



ELA Virtual Learning

# Composition and Reading 2

April 20, 2020



## Composition and Reading II

### Lesson: April 20, 2020

#### **Objective/Learning Target:**

Students will practice “close reading” with a short story with the purpose of developing a unique interpretation of a text and providing examples to support their interpretation.

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**Answer the following questions in your notebook.**

#### **Starting Question(s):**

- 1. Would close reading become more difficult if the reader was dealing with a more speculative genre like science fiction or fantasy?**
- 2. Does close reading defy genre interest? For example, if a reader is not a fan of romance novels, could they still find interest in the piece by focusing on an element besides genre conventions (i.e. if you don't like the traditional love story, focus on a secondary or tertiary character's dialogue or actions)?**



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### **Lesson/Activity:**

I would like you to do a close read of the short story “The Last Night of the World” by Ray Bradbury. Bradbury is normally a science fiction author, but this short story more falls into the genre of “magical realism” (mostly conventional, but with some surreal elements). Don’t forget the [Close Reading Example Questions](#) that we went over in the last lesson if you need help.

[“The Last Night of the World” by Ray Bradbury](#)



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### **Practice:**

After you have read “The Last Night of the World”, please write, on a separate document, what your unique interpretation of the specific details of the text to be. What will your focus be? Mood? Dialogue? Theme? Absurdity of the plot? Please ensure that you make a specific claim about the text and support it using examples from the story.



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### Practice \*Example\*:

Bradbury's short story forces the reader to confront an existential question right from the outset: "What would you do if you knew that it was the last night of the world?". A reader might come up with a romantic answer, describing a night in which they throw caution to the wind and attempt to live as they've always wanted to, but Bradbury writes something far more realistic, both for the characters in the story and for the real world. The characters in the story, a husband and wife, go about their daily routines as if the world were not ending tomorrow. I feel as though many of us would behave the exact same way and use the same justification that the husband does: "there's nothing else to do."

Ultimately, humans are creatures of habit. The same reason that we don't do anything that goes against the grain in our daily lives is the same reason that we wouldn't even if the world were ending tomorrow. We will always do what is comfortable. Bradbury establishes this bland view of humanity using the mood and dialogue of his piece. There is no exciting verbiage, no vibrant imagery, and there is only one punctuation mark. Bradbury makes a comment on the nature of humanity by describing an apocalypse the same way that he sees human behavior: mundane.