

PURPOSE:

- To explore and analyze how motifs work in a literary text.
- To analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.
- To analyze the development of themes and/or central ideas of a text.

STANDARDS:

LAFS.910.RL.1.2 → **Determine** a theme or central **idea of a text** and **analyze in detail its development** over the course of the text, including **how it** emerges and is **shaped** and refined **by specific details**.

LAFS.910.RL.2.4 → **Determine** the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including **figurative and connotative meanings**; **analyze** the cumulative **impact of specific word choices** on **meaning** and tone.

LAFS.910.W.3.9 → **Draw evidence** from literary or informational texts **to support analysis**, reflection, and research.

PROMPT:

Write an essay in which you analyze the use of hands as a motif. You will base your analysis on 3 of the 10 quotes provided (you can choose which ones to use).

Remember that your analysis must go beyond observations—don't just state "Bradbury uses imagery" or "Hands are used as a motif." Instead, focus on why Bradbury made that choice. What is he trying to achieve? Is he trying to create a particular mood? Develop a theme? Develop a character? Create suspense?

Be sure to:

- Go to the passage in the novel and read each quote and its context.
- Interpret the meaning of the quote and the use of the motif of hands in the quoted.
- Identify and analyze all the literary techniques in the quote and the ideas created by the techniques.
- Construct a thesis that addresses what devices/elements the author uses as well as what his purpose is for using them. Think about the formula: "(author) uses (device) to (purpose)."
- Include specific examples and textual evidence (with in-text citations!).

DIRECTIONS:

Answer the writing prompt in no more than 1 ½ pages. Your response should be typed and in MLA format. **For this assignment only**, you will **not** include an MLA heading on your paper, and your Works Cited page should **not** be on a separate page. You must submit a hard copy in class on Wednesday 23rd. You must also submit an electronic copy via turnitin.com. Both copies must be **identical**; otherwise, they will **not** be graded and you will earn a zero. Please email me if you have any questions.

QUOTES:

Hands are used as a motif throughout Fahrenheit 451. The 10 quotations listed below all deal with hands, and they are all connected in some way. Some present similar ideas, which progress from quote to quote. Others may illustrate opposing ideas.

1. Montag had done nothing. His hand had done it all, his hand, with a brain of its own, with a conscience and a curiosity in each trembling finger, had turned thief. Now it plunged the book back under his arm... (35)

2. His hands were ravenous. And his eyes were beginning to feel hunger, as if they must look at something, anything, everything. (38)
3. He put his hand back up and took out two books and moved his hand down and dropped it on the floor. He put his hand back up and took out two books and moved his hand down and dropped the two books to the floor. He kept moving his hand and dropping books... (63)
4. Montag stood there and waited for the next thing to happen. His hands, by themselves, like two men working together, began to rip the pages from the book. (84)
5. In Beatty's sight Montag felt the guilt of his hands. His fingers were like ferrets that had done some evil and now never rested, always stirred and picked and hid in pockets, moving from under Beatty's alcohol-flame stare. If Beatty so much as breathed on them, Montag felt that his hands might wither, turn over on their sides, and never be shocked to life again; they would be buried the rest of his life in his coat sleeves, forgotten. For these were the hands that had acted on their own, no part of him, here was where the conscience first manifested itself to snatch books, dart off with Job and Ruth and Willie Shakespeare, and now, in the firehouse, these hands seemed gloved with blood. (101-102)
6. He twitched the safety catch on the flame thrower. Beatty glanced instantly at Montag's fingers and his eyes widened the faintest bit. Montag saw the surprise there and himself glanced to his hands to see what new things they had done. Thinking back later he could never decide whether the hands or Beatty's reaction to the hands gave him the final push toward murder. The last rolling thunder of the avalanche stoned down about his ears, not touching him. (112-113)
7. He saw many hands held to its warmth, hands without arms, hidden in darkness. (139)
8. "Poor Millie, poor, poor Millie. I can't remember anything. I think of her hands but I don't see them doing anything at all. They just hand there at her sides or they lay there on her lap or there's a cigarette in them, but that's all." (149)
9. "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." (149-150)
10. "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." (150)