10th Grade
General English Language Arts
Summer Reading Assignment

Within this document are two short stories by Ray Bradbury. Some information about the author is provided below:

"Ray Bradbury is one of those rare individuals whose writing has changed the way people think. His more than five hundred published works -- short stories, novels, plays, screenplays, television scripts, and verse -- exemplify the American imagination at its most creative.

Once read, his words are never forgotten. His best-known and most beloved books, THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES, THE ILLUSTRATED MAN, FAHRENHEIT 451 and SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES, are masterworks that readers carry with them over a lifetime. His timeless, constant appeal to audiences young and old has proven him to be one of the truly classic authors of the 20th Century -- and the 21st.

In recognition of his stature in the world of literature and the impact he has had on so many for so many years, Bradbury was awarded the National Book Foundation's 2000 medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters, an the National Medal of Arts in 2004."


Directions: After reading the two selections provided, complete each task completely and carefully.

1. Comparison/Contrast Graphic Organizers (Be sure to provide textual evidence; it is a required component!)

2. Comprehension and Response Questions for each selection.

Completion of the reading and assignments listed above are due AUGUST 18, 2015
"George, I wish you'd look at the nursery."
"What's wrong with it?"
"I don't know."
"Well, then."
"I just want you to look at it, is all, or call a psychologist in to look at it."
"What would a psychologist want with a nursery?"
"You know very well what he'd want." His wife paused in the middle of the kitchen and watched the stove busy humming to itself, making supper for four.
"It's just that the nursery is different now than it was."
"All right, let's have a look."
They walked down the hall of their soundproofed Happylife Home, which had cost them thirty thousand dollars installed, this house which clothed and fed and rocked them to sleep and played and sang and was good to them. Their approach sensitized a switch somewhere and the nursery light flicked on when they came within ten feet of it. Similarly, behind them, in the halls, lights went on and off as they left them behind, with a soft automaticity.
"Well," said George Hadley.
They stood on the thatched floor of the nursery. It was forty feet across by forty feet long and thirty feet high; it had cost half again as much as the rest of the house. "But nothing's too good for our children," George had said.

The nursery was silent. It was empty as a jungle glade at hot high noon. The walls were blank and two-dimensional. Now, as George and Lydia Hadley stood in the center of the room, the walls began to purr and recede into crystalline distance, it seemed, and presently an African veldt appeared, in three dimensions, on all sides, in color reproduced to the final pebble and bit of straw. The ceiling above them became a deep sky with a hot yellow sun.

George Hadley felt the perspiration start on his brow.
"Let's get out of this sun," he said. "This is a little too real. But I don't see anything wrong."
"Wait a moment, you'll see," said his wife.

Now the hidden odorophonic were beginning to blow a wind of odor at the two people in the middle of the baked veldtland. The hot straw smell of lion grass, the cool green smell of the hidden water hole, the great rusty smell of animals, the smell of dust like a red paprika in the hot air. And now the sounds: the thump of distant antelope feet on grassy sod, the papery rustling of vultures. A shadow passed through the sky. The shadow flickered on George Hadley's upturned, sweating face.
"Filthy creatures," he heard his wife say.
"Yes." She nodded.

"And darn my socks?"

"Yes." A frantic, watery-eyed nodding.

"And sweep the house?"

"Yes, yes—oh, yes!"

"But I thought that's why we bought this house, so we wouldn't have to do anything?"

"That's just it. I feel like I don't belong here. The house is wife and mother now, and nursemaid. Can I compete with an African veldt? Can I give a bath and scrub the children as efficiently or quickly as the automatic scrub bath can? I cannot. And it isn't just me. It's you. You've been awfully nervous lately."

"I suppose I have been smoking too much."

"You look as if you didn't know what to do with yourself in this house, either. You smoke a little more every morning and drink a little more every afternoon and need a little more sedative every night. You're beginning to feel unnecessary too."

"Am I?" He paused and tried to feel into himself to see what was really there.

"Oh, George!" She looked beyond him, at the nursery door. "Those lions can't get out of there, can they?"

He looked at the door and saw it tremble as if something had jumped against it from the other side.

"Of course not," he said.

At dinner they ate alone, for Wendy and Peter were at a special plastic carnival across town and had televised home to say they'd be late, to go ahead eating. So George Hadley, bemused, sat watching the dining-room table produce warm dishes of food from its mechanical interior.

"We forgot the ketchup," he said.

"Sorry," said a small voice within the table, and ketchup appeared.

