have played in enabling these societal norms to creep in unseen, or we may consider ways we want to combat some of these frightening trends in our own lives. In terms of the recent past, COVID has made us all more screen-addicted, and given us far greater challenges in terms of holding live conversations with others; but it has also, I hope, brought many of us more solitary time to consume lots of books! My own bookshelves are certainly more laden since COVID, and while my mind is the happier for this abundance, it also gives me a greater sense of horror at the book burning in *Fahrenheit 451*.

We are very pleased to have found this stage rendition of Bradbury's epic story, adapted by actor Tobias Andersen, who knew Bradbury well and collaborated with him on other projects. The joy of having Tobias's input into the text, a direct line from the author to us, is something for which we are deeply grateful.

ARE YOU HAPPY?

BY BENJAMIN HANNA, DIRECTOR



Clarisse asks Montag this simple question. For the first time in as long as he can remember, he contemplates his happiness. Is he experiencing feelings of joy, satisfaction, contentment, and fulfillment? Do his positive moments on earth outweigh his negative moments? And if he isn't happy, what can he do to find happiness?

This is the beginning of an awakening—a slow realization that his path is being carefully and meticulously tracked and guided. As he wakes, he realizes that every day he is choosing to follow this path and yet is immobilized by a system that has been built for him not to think, but to do. And not just to do, but to *follow*. Is any of this sounding familiar?

In 1953 when Bradbury wrote *Fahrenheit 451*, it was deemed a great work of science fiction. Now, nearly 70 years later, we are—in often terrifying ways—living in the future he imagined. As the miracle of technology began to change our learning and living patterns, how did we fall into the traps that he suspected we would fall into?

Revisiting Bradbury's classic gives us an opportunity to contemplate what our culture will be like if we don't change course—if we don't figure out how to utilize technology without letting it become the center of our human experience. Many of us have already begun to understand the grip that technology has on our precious moments on earth. Who hasn't felt at least a moment of panic when we discover ourselves without internet access or cell service? Or when we lose our smart phone and need to navigate to our next destination on our own? Who hasn't been frustrated by the expectations we have for people to have the same competencies with technology that we have?

When the power goes out and we are left by candlelight to sit and think without constant entertainment or distraction, can we find our way to happiness? Headlines blare that Facebook is preparing a virtual Metaverse where we can socialize, work, and play. Young people are developing extreme body dysmorphia and depression from social media. The wealthiest among us are becoming astronauts-for-a-day in the midst of a global pandemic. And capitalizing on this wave is a growing movement to disconnect from technology and find our way to wellness through meditation, yoga, silent retreats, medication, and any variety of therapeutic and detoxifying practices.

We have gathered in the theatre together to connect to a human story that uses the breadth and energy of both the human experience and the technology that every year advances and grows more alluring. As we attend Bradbury's cautionary tale, we must question how we will take a stand against the monoliths of technology. These companies benefit from our constant stream of information, and make us crave looking better, owning more, and judging our worth based on the size of our bank accounts and our online popularity. We have choices.

Just months ago we were celebrating the transformational power of literature in *The Book Club Play*. Now, we imagine a world where our modern-day heroes are keeping us from the joy and imagination and freedom we receive from these same beloved books. Bradbury's dystopia invites us all to consider our relationship to technology and ask the simple and important question: Are you happy?



FUTURE PRESENT

WILLIAM BOLES SCENIC DESIGNER

What does a world look like in which books are burned? Imagining Montag's reality of *Fahrenheit 451*, surreal mages of a mind-numbing machine inspired my thinking. While blending a library and a firehouse, we've worked to create an environment in which projected image relates to space in a physical way.



Preliminary storyboard by projections designer Rasean Davonte Johnson.

RASEAN DAVONTE JOHNSON PROJECTION DESIGNER

“Let’s suppose that you were able every night to dream any dream that you wanted to dream. And that you could, for example, have the power within one night to dream 75 years of time. Or any length of time you wanted to have. And you would, naturally, as you began on this adventure of dreams, you would fulfill all your wishes. You would have every kind of pleasure you could conceive. And after several nights of 75 years of total pleasure each, you would say, “Well, that was pretty great.” But now let’s have a surprise. Let’s have a dream which isn’t under control. Where something is gonna happen to me that I don’t know what it’s going to be. And you would dig that and come out of that and say, “Wow, that was a close shave, wasn’t it?” And then you would get more and more adventurous, and you would make further and further out gambles as to what you would dream. And finally, you would dream ... where you are now. You would dream the dream of living the life that you are actually living today.”

—Alan Watts (1915-1973), theologian & philosopher

IZUMI INABA COSTUME DESIGNER

There are two contrasting costume ideas, the firemen and the book people, which I had a great fun designing. I am looking forward to Montag's journey from the cold and rigid world of "civilization" to a warmer and more organic world of the imagination.



Renderings by costume designer Izumi Inaba for the Firemen and Aristotle..

