

**Image Journal: *Fahrenheit 451***  
Gwen Romero, Wasatch Range Writing Project

**Summary:**

Students create a journal including images, summaries, and reflections to process the events/details in a work of literature.

**Objectives:**

- Develop critical thinking skills through analyzing, synthesizing, and conceptualizing information.
- Evaluate the implications of a totalitarian government vs. the individual and the importance of independent thought through reflection.
- Analyze the literal and metaphorical uses of fire in a literary work.

**Context:**

An 8th-12th grade English/literature class.

**Materials:**

- Copies of *Fahrenheit 451* for the whole class.
- Image Journal Assignment handout. **Note:** Based on the level of your class, determine how many entries per part you will require (requiring five each has worked well for me in my 11th grade classes—depth without filler or frustration). Fill in the blanks on the assignment sheet: required number of entries per part, first journal check, and final journal check.
- Pens/pencils, colored pencils, and paper (students may choose to use a memo book or sketchpad).

**Time Span:**

Approximately two weeks (length of time to study novel)

**Procedures:**

1. Day 1: Introduce author and work (brief background). Introduce the assignment by reviewing the handout with the class.
2. Begin reading book, together or individually. Have students mark their places when you have 10 minutes remaining of class time. Have a student summarize what has happened so far. Have others share thoughts/feelings/themes. Then, have students suggest possible key images for this part as well as the relevance/significance of each image. Each student should have the first entry ready to share start-of-class the following day.
3. Day 2: Have students share entries, leading into class discussion. Students should write discussion notes on back of entry or on another page.
4. Continue daily with journal sharing and discussion until finished with book.



**Follow up:** Each student selects one thread from his/her journal (theme, symbolism, etc., the student wrote about/referred to in multiple entries/notes) for the formal paper. Formal paper may be expository, argumentative, or analytical, depending on the needs of your class.

**Note:** I check journals halfway through the unit, while students are working on small-group discussion questions, and at the end of the unit. Journals are graded on the quality and depth of responses to the literature, the quality of the images/photos, and the additional notes from class discussion.

**Extensions:**

- Play and have students take notes on NPR’s interview with Ray Bradbury—add to discussion notes: <http://www.npr.org/2012/06/08/154524695/ray-bradbury-its-lack-that-gives-us-inspiration>.
- Watch and take notes on “A Conversation with Ray Bradbury”—add to discussion notes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EzD0YtbViCs>.
- After reading the novel, read Jack London’s “To Build a Fire.” Have students create a 3-image panel based on key aspects of the story, then compare and contrast the stories’ plots, characters, themes, and symbols.
- Read Robert Frost’s “Fire and Ice.” Discuss the poem with both a literal interpretation and with a metaphorical interpretation. Compare the poem’s themes and implied images to both *Fahrenheit 451* and “To Build a Fire.”

**Rationale:**

Having students incorporate imagery into written responses appeals to visual learners and strengthens personal connections for all students while challenging them to evaluate the text in a symbolic mode.

**Resources:**

Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451*. New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 2012 (or other edition). Print.

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## Image Journal Assignment

While reading, you will be required to keep an image journal—a combination of sketches about and written responses to the book. You will be required to make \_\_\_\_\_ entries for each of the three parts of the novel.

You may use lined paper, a tablet, or a sketchbook. Each entry should include the following: title, key image (sketch of detail or scene or comparable photo from a magazine or the Internet), two-sentence synopsis, and observations (see below).

Observations: The written entries should focus on your response to the literature, significance of details, insights to governmental control versus the individual, and your thoughts and feelings while reading; questions for class discussion; notes on characters, mood, and themes; and connections to your own life/experiences and current events. Each written entry should be at least the equivalent of a half page of standard notebook paper. In order to show depth and understanding, vary your entries. *\*Two of the entries for each part must reflect the use of fire—literally or metaphorically—in the work.*

On the back of each entry, or on the proceeding page, you are expected to include additional notes and observations from class discussion. You will use these notes to write a formal paper.

Your final journal should include a cover that includes the book title and author, your name, and a design/sketch/image that conceptualizes a central theme.

First journal check: \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Final journal: \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Includes entries for all three parts as well as discussion notes.

*You will be called on to share entries during our study of the novel.*