As for the nursery, thought George Hadley, it won't hurt for the children to be locked out of it awhile. Too much of anything isn't good for anyone. And it was clearly indicated that the children had been spending a little too much time on Africa. That sun. He could feel it on his neck, still, like a hot paw. And the lions. And the smell of blood. Remarkable how the nursery caught the telepathic emanations of the children's minds and created life to fill their every desire. The children thought lions, and there were lions. The children thought zebras, and there were zebras. Sun—sun. Giraffes—giraffes. Death and death.

That last. He chewed tastelessly on the meat that the table had cut for him. Death thoughts. They were awfully young, Wendy and Peter, for death thoughts. Or, no, you were never too young, really. Long before you knew what death was you were wishing it on someone else. When you were two years old you were shooting people with cap pistols.

But this—the long, hot African veldt—the awful death in the jaws of a lion. And repeated again and again.

"Where are you going?"

He didn't answer Lydia. Preoccupied, he let the lights glow softly on ahead of him, extinguish behind him as he padded to the nursery door. He listened against it. Far away, a lion roared.

He unlocked the door and opened it. Just before he stepped inside, he heard a faraway scream. And then another roar from the lions, which subsided quickly.

He stepped into Africa. How many times in the last year had he opened this door and found Wonderland, Alice, the Mock Turtle, or Aladdin and his Magical Lamp, or Jack Pumpkinhead of Oz, or Dr. Doolittle, or the cow jumping over a very real—appearing moon—all the delightful contraptions of a make-believe world. How often had he seen Pegasus flying in the sky ceiling, or seen fountains of red fireworks, or heard angel voices singing. But now, is yellow hot Africa, this bake oven with murder in the heat. Perhaps Lydia was right. Perhaps they needed a little vacation from the fantasy which was growing a bit too real for ten-year-old children. It was all right to exercise one's mind with gymnastic fantasies, but when the lively child mind settled on one pattern...? It seemed that, at a distance, for the past month, he had heard lions roaring, and smelled their strong odor seeping as far away as his study door. But, being busy, he had paid it no attention.
"We'll see about this," said George Hadley, and they all walked down the hall together and opened the nursery door.

There was a green, lovely forest, a lovely river, a purple mountain, high voices singing, and Rima, lovely and mysterious, lurking in the trees with colorful flights of butterflies, like animated bouquets, lingering in her long hair. The African veldtland was gone. The lions were gone. Only Rima was here now, singing a song so beautiful that it brought tears to your eyes.

George Hadley looked in at the changed scene. "Go to bed," he said to the children. They opened their mouths. "You heard me," he said. They went off to the air closet, where a wind sucked them like brown leaves up the flue to their slumber rooms.

George Hadley walked through the singing glade and picked up something that lay in the corner near where the lions had been. He walked slowly back to his wife.

"What is that?" she asked.
"An old wallet of mine," he said.
He showed it to her. The smell of hot grass was on it and the smell of a lion. There were drops of saliva on it, it had been chewed, and there were blood smears on both sides.

He closed the nursery door and locked it, tight.

In the middle of the night he was still awake and he knew his wife was awake. "Do you think Wendy changed it?" she said at last, in the dark room.
"Of course."
"Made it from a veldt into a forest and put Rima there instead of lions?"
"Yes."
"Why?"
"I don't know. But it's staying locked until I find out."
"How did your wallet get there?"
"I don't know anything," he said, "except that I'm beginning to be sorry we bought that room for the children. If children are neurotic at all, a room like that—"
"It's supposed to help them work off their neuroses in a healthful way."
"I'm starting to wonder." He stared at the ceiling.
"We've given the children everything they ever wanted. Is this our reward—secrecy, disobedience?"
"Who was it said, 'Children are carpets, they should be stepped on occasionally'? We've never lifted a hand. They're insufferable—let's admit it. They come and go when they like; they treat us as if we were offspring. They're spoiled and we're spoiled."
"They've been acting funny ever since you forbade them to take the rocket to New York a few months ago."
"They're not old enough to do that alone, I explained."
"Nevertheless, I've noticed they've been decidedly cool toward us since."
"I think I'll have David McClean come tomorrow morning to have a look at Africa."
"But it's not Africa now, it's Green Mansions country and Rima."
"I have a feeling it'll be Africa again before then."
A moment later they heard the screams.
Two screams. Two people screaming from downstairs. And then a roar of lions. "Wendy and Peter aren't in their rooms," said his wife.
He lay in his bed with his beating heart. "No," he said. "They've broken into the nursery."
"Run outside a moment, children," said George Hadley. "No, don't change the mental combination. Leave the walls as they are. Get!"