KEVIN O'DONNELL SOUND DESIGNER

Often—and definitely for *Fahrenheit 451*—I find my early inspiration in the intersection of natural sounds and musical ones (both acoustic and electronic). Years ago I learned that “non-pitched” percussion actually had so many pitches that they cancelled each other out. It isn't true to think of a drum as having no pitch, but rather no *dominant* pitch. This concept is true of the sounds of waves, rain, wind, and fire as well. If I drag wire brushes over a snare drum, I can mimic all of those natural sounds. The white noise or “snow” of a TV channel with no signal also shares this quality. These kinds of ideas always give me a starting place for sound and music when creating worlds that are not an exact reflection of our own, but that are still human.

AUTHOR RAY BRADBURY

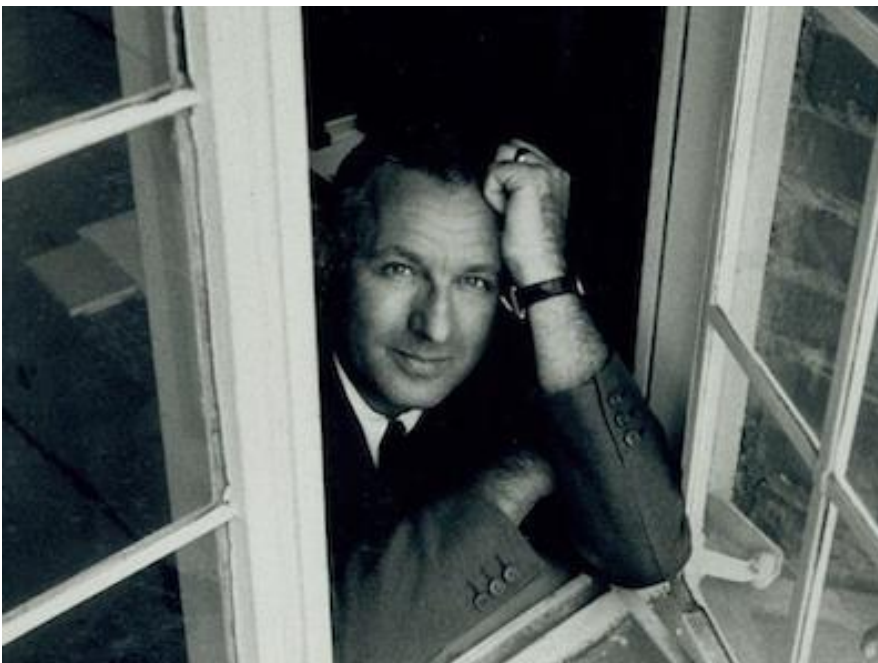
BY RICHARD J ROBERTS, RESIDENT DRAMATURG

At the height of the Space Age, Ray Bradbury inspired scientists, astronauts, and other readers of all ages with his stories and novels that blurred the boundaries between fiction and reality. In science fiction works that offered pointed social criticism and prescient warnings about over-reliance on technology, he focused less on science and more on human beings: “I use a scientific idea as a platform to leap into the air and never come back.”

The New York Times called Bradbury “the writer most responsible for bringing modern science fiction into the literary mainstream.” But Bradbury himself wrote, “People ask me to predict the future, when all I want to do is prevent it.”

Ray Bradbury was born in Waukegan, Illinois, in 1920. His father was an electrical and telephone lineman, his mother a Swedish immigrant. By the age of 4 Ray had learned to read; among his favorite childhood authors were H. G. Wells, Jules Verne, and Edgar Allan Poe. In later years, Bradbury often told of an encounter with a carnival magician. Wreathed in static electricity, “Mr. Electrico” reached out to the 12-year-old boy and commanded, “Live forever!” Bradbury said, “I decided that was the greatest idea I had ever heard. I started writing every day. I never stopped.”

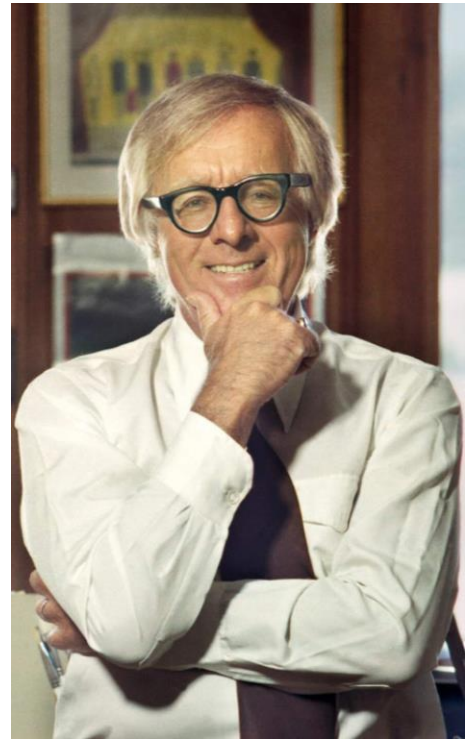
In 1934, Bradbury’s family moved to Los Angeles, California. Teen-aged Ray would roller-skate through Hollywood, “hell-bent on getting autographs from glamorous stars. It was glorious.” Among those he met was George Burns, and at 14 Ray earned his first money as a writer by selling a joke to *The Burns & Allen Show*. He joined his high school drama club as well as the Los Angeles Science Fiction League, attending weekly meetings and making connections with other aspiring writers.



