

8. What is *ironic* about the lifelike images in the nursery?

9. What effect has the death of the family had on the house? What effect do you think the end of humankind has had on the world?

10. What part of the house does the fire attack? What consequence will this attack have for the house?

11. People have often claimed that at death a person's life "flashes before his or her eyes." In what way is the death of the house similar to the death of a person?

POST-READING QUESTIONS

Recall

1. Who is talking in the house on the morning of August 4, 2026? In what ways does the house prepare for people who do not appear?

2. What happens just after nine o'clock? Which poem does the house select?

3. What happens at ten o'clock? How does the house react?

Interpret

1. What is ominous about the house at the beginning of the story?

2. Why is the action just after nine o'clock somewhat more personal than the others of the day? How does the house choose the poem? Why is it an appropriate poem for the situation?

3. Describe the scene of the destruction of the house. How is the house left in the end? How does the action of the house in the last line compare to its action in the first line?

Analyze

1. Based on Bradbury's descriptions in the story, how do you think the city and its inhabitants were destroyed?

Synthesize

1. Why do you think Bradbury waited until paragraph 10 to explain what had happened to the city? Why do you think he waited to show what had happened to the family?

Evaluate

1. What makes the actions of the house senseless? Might it be dangerous to put too much of our lives in the hands of machines? Why, or why not?

Extend

1. What comment is Bradbury making about the essential stupidity of machines? Of mankind? Contrast this with Sara Teasdale's view of nature in her poem "There Will Come Soft Rains."

LITERARY ELEMENTS

Theme. What do you think the theme of Sara Teasdale's poem is? Why do you think Bradbury chose to use the name of this poem for the title of his story as well as to incorporate the poem into the story? How are the themes of the poem and the story similar?

Personification. What is special about this house that makes it different from other houses? What specific lines, especially in the fire scene, describe the house in human terms? What is ironic about the survival of the house?