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English 112B

Dr. Warner

Unit of Study

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*Fahrenheit 451*: Society Norms

Rationale:

As technology continues to grow society becomes more engrossed in what it has to offer. The truth of a matter can often be overlooked simply due to the public believing something that they saw on social media or on television rather than looking for the facts. Technology is an amazing tool that we are fortunate to have the advantage of containing but we must also remember that sometimes what is convenient might not always be right; sometimes one must question society to find the truth.

I chose to circle my unit of study around *Fahrenheit 451* due to the fact that it would allow a class to discuss the importance of knowledge and allow them to question society. Students must learn that they are able to think for themselves; they must be able to develop the ability to do their own research and question the status quo, without this society will not develop. I chose to circle my unit of study around *Fahrenheit 451* because I believe students must realize the power that books have and how, if given too much power, technology can be a bad thing because it does not allow one to think critically.

One of the main topics I want to be able to discuss with my students is that they need to be able to think for themselves. In today’s society it is so easy to be influenced by what others tell you; Mrs. Phelps said in the novel “He'll be back next week. The Army said so. Quick war. Forty-eight hours they said, and everyone home. That's what the Army said” (Bradbury 90). This shows how in the dystopian society, that *Fahrenheit 451* takes place in, all of the civilians so easily believe what they are told is going to happen and what is and isn’t illegal. Dystopian societies need to be discussed within the classroom to show what can happen if there is no one to question others actions.

*Fahrenheit 451* is able to chapters five, six, seven, and eight from *Adolescents in the Search For Meaning: Tapping the Powerful Resource of Story.* The novel is able to fit into chapter five due to the fact that it discusses loss and through all of the novel the main character, Guy Montag, discoveries that he has lost himself. He doesn’t know what is missing from his life but he knows that he feels incomplete; he later realizes that he is missing knowledge in his life. Guy Montag also struggles with decisions in the novel because he must decide whether he will start rebelling against his community and try to make everyone understand the importance of books. Chapter eight from *Adolescents in the Search For Meaning: Tapping the Powerful Resource of Story* also ties into *Fahrenheit 451* because the story follows Montag as he must build up the courage to try to fight against social norms and then try to survive in a society that wants him abolished because he is speaking out against everything they believe in. Finally the novel relates to chapter eight because *Fahrenheit 451* takes place in a futuristic America. *Fahrenheit 451* should be taught in high school classroom to try to teach future generations that knowledge is power and that they must stand up for what they believe in even if it goes against social norms.

With the Text:

When introducing the text to the classroom I want to capture their attention in a way that will have them intrigued on what will come. The morning before class begins I would decorate the classroom walls in red paper that is cut to look like flames. I would then have Radioactive by Imagine Dragons, Love the Way You Lie by Eminem, I See Fire by Ed Sheeran, or any songs popular songs that can connect to the novel playing as my students come into class. From there I would start the class by asking them questions about society and knowledge. I would ask them if they have ever questioned the way their high school was ran and if so why or why not. I would have them first discuss the questions with their group then as a class. From there I would pass out half a sheet of paper and colored pencils and instruct the students to draw the cover of a written work that has some meaning to them or that is just their favorite. Once the students are done with their drawings I would have them flip it over and write what it would mean to them if this work was no longer in their life. After that I would have them go over to the flames and put the titles in the flames.

The next activity I would do with the class is vocabulary to make sure that the students are all clear on what a dystopian society is. Once everyone understands the society that *Fahrenheit 451* takes place in I would introduce the novel by having them all close their eyes and imagine a world where books were all illegal. I would them tell them that books are knowledge and knowledge is power. I would give the students a short description of the novel to hopefully capture their interest and then dive into a quick short write on what they believe society would be like if all books were being burnt, where all people were to be similar, and where people were not expect to be outdoors or asking any questions.

I also believe it is important to begin a novel as a class so that the students can feel comfortable continuing on since often the hardest part is beginning. After we have completed some of the reading as a class the students will be assigned a certain amount of reading a week that they need to have done but I will allow reading time on their short day. Throughout their reading I will also have the students do ‘pop quizzes’ where they will play kahoot and gain participation points for playing as well as do quick writes to check the student’s progress on the book. Once the students had finished the book then I would conduct a socratic seminar so they are able to discuss the work with their peers.

The next activity I would conduct is a book pass where I would bring in young adult books that could be paired with the novel. I would bring in books such as:

* *Scythe* by Neal Schusterman
* *The Giver* by Lois Lowry
* *Shatter Me* by Tahereh Mafi
* *Lord Of The Flies* by William Golding
* *The Selection* by Kiera Cass
* *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins
* *Divergent* by Veronica Roth

I would bring enough books so that there would be one book in front of each student. Each table would be covered in white paper with flowers in the middle, to make it look like a restaurant, and a few markers. The first time the students have a book I would set a timer for 3 minutes and tell them to read the description of the book and then draw an appetizer that they believe reminds them of the work, meaning it could be something nasty or tasty. I would have the student continue this process two more times; the second round they would draw their entree and then their dessert. The student would move one last time and just look at the title of the book and the ‘meal’ around it. There would be a discussion around the class saying what they thought about the cover of the book and the title. Most of the students would most likely interpret the pictures wrong and I would explain that if the really wanted to know what the novel was about they would have needed to open it to see what was inside, relating it back to *Fahrenheit 451* and telling them that books have to be read to be interpreted.

The next thing we would do is go to the library and the students would pick a book that could in some way be related back to *Fahrenheit 451,* meaning it has to do with going against social norms, finding one's own voice, and so on. All of the books that the choice would have to be approved by me to make sure that they are appropriate and can tie into the lesson. With the novels that they picked they would do a book report on a bag; each side of the bag would be different. The sides of the bag would be clearly laid out with a rubric attached and the students would have to do on side facts about the author, the title page, metaphors, main characters, and finally take a page from the book and create black out poetry. The students would present their books to the class but since it would most likely be their first time presenting, I would have most of the lights off and have the presenter holding a flashlight so that their first time presenting in front of a class is not an intense.

To conclude this unit, I would have the students to a timed write comparing *Fahrenheit 451* and the novel they did their book talk on. This unit of study would allow students to think outside of the box and question their normal actions.

Work Cited

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