Bradbury graduated from high school in 1938, but he always credited his real education to the public library. “Libraries raised me.... When I graduated from high school, it was during the Depression, and we had no money. I couldn’t go to college, so I went to the library three days a week for ten years.” He supported himself by selling newspapers on a street corner from 1939 to 1942. “I made approximately \$10 a week. When I made \$11 a week at writing, I stopped selling newspapers.”

At 18 Bradbury saw his first published story, “Hollerbochen’s Dilemma,” in the Science Fiction League magazine, *Imagination!* The next year he published the first of four issues of his own magazine, *Futura Fantasia*, using a variety of pseudonyms to hide the fact that he wrote almost every story himself. He also joined the Wilshire Players Guild, where for two years he wrote and acted in plays that he later described as “incredibly bad.”

Ruled ineligible for military service because of his vision, Bradbury continued to write throughout World War II. His first professional story, “Pendulum,” was published in 1941 in *Super Science Stories*. Many of his early stories were published in *Weird Tales*, where his rich, evocative writing style made him stand out from other pulp magazine writers. In 1946, his story “Homecoming” appeared in *Mademoiselle*, pulled out of the slush pile by a young editorial assistant named Truman Capote. Soon Bradbury’s stories were appearing in other major magazines like *Harper’s*, *McCall’s*, *Collier’s*, and *The New Yorker*.



In 1947 Bradbury married Marguerite McClure, whom he had met in a bookstore. Hollywood special effects pioneer Ray Harryhausen, whom Bradbury had first met on roller skates, was best man at the wedding. That same year Bradbury’s first collection of short stories, *Dark Carnival*, was published.

In 1950, after being rejected by several publishers who were more interested in novels than short stories, Bradbury gathered some random stories he had written about life on Mars. Revising them to create a narrative about the conflict between colonizing humans and native Martians, he developed *The Martian Chronicles*, now considered one of his major works.

The next year another collection, *The Illustrated Man*, was published. (Twenty-one years later, Bradbury’s story “The Rocket Man” would inspire Elton John’s hit song “Rocket Man.” Lyricist Bernie Taupin was intrigued by the story’s portrayal of being an astronaut as an everyday job.)

Fahrenheit 451 was published in 1953 at the height of McCarthyism, when its themes of censorship and conformity were particularly apt. This defense of literature against electronic media is considered Bradbury’s masterpiece.

After a few minor television assignments, in 1956 Bradbury co-wrote the screenplay for *Moby Dick* with director John Huston. Soon he was writing scripts for such popular anthology shows as *Playhouse 90*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, and *The Twilight Zone*.

Bradbury often made use of childhood memories in his work. His novels *Dandelion Wine* (1957) and *Something Wicked This Way Comes* (1962), as well as numerous short stories, were set in Green Town, a fictionalized version of Waukegan.

In the early 1970s, Bradbury participated in the development of Disney World's EPCOT (Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow). Around the same time, he began to focus more on poetry and theatre, which had both been lifelong interests. Between 1985 and 1992 he adapted 65 of his stories for the HBO/USA series *The Ray Bradbury Theatre*.

Until the end of his life, Bradbury wrote several hours daily. The result was more than 30 books and nearly 600 short stories, as well as poems, essays, screenplays, and plays. He said, "You must write every single day of your life.... You must lurk in libraries and climb the stacks like ladders to sniff books like perfumes and wear books like hats upon your crazy heads.... May you be in love every day for the next 20,000 days. And out of that love, remake a world."

In 2007 Bradbury received a special citation from the Pulitzer Prize board for his "distinguished, prolific, and deeply influential career as an unmatched author of science fiction and fantasy." The board praised him as "one of those rare individuals whose writing has changed the way people think."

When Bradbury died in 2012, President Barack Obama said, "His gift for storytelling reshaped our culture and expanded our world.... Ray also understood that our imaginations could be used as a tool for better understanding, a vehicle for change, and an expression of our most cherished values." As Bradbury himself once said, "That's my function, and it should be the function of every science fiction writer around. To offer hope. To name the problem and then offer the solution."

