

# Free essay on fiction

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Ray Bradbury is a renowned science fiction writer whose works have an overwhelming number of fans around the globe. *The Sound of Thunder*, one of his short stories, is a masterpiece in both its content, stylistic devices, and method of delivery. This fiction story not only focuses on the building of a solid plot, but also leaves the audience in suspense leaving many questions unanswered. Despite the story's ability to capture the attention of its audience, Bradbury is able to bring out a take home message that he would like to impart into his readers. Though subject to debate, Ray Bradbury builds on a central thesis that a little distortion or drift from the set framework of ideals can have a large effect to other facets of life. This means that a little change has ripple effects that can eventually lead to an even larger effect.

Bradbury builds on the idea that little rifts in life can lead to significant effects by labeling this effect the chaos theory or the butterfly effect. This labeling is derived from the plot scene where Travis cautions Eckels from wandering off the path. Eckels' disobedience causes him to step and crush a butterfly (Bradbury 33). Bradbury uses foreshadow as a literary device to explain to his readers why the action of stepping on the butterfly is important to the central thesis that he presents in his work *"the Sound of Thunder."* This might seem like a small action, but everything seems to go wrong after this incidence. Though a fiction story, it is apparent that Bradbury structures the unfolding of events within the plot of this story in a way that there is a moral lesson to be derived from it. Therefore, Bradbury's story is not a story that only aims to fulfill the meet the scholarly nourishment of today, but one that looks at the future as more important.

The short story, “ The Sound of Thunder”, takes a reflective approach that sees the future as bright for those who approach it with moral courage and the wisdom of reality. Bradbury sees human nature as good, but at the same time he is not apologetic of the idea that human beings need guidance if they are to understand the reality of the world. It is human nature not to follow instructions, but the little effects that humans have the ability to induce in the world can lead to significant long-term predicaments that would be difficult or impossible to change.

Symbolism as a literary device is used in this fiction story to bring out the idea that human beings are individuals who in many cases, if left unobserved, do not follow instruction. Bradbury uses Eckels as the protagonist, as a symbol the behavior of human nature characterized by the failure to flow instructions. Before Eckels embarks on the safari to hunt dinosaurs, there is clear instruction given that failure to follow instructions would lead to severe punishment. According to the only the animals that appeared to be in the verge of dying should be used for the hunting expedition. Despite the presence of these instructions, Eckels still wanders off the designate path which causes him to kill a butterfly (Bradbury 45). This was against the instructions that had been provided before the Eckels commenced his safari expedition. Bradbury uses Eckels as a demonstration of how human nature can lead to irreversible effects on other people’s lives. One of the most important things to take away from this story is the facts that reality in the world cannot be achieved unless we are humble enough to realize that the future is dependent of the present and that the present relies on the past. Eckels, the protagonist in this story, is determined to have a trip

that he would remember in the future. However, one thing that he fails to put in mind is the fact that, what he does in the present is going to determine how he is going to view this life-time trip in the future. Though Eckels embarks on his safari with a lot of hope that he would enjoy the expedition, the situation worsens when he decides not to follow the instructions given to him before commencing the safari (Smith 29). Travis tries his best to converse with Eckels by explaining to him how important it is for Eckels to remain in the designated path. Bradbury uses dialogue, as a literary device to demonstrate to his audience the persuasiveness that dialogue presents. Despite Travis' efforts to ensure that Eckels remains in the path, Eckels still diverts from the path. His disobedience leads to a severe repercussion of stepping on a butterfly (Heath 132). This causes a distortion of everything that happens after this action. In order to reinforce the idea that human beings do not follow instructions, Bradbury uses flashback as a literary device to explain to the readers that Eckels had been forbidden from taking trophies and souvenirs of the animals hunted during his trip. All that was allowed in the trip was the photograph of the animal that had been hunted and that of the hunter. However, Eckels seems to be unmoved by the unfolding of events after the death of the butterfly. Eckels seems to be unapologetic of his disobedience. In fact, he goes ahead to carry the butterfly with him despite the fact those souvenirs had been prohibited during the hunting expedition. Bradbury uses this plot to illustrate the fact that human beings do not at times learn from their past mistakes. Considering that human beings are rational we would expect that human beings have the ability to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of their actions.

This would allow Eckels, as the protagonist, to understand that there was a severe punishment awaiting him for killing the butterfly in the first place. As a rational human being, we would not expect him to go ahead and take the butterfly with him due to the fact that taking the butterfly would worsen the situation.

According to the plot created by Bradbury after Eckels' action of stepping on the butterfly, everything seems to be out of hand. The mistakes that Eckels' makes in the past are carried forward to the future. The balance of nature completely changes as a result of these actions. People tend to speak differently. The words used in speech seem to have a different meaning. The presidential elections that are conducted in the future also tend to follow a different trajectory. Those believed to win end up being the losers and vice-versa. All these chaos in the future are brought about by the fact that Eckels failed to follow in the instruction, drifting from the designated path, which eventually caused him to step on a butterfly.

In conclusion, the take home message in this short story, " the Sound of Thunder" is the fact that the little things that we do in the present might have larger effects to us and the society at large in the future. The past, the present, and the future are connected and therefore our actions today should be well cautious and thoughtful. Obedience and following of instructions are valuable tools for human beings in order to set the stage for a brighter future.

## **Works Cited**

Bradbury, Ray. A Sound of Thunder. New York: Barrett Kendall Publishing, 2000.

Print.

Bradbury, Ray. A Sound of Thunder and Other Stories. New York:

HarperCollins

Publishers, 2005. Print.

Heath, Stephen. " Education – Academia: The value of literature." Critical Quarterly 41. 1 (2003): 132-138. Print.

Smith, Wilbur. The Sound of Thunder. William Heinemann Ltd: New York, 2007.

Print.