

# Fahrenheit 451 essay sample

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



Ray Bradbury uses many forms of symbolism in his book Fahrenheit 451, but two of the biggest symbols are represented through fire and the phoenix.

Fire has more than one meaning in this novel, and it is viewed as dangerous throughout most of the novel. But as the story continues, the reader sees that it can mean so much more. The phoenix bird has symbolized immortality, but for the people in Fahrenheit 451, their only hope was that the phoenix would be burn out, and be reborn again. The myth of the phoenix gave Guy Montag hope that his dying world would be burnt down and soon rise again from the ashes. These two symbols represent not just destruction and death, but also construction, rebirth, and knowledge.

For both the firefighters as well as Montag and his hobo clan, fire symbolizes cleansing. Captain Beatty believes that fire can destroy anything and make problems disappear. He says that they should “ Forget them. Burn all, burn everything. Fire is bright and fire is clean”. When Montag sets Beatty on fire he too is attempting to clean something. To him, Beatty symbolizes the whole society that burns books. By burning Beatty and his house, Montag makes it clear he is ready to change and that he wants to cleanse the evil society. When Montag joins the group of “ hobos”, he discovers that fire does not only represent destruction but in this instance protection. The campfire in the woods that the hobos ignited provided warmth for them. It was essential for their survival.

The phoenix in Fahrenheit 451 symbolizes change, just like fire does. When Montag is forced to set his own house on fire, an opportunity for Montag to turn around becomes present. From the ashes of his burnt house Montag arises as a new person, similar to what a phoenix does in rises as a new bird.

After the bombing of the city, Granger mentions the phoenix and how it symbolizes rebirth. But unlike the phoenix, Granger remarks that the people have the knowledge of what they were doing wrong before everything was burnt down and from that knowledge they can build up a new, better society.

The people in Fahrenheit 451 undergo many forms of censorship, one being that they are reduced to mindlessly watching screens rather than gaining knowledge from books. It takes the whole city being burned down in order to destroy the over-authorized government in Fahrenheit 451. Before being burned, the people of that society lived their lives completely censored by their government. By when the city is turned to ash, an opportunity to change their society arises. Just like the phoenix rises with new life from the ashes of its old life, the city rises from the ash with an opportunity for new life.