PLAYWRIGHT TOBIAS ANDERSEN



Tobias Andersen originated the role of Fire Captain Beatty for the 1977 inaugural production of *Fahrenheit 451* at the Colony Theatre, Los Angeles. He and Mr. Bradbury later co-wrote *The Illustrated Bradbury*, a one-man show adapted from nine of Bradbury's short stories. Tobias is a veteran of five decades of regional theatre with such noted companies as Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Milwaukee Rep, Playmakers Rep, and the California Shakespeare Festival, where he appeared as Henry Higgins, Atticus Finch, C. S. Lewis, Don Quixote, and Sheridan Whiteside; and, as a devotee of Shakespeare, Falstaff, Dogberry, Prospero, Cymbeline, Polonius, Gloucester, King Lear, and another dozen or so. His critically acclaimed solo portrayal of famed attorney Clarence Darrow in *Darrow* has been seen throughout the United States and was selected to represent America in the second International Theatre

Festival in Lahore, Pakistan. During his early Hollywood years he was a featured actor on such classic TV shows as *Roseanne*, *The Incredible Hulk*, *Newhart*, *Little House on the Prairie*, *Bonanza*, *Knot's Landing*, ad infinitum. His most recent TV appearance was on *Grimm* as a Catholic priest having a very difficult time with an exorcism. He is a recipient of the Portland theatre community's 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award.

THE GENESIS OF *FAHRENHEIT 451*

BY RICHARD J ROBERTS, RESIDENT DRAMATURG

Ray Bradbury had a lifelong passion for books. As a young man, he spent a lot of time in the Los Angeles Public Library, where he was dismayed to discover that even classic science fiction books were often in short supply because they were not considered “literature.” The ancient burning of the Library of Alexandria, as well as contemporary events like Nazi book burnings and Joseph Stalin’s “Great Purge,” impressed upon him the vulnerability of books to censure and destruction.

In 1947 the House Un-American Activities Committee, which had been founded in 1938, began holding hearings to seek out alleged communist influence in Hollywood. Like many Americans, Bradbury was concerned and angered by government interference in artists’ work. Around this time, he wrote “Bright Phoenix,” a short story about a librarian who confronts a book-burning censor.

A couple of years later, while taking a late-night stroll, Bradbury was stopped and questioned by an over-zealous police officer. This incident inspired another short story, “The Pedestrian,” in which a late-night walker is harassed by a remotely operated robot policeman and taken to the “Psychiatric Center for Research on Regressive Tendencies.”

In summer 1950 Bradbury wrote a story that combined the book-burning idea of “Bright Phoenix” with the authoritarian regime of “The Pedestrian.” “The Fireman” was published in *Galaxy Science Fiction* magazine.

An editor at Ballantine Books urged Bradbury to expand “The Fireman” into a full-length novel. Bradbury wanted a new title for the book, one that would go beyond the single-character focus of “The Fireman.” He thought that the temperature at which paper bursts into flame would make a good metaphorical title. He telephoned several chemistry and physics departments at several universities; none could give him an answer. Finally, he called the Los Angeles Fire Department, and he had his title: *Fahrenheit 451*.

Original 1953 book jacket.



INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS ALIGNMENT GUIDE

Seeing a performance at Indiana Repertory Theatre is a great way to help make connections for students and facilitate their understanding of a text. Some key literature standards to consider on your trip would be:

READING LITERATURE

RL.1: Read a variety of literature within a range of complexity

RL.2: Build comprehension and appreciation of literature by identifying, describing, and making inferences about literary elements and themes

RL.3: Build comprehension and appreciation of literature, using knowledge of literary structure, and point of view

RL.4: Build comprehension and appreciation of literary elements and themes and analyze how sensory tools impact meaning

READING VOCABULARY

RV.1: Build and apply vocabulary using various strategies and sources

RV.2: Use strategies to determine and clarify words and understand their relationship

RV.3: Build appreciation and understanding of literature and nonfiction texts by determining or clarifying the meaning of words and their uses

SPEAKING & LISTENING

SL.1: Develop and apply effective communication skills through speaking and active listening

MEDIA LITERACY

ML.1: Develop an understanding of media and the roles and purposes of media

ML.2: Recognize the purpose of media and the ways in which media can have influences

THEATRE—RESPONDING

TH:Re.7: Perceive and analyze artistic work

TH:Re.8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work

TH:Re.9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work

THEATRE—CONNECTING

TH:Cn.10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art

TH:Cn.11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding

US HISTORY

USH.6: Examine the political, economic, social, and cultural development of the United States during the period from 1945 to 1960.

USH.10: Conduct historical research that incorporates information literacy skills such as forming appropriate research questions, evaluating information by determining its accuracy, relevance and comprehensiveness, interpreting a variety of primary and secondary sources, and presenting their findings with documentation

RESOURCES

BOOKS

OTHER BOOKS BY RAY BRADBURY

The Martian Chronicles (1950)
The Illustrated Man (1951)
Dandelion Wine (1957)
Something Wicked This Way Comes (1962)
Green Shadows, White Whale (1992)
Zen in the Art of Writing (1990)

BOOKS ABOUT RAY BRADBURY

The Bradbury Chronicles: The Life of Ray Bradbury by Sam Weller
Becoming Ray Bradbury by Jonathan R. Eller

OTHER DYSTOPIAN FICTION

The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins
Divergent by Veronica Roth
The Maze Runner by James Dashner
Noughts & Crosses by Malorie Blackman
Animal Farm by George Orwell
The Giver by Lois Lowry
The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood

CLASSIC SCIENCE FICTION

A Journey to the Center of the Earth by Jules Verne
The War of the Worlds by H. G. Wells
Brave New World by Aldous Huxley
1984 by George Orwell
The Sirens of Titan by Kurt Vonnegut
A Canticle for Liebowitz by Walter M. Miller
A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle
Dune by Frank Herbert
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy by Douglas Adams

WEBSITES

Bradbury's own website, filled with great photos, quotes, and book recommendations

<http://www.raybradbury.com>

The Center for Ray Bradbury Studies at IUPUI, an invaluable resource

<http://www.bradbury.iupui.edu>

The Ray Bradbury Experience Museum in his home town, Waukegan, Illinois.

