



# Ray Bradbury

Ray Bradbury, author of the famous novel *Fahrenheit 451*, was born in Illinois in 1920. His mother was a Swedish immigrant, and his father, whose family was from England, worked on power and telephone lines. He grew up in an extended family, where an aunt frequently read to him, kindling in him an early love of literature. His family moved to Arizona several times as his father looked for a job. The family eventually settled in Los Angeles when Bradbury was fourteen.

In high school, Bradbury was in the drama club. He spent a lot of time in Hollywood, where he hoped to meet celebrities. He first earned money as a writer when he sold a joke to the comedian George Burns to use on a popular radio show. He spent a lot of time at the library, reading. He was also a cartoonist. At sixteen, he joined the Los Angeles Science Fiction Society. Not long after graduating from high school, he met the science fiction writer Robert Heinlein, who Bradbury said "influenced me to dare to be human instead of mechanical" as a writer.

Bradbury's first publication was a story called "Hollerbochen's Dilemma" in the January 1938 number of Forrest J. Ackerman's fanzine *Imagination!*. Bradbury then started his own fanzine, *Futura Fantasia*, which Ackerman funded. When he was rejected by the World War II draft for having bad eyesight, he began to publish more and more stories in fanzines. His big break as a writer came when an editorial assistant named Truman Capote, who would go on to become a famous writer himself, decided to publish Bradbury's story called "Homecoming" in the magazine *Mademoiselle*. *Homecoming* was published again in the *O. Henry Award Stories of 1947*, officially launching the career of one of the greatest American writers.

1. What famous novel did Bradbury write?
2. What famous writer gave Bradbury his first break while working as an editor?
3. What kind of stories did Bradbury write?

