
“The Pedestrian” by Ray Bradbury

Directions: Choose SIX Questions. Questions 1, 5, and 9 must be answered.

Use textual evidence to support your answers.

Your job is to think critically, not superficially, so dig deep.

EVERYONE needs to take notes about the discussion and the thoughts/answers that everyone came up with during the discussion.

1. Describe the setting of “The Pedestrian.” What US city do you think it might be modeled after?

Dig Deeper, Think About:

This story was published in 1951. Are there any cultural or historical events that Bradbury might be commenting on here? What impact(s) did technology have on life in and in the years leading up to 1951? Does Bradbury’s commentary seem negative or positive? What events might have influence Bradbury’s opinion on humanity as a whole? What impact do you think those events had on him? What is the impact on his short story?

2. What is the genre of this story? What clues from the story help you determine the genre?

Dig Deeper, Think About:

How are elements of dystopian control utilized in “The Pedestrian”? Discuss the effects on the population and human institution(s).

3. How does the characterization of the police car shape our understanding of the society?

Dig Deeper, Think About:

What does the descriptive language used to describe the voice reveal about the government/dystopian control?

4. How does Leonard Mead meet the criteria for a Dystopian Protagonist?

Dig Deeper, Think About:

What purpose does Leonard’s role as an outcast serve? Discuss the descriptive, metaphorical language from the story used to characterize him.

5. Identify **symbolism** from “The Pedestrian.”

Dig Deeper, Think About:

What does the author do that gives symbolic meaning to the elements you see as symbols? What does each symbol mean? Does the title have more than one possible meaning? What do the symbols add to the meaning of the work?

6. What social trends does Bradbury see as potential problems for future society?

Dig Deeper, Think About:

What elements of the society in “The Pedestrian” do you see in our own society? How do the similarities between our society and Leonard Mead’s make you feel? Do you think our society has the capacity to improve? Why or why not?

7. Look at the **structure** of the first sentence. Where is the main clause in this sentence?

Dig Deeper, Think About:

How could this sentence be written differently? Why do you think Bradbury chose this structure? How does the position of the main clause influence the meaning/emphasis of this sentence?

8. How does the author's tone affect the **mood** of the story? (Mood is the way the reader feels. Tone is the way the author feels towards the characters and subject.)

Dig Deeper Think About:

The mood of the 1st paragraph. The shift in mood between the 9th and 10th paragraphs.

What purpose does the author have for making this change in mood? What details help create the mood? What do you understand to be the writer's own attitude toward the police encounter and the arrest? Exactly what in the story makes his attitude clear to us?

9. What is ironic about the conclusion? Which type of irony occurs?

Dig Deeper, Think About:

Mead is taken to the Psychiatric Center for Research on Regressive Tendencies. What does "regressive" mean? Why would he be taken there just for walking down the street?