<http://www.raybradburyexperience museum.org>

VIDEO

Ray Bradbury's IMDB page

<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001969/>

Fahrenheit 451 (1966) directed by François Truffaut

The Ray Bradbury Theater (1985-1992), TV series with adaptations of 65 Bradbury stories

Moby Dick (1956), screenplay co-written by Bradbury

Something Wicked This Way Comes (1983), Disney film of Bradbury's novel

A Conversation with Ray Bradbury (2008)

Live Forever: The Ray Bradbury Odyssey (2014)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

BEFORE SEEING THE PLAY

What is the importance of books? What do we get from books that we do not get from television?

How is life less restricted now than in the past? How is it more restricted? How have these restrictions made the world a better place? How have they made it worse?

How much time in an average day do you spend with screens—on your phone, tablet, computer, television, gaming system? How much time do you spend interacting with people? What is a good balance between these two? How can you find that balance?

AFTER SEEING THE PLAY

Describe the society that Montag lives in. How is it different from the society we live in today? How is it similar? What would it take to turn our current society into that society? How difficult or easy might that transition be?

What makes Clarisse unique—different from most people in her society? Why are those differences seen as unhealthy in her world? Why is Montag receptive to her influence?

Is this the first time Mildred has overdosed on sleeping pills? How and why are these overdoses happening? How do Mildred's actions contradict her cheerful behavior?

How are the TV shows in the play similar and/or different from shows we see on TV today? How might such seemingly meaningless TV programs be considered dangerous? How does television influence the lives of the people in Mildred's world? How does television influence our world today? How does television influence you?

Does the mechanical hound “dislike” Montag, as he believes? How can a machine dislike a person? Why does the hound react to Montag the way it does?

Beatty and Mrs. Hudson share a quote: “Play the man, Master Ridley, and we shall this day light a candle, by God's Grace, as I trust shall never be put out.” This is a quote from history, spoken by one Anglican bishop to another as they were both about to be burned at the stake for heresy by the Catholic Church in 1555. What is heresy? Research the conflict between Catholics and Protestants in England in the 16th century. What is the meaning of the quote in its historical context—what is the candle that will be lit by the men's deaths? How is Mrs. Hudson's attitude about books a kind of heresy in the world of the play? What is the relevance of the quote to Mrs. Hudson's situation?

Why do you think Mrs. Hudson chooses to burn herself along with her books? Why does this event have such a powerful effect on Montag? Why does Montag get “sick” and try to avoid going to work?

What does Beatty’s racist rant suggest about him? Why do you think Bradbury included these intentionally offensive comments in his book? What was he trying to achieve?

The scene in the play where Montag visits Beatty’s home is not in the original novel. Why do you suppose Bradbury added this scene for the play? What do we learn about Beatty in this scene? How are the contradictions within Beatty different from and/or similar to the contradictions within Mildred?

Why does Beatty tell Montag that Clarisse is dead? Why do you suppose Bradbury removed the character of Clarisse from the book at this early point in the story?

Faber tells Montag that three things are missing from their world:

1—Quality: “texture. Fresh Detail. Quality of information.”

2—Leisure: “time to ... talk and listen, consider.”

3—“The right to carry out self-determined actions
based on what we learned from having the first two.”

What is the significance of each of these three items? Using these three standards, how is the world of the play different from and/or similar to the world we live in today?

What is the significance of the quotation duel between Beatty and Montag/Faber? How does Beatty’s instant mental access to so many literary quotes contradict what he has told Montag about his relationship to books and reading? What are some different reasons why Beatty might be challenging Montag this way?

Why does Mildred turn Montag in? How has the social norm become more important to her than her own husband?

Why does Montag tell the firemen to burn his television wall and his bed?

What does Beatty mean when he says Faber killed himself?

Beatty’s death in the book is different from his death in the play. Why do you suppose Bradbury might have made this change? How are the motivations behind Beatty’s actions similar in both situations?

If you’ve read the book, discuss the differences between the book and the play. Why do you suppose these changes were made? What changes might have been inspired by the different needs for narrative fiction and live stage action? What changes might have been inspired by the author’s changing ideas over time? Which do you prefer? Why?

WRITING PROMPTS

Choose one of the major characters in the story: Montag, Clarisse, Beatty, Mildred, Faber, Mrs. Hudson, Aristotle. Write a character analysis: What do they do? What do they say? What do other characters say about them? Write a biography for the character, using what is said in the play and the book as a basis, and extrapolating beyond that to fill in the blanks.

In literary terms, Montag is *Fahrenheit 451*'s protagonist, and Beatty is the antagonist. Yet in many ways, Beatty is the more complex and interesting character. Write an essay about how each character fits into these literary classifications, and how each defies such labels. How does each character's mental process and tendencies affect the way they deal with the events of the story? How does Bradbury use these two contrasting characters to comment on the nature of good and evil?

What happens in the world after the play ends? Using characters from the play, or entirely new characters, write a scene detailing the events following the ending of the play. Is there significant change within society? Do things remain the same? The choice is yours. Read your scenes in class and discuss the different points of view shown in the various scenes.

What is your favorite book? Write a column for your school newspaper telling your fellow students why you think they should read this book. What makes it a good book? Why is it important? What will people gain from reading it?

Write a review of the play. A well-rounded review includes your opinion of the theatrical aspects—scenery, lights, costumes, sound, direction, acting—as well as your impressions of the script and the impact of the story and/or themes and the overall production. What moments made an impression? How do the elements of scenery, costumes, lighting, and sound work with the actors' performance of the text to tell the story? What ideas or themes did the play make you think about? How did it make you feel? Did you notice the reactions of the audience as a whole? Would you recommend this play to others? Why or why not? To share your reviews with others, send to: education.irt@gmail.com

ACTIVITIES

BLACKOUT POETRY

Print out different passages from *Fahrenheit 451*, or other banned books. Using a black sharpie or marker, have students black out words so that the remaining words create an original poem.

BECOME A LIVING LIBRARY

Immerse your students into the story. Your classroom is now a refuge for renegades hoping to save books, but there is only room for five physical books. Have each student choose the book that they would most like to save and give a 30-second persuasive speech on why that book should be saved. Have the students vote by secret ballot and then discuss the results. If some future entity were to discover these five books, what would the books tell them about our civilization? What knowledge would be missing?

AUTHORS

In the play, while the firemen are gathering her books, Mrs. Hudson lists a number of authors: Agee, Alcott, Auden, Austen, Blake, Baldwin, Brontë, Buck, Burroughs, Cather, Camus, Carroll, Dumas, Ellison, Emerson, Frye, Frost, Heller, Hesse, Hemingway, Homer, Hugo, Hughes, Jackson, Jonson, Johnson, Joyce, Kerouac, Lewis, O'Hara, Rand, Rostand, Sand, Dr. Seuss, Sinclair, Singer, Saroyan, Solzhenitsyn, Sophocles, Steinbeck, Thoreau, Voltaire, Woolf, Wordsworth. Assign one writer to each student randomly, and have them research that writer. Have each student give a one-minute oral report on their writer, their life and times, the most important books they wrote, and what their significance is in literature. OR have each student create an 8½" x 11" collage on their writer, and create a large wall of authors in your classroom.

QUOTES

Using the novel, assign each student a quote from Beatty and Montag/Faber's duel. Have each student research their quote, then give a one-minute oral report or create a small collage about the source of the quote, who wrote it, the context within the original work, and what it means.

GLOSSARY

Aristotle

Aristotle (384–322 BCE) was a philosopher of Ancient Greece, a student of Plato. Aristotle's writings and his philosophy of deductive logic have influenced almost every form of knowledge, forming the Western world's intellectual lexicon and its methods of inquiry.

Baptists

Baptists form a large branch of Protestant Christianity; they are opposed to infant baptism and only baptize professing (generally, adult) Christian believers, and do so by complete immersion.

Baskerville

The mechanical hound's name is a reference to *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1902), a Sherlock Holmes novel by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. It is a murder mystery focused around the legend of a supernatural, diabolical hound.

Bible

The Bible is an anthology of texts written over more than a millennium: history, hymns, prayers, proverbs, parables, letters, essays, poetry, and prophecies. Numerous biblical canons have evolved, with overlapping and diverging contents.

Bienvenu

French: Welcome

capillary

referring to a very fine network of hair-like blood vessels

centrifuge

a machine using centrifugal force for separating substances of different densities, for removing moisture, or for simulating gravitational effects

Communist Manifesto

The Communist Manifesto is an 1848 pamphlet by German philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Commissioned by the Communist League, it analyzes history as class struggle and predicts that capitalism will be overthrown by socialism. Although it long fell into obscurity, since the Russian Revolution in 1917 the *Manifesto* has been widely read.

Crime and Punishment

Crime and Punishment (1866) by Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881) focuses on the mental anguish and moral dilemmas of an impoverished ex-student who formulates a plan to kill an unscrupulous pawnbroker for her money. Once it is done, he finds himself racked with confusion, paranoia, and disgust.

Cyrano de Bergerac

In *Cyrano de Bergerac*, the title character (a highly fictionalized version of a real 17th-century person) is a gallant soldier, an unbeatable duelist, and a gifted poet; but his extremely large nose causes him to doubt himself, so he hides his love for the beautiful and intellectual Roxane. Instead he writes beautiful love letters to her from Christian, who is handsome and sincere but lacks skills in poetry or cleverness.

Death in Venice

Death in Venice (1912) by Thomas Mann tells of a famous writer visiting Venice who sees a beautiful 14-year-old boy, becomes obsessed, and follows him everywhere. Ignoring the cholera epidemic sweeping the city, the man collapses and dies, just as he tries to speak to the boy for the first time.

digests

In this context, a digest is a magazine or periodical summarizing several recent news stories. The most famous is *Reader's Digest*, published since 1922, with a circulation today of more than 3 million.

Dixie Duo

The Dixie Duo was a vaudeville act formed shortly after World War I by songwriters and performers Eubie Blake (1887-1983) and Noble Sissle (1889-1975). By 1921 the two had written and were performing in *Shuffle Along*, the first hit Broadway musical written by and about African Americans.

Faber

In 1979, Bradbury wrote: "Only recently, glancing at the novel, I realized that Montag is named after a paper manufacturing company. And Faber, of course, is a maker of pencils! What a sly thing my subconscious was, to name them thus. And not tell me!"

Fagin in *Oliver Twist*

In Charles Dickens's 1838 novel *Oliver Twist*, Fagin is the leader of a group of children whom he teaches to make their livings by pickpocketing and other criminal activities, in exchange for shelter. Fagin has been the subject of much debate over antisemitism, during Dickens's lifetime and in modern times.

Fahrenheit

The Fahrenheit scale was developed in 1724 by Polish physicist Daniel Gabriel Fahrenheit (1686–1736). Today it is used by the United States and a few other nations; most of the world uses the Celsius scale.

Hamlet

William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1599) is considered by many to be his greatest play, perhaps even the greatest of all plays. One of the most quoted works in the English language, it is often included on lists of the world's greatest literature.

Happiness Boys

The Happiness Boys was a popular radio program of the 1920s, starring Billy Jones and Ernie Hare. Sponsored by Happiness Candy stores, the duo sang popular tunes and comic songs, with jokes and patter between numbers.

Impressionistic painting

Impressionism focuses more on the suggestion of light and movement than the depiction of solid objects. Painters such as Monet and Renoir began developing the Impressionist style in the early 1860s, although it was not named until 1872.

jai alai

Jai alai is a sport in which, similar to racquetball, two players bounce a ball off a walled court; in jai alia, they use a hand-held *cesta*, a sort of basket-like wicker racquet. The sport is most popular in Spain and in Latin America.

Job

In the Bible, Job is a good and prosperous family man whom God allows Satan to beset with horrendous disasters to prove that Job's devotion to God is faith, not merely gratitude. Losing his health, his family, and his wealth, Job nonetheless passes the test, and his blessings are restored and multiplied.

kerosene

Kerosene is derived from petroleum. It is widely used as a fuel in aviation as well as households. Its name derives from the Greek *keros*, meaning wax. Distilling kerosene from petroleum goes back at least as far as 9th century Persia.

Little Black Sambo

The Story of Little Black Sambo was written and illustrated by Scottish author Helen Bannerman in 1899. Critics at the time noted that the book presented one of the first Black heroes in children's literature. As time went on, however, the book was more often seen as racist. Nonetheless, many adaptations have continued to be published through the years.

The Little Prince

The Little Prince (1943) by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry follows a young prince who visits various planets in space, including Earth. Despite its style as a children's book, *The Little Prince* addresses themes of loneliness, friendship, love, and loss, and makes observations about life, adults, and human nature.

Montag

In 1979, Bradbury wrote: "Only recently, glancing at the novel, I realized that Montag is named after a paper manufacturing company. And Faber, of course, is a maker of pencils! What a sly thing my subconscious was, to name them thus. And not tell me!"

Mormon

The Book of Mormon is a religious text of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, often referred to as Mormons. Founded by Joseph Smith in the 1820s, the church focuses on family, conservative values, and missionary work.

morphine

Morphine is an opiate derived from the poppy plant. It has been used for pain medication since the 1820s. It acts directly on the central nervous system to increase feelings of pleasure and warm relaxation and to reduce pain, and it is often abused for this purpose. It is highly addictive.

pell-mell

in a confused, rushed, or disorderly manner

phoenix

The ancient Greeks described a mythical bird called the phoenix who lived for 500 years, only one at a time. Just before its time was up, the phoenix built a nest and set itself on fire; then a new phoenix would rise from the ashes. Thus, the phoenix was a symbol of rebirth, renewal, and triumph over catastrophe.

Pierian Spring

In Greek mythology, the Pierian Spring was the metaphorical source of knowledge of art and science.

Poe

Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849, American) is best known for his tales of mystery and the macabre, such as "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841), "The Black Cat" (1843), and "The Tell-Tale Heart" (1843), as well as poems such as "The Raven" (1845) and "Annabel Lee" (1849).

Poetics

Aristotle's *Poetics* (c. 335 BCE) is the earliest surviving work of dramatic theory and the first extant philosophical treatise to focus on literary theory. The *Poetics* is primarily concerned with the analysis of tragedy. There was once a now-lost second part of the book that focused on comedy.

Pride and Prejudice

Feminist critics have long debated whether Jane Austin's works are revolutionary works that promote equality for women in an unjust society, or counter-revolutionary works that portray the unpleasant consequences of individuality and abandoning convention.

The Prince

The Prince was written by Niccolò Machiavelli as an instruction guide for new princes and royals. The treatise not only accepts but encourages immorality in powerful men with large goals—in other words, the end justifies the means.

procaine

Procaine (more commonly known by its trade name, Novocaine) is a local anesthetic drug first synthesized in 1905. Although it was developed for surgical use, today it is most commonly used for numbing teeth in dental procedures.

puff adders

The puff adder is a venomous viper found in most of Africa south of the Sahara. It is the most common snake in Africa. Its name come from a loud “puffing” sound it makes when threatened.

Remembrance of Things Past

À la recherche du temps perdu by Marcel Proust (1871-1922) is famous for its theme of involuntary memory, represented by the “episode of the madeleine.” Throughout the book, Proust intimates that the central character is a closeted homosexual (as was Proust himself).

Ruth

In the Bible, Ruth, a Moabite, marries an Israelite. When he dies, Ruth refuses to abandon her mother-in-law, Naomi, and returns to Bethlehem with her. There she meets Boaz, a wealthy man who, moved by her loyalty to Naomi, marries Ruth.

syllogism

a deductive scheme of a formal argument consisting of a major and a minor premise and a conclusion (as in “All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.”)

tabloids

A tabloid is a newspaper with a compact page size smaller than broadsheet. Prominent tabloids in the United States include the *New York Post*, the *Daily News*, the *San Francisco Examiner*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, and the *Boston Herald*. (The term *tabloid journalism* refers to an emphasis on sensational crime stories, astrology, celebrity gossip, and television, and is not a reference to this newspaper format.)

Tacoma

Tacoma, Washington, is a mid-sized port city at the southern end of Puget Sound, 30 miles south of Seattle.

Uncle Tom’s Cabin

The anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe was published in 1852. It was the best-selling novel and the second best-selling book of the 19th century, following the Bible, and is credited with helping fuel the abolitionist cause in the 1850s. The book and especially the stage plays it inspired helped popularize a number of stereotypes about Black people; in recent years, these negative associations have, to an extent, overshadowed the historical impact of the book as a vital antislavery tool.

Unitarians

Unitarianism, founded in the 16th century, is a liberal Christian theological movement known for its belief in the unitary nature of God, and for its rejection of such doctrines as the Trinity, original sin, predestination, and Biblical inerrancy.

War and Peace

War and Peace (1869) by Leo Tolstoy is regarded as one of his finest literary achievements and remains a classic of world literature. Through the stories of five aristocratic Russian families, the book chronicles the French invasion of Russia and the impact of the Napoleonic era on Tsarist society.

The Weir of Hermiston

Weir of Hermiston (published 1896) is an unfinished novel by Robert Louis Stevenson. Archie Weir, the son of a criminal judge in Edinburgh, speaks out against his father’s cruelty on the bench and is banished from their village. Later he is condemned to death by his own father, but he escapes to America.

Wuthering Heights

Wuthering Heights is an 1847 novel by Emily Brontë; Cathy and Heathcliff are childhood sweethearts who are wrenched apart by snobbery, jealousy, and revenge. With its themes of morality, religion, love, childhood, class, and money, the novel was influenced by both Romanticism and Gothicism.

THE ROLE OF THE AUDIENCE

You, the audience are one of the most important parts of any performance. Experiencing the theatre is a group activity shared not only with the actors, but also with the people sitting around you. Your attention and participation help the actors perform better, and allow the rest of the audience to enjoy the show. Here are a few simple tips to help make each theatre experience enjoyable for everyone:

Masks must be worn the entire time you are in the building and must cover your nose and mouth.

Leave mp3 players, cameras, mobile phones, and other distracting and noise-making electronic devices at home.

You may think texting is private, but the light and the motion are very annoying to those around you and on stage. Do not text during the performance.

Food and drink are not allowed in the building during student matinees.

The house lights dimming and going out signal the audience to get quiet and settle in your seats: the play is about to begin.

Don't talk with your neighbors during the play. It distracts people around you and the actors on stage. Even if you think they can't hear you, they can.

Never throw anything onto the stage. People could be injured.

Remain in your seat during the play. Use the restroom before or after the show.

Focus all your attention on the play to best enjoy the experience. Listen closely to the dialogue and sound effects, and look at the scenery, lights, and costumes. These elements all help to tell the story.

Get involved in the story. Laugh, cry, sigh, gasp—whatever the story draws from you. The more emotionally involved you are, the more you will enjoy the play.

Remain at your seat and applaud during the curtain call; this is part of the performance too. It gives you a chance to recognize a job well done and the actors a moment to thank you for your attention.