With the children gone, the two men stood studying the lions clustered at a distance, eating with great relish whatever it was they had caught.

"I wish I knew what it was," said George Hadley. "Sometimes I can almost see. Do you think if I brought high-powered binoculars here and—"

David McClean laughed dryly. "Hardly." He turned to study all four walls. "How long has this been going on?"

"A little over a month."
"It certainly doesn't feel good."
"I want facts, not feelings."

"My dear George, a psychologist never saw a fact in his life. He only hears about feelings; vague things. This doesn't feel good, I tell you. Trust my hunches and my instincts. I have a nose for something bad. This is very bad. My advice to you is to have the whole damn room torn down and your children brought to me every day during the next year for treatment."

"Is it that bad?"

"I'm afraid so. One of the original uses of these nurseries was so that we could study the patterns left on the walls by the child's mind, study at our leisure, and help the child. In this case, however, the room has become a channel toward destructive thoughts, instead of a release away from them."

"Didn't you sense this before?"

"I sensed only that you had spoiled your children more than most. And now you're letting them down in some way. What way?"

"I wouldn't let them go to New York."

"What else?"

"I've taken a few machines from the house and threatened them, a month ago, with closing up the nursery unless they did their homework. I did close it for a few days to show I meant business."

"Ah, ha!"

"Does that mean anything?"

"Everything. Where before they had a Santa Claus now they have a Scrooge. Children prefer Santas. You've let this room and this house replace you and your wife in your children's affections. This room is their mother and father, far more important in their lives than their real parents. And now you come along and want to shut it off. No wonder there's hatred here. You can feel it coming out of the sky. Feel that sun. George, you'll have to change your life. Like too many others, you've built it around creature comforts. Why, you'd starve tomorrow if something went wrong in your kitchen. You wouldn't know how to tap an egg. Nevertheless, turn everything off. Start new. It'll take time. But we'll make good children out of bad in a year, wait and see."

"But won't the shock be too much for the children, shutting the room up abruptly, for good?"

"I don't want them going any deeper into this, that's all."

The lions were finished with their red feast.

The lions were standing on the edge of the clearing watching the two men.

"Now I'm feeling persecuted," said McClean. "Let's get out of here. I never have cared for these damned rooms. Make me nervous."

"The lions look real, don't they?" said George Hadley. I don't suppose there's any way—"

"What?"

"—that they could become real?"

"Not that I know."

"Some flaw in the machinery, a tampering or something?"

"No."

They went to the door.
They ran into the nursery. The veldtland was empty save for the lions waiting, looking at them. "Peter, Wendy?"

The door slammed.
"Wendy, Peter!"

George Hadley and his wife whirled and ran back to the door.
"Open the door!" cried George Hadley, trying the knob. "Why, they've locked it from the outside! Peter!" He beat at the door. "Open up!"

He heard Peter's voice outside, against the door.
"Don't let them switch off the nursery and the house," he was saying.

Mr. and Mrs. George Hadley beat at the door. "Now, don't be ridiculous, children. It's time to go. Mr. McClean'll be here in a minute and..."

And then they heard the sounds.
The lions on three sides of them, in the yellow veldt grass, padding through the dry straw, rumbling and roaring in their throats.

The lions.
Mr. Hadley looked at his wife and they turned and looked back at the beasts edging slowly forward crouching, tails stiff.

Mr. and Mrs. Hadley screamed.
And suddenly they realized why those other screams had sounded familiar.
"Well, here I am," said David McClean in the nursery doorway, "Oh, hello." He stared at the two children seated in the center of the open glade eating a little picnic lunch. Beyond them was the water hole and the yellow veldtland; above was the hot sun. He began to perspire. "Where are your father and mother?"

The children looked up and smiled. "Oh, they'll be here directly."

"Good, we must get going." At a distance Mr. McClean saw the lions fighting and clawing and then quieting down to feed in silence under the shady trees.

He squinted at the lions with his hand tip to his eyes.
Now the lions were done feeding. They moved to the water hole to drink.
A shadow flickered over Mr. McClean's hot face. Many shadows flickered. The vultures were dropping down the blazing sky.

"A cup of tea?" asked Wendy in the silence.
Marionettes, Inc.

By Ray Bradbury
(First published in 1949)

THEY walked slowly down the street at about ten in the evening, talking calmly. They were both about thirty-five, both eminently sober.

"But why so early?" said Smith.

"Because," said Braling.

"Your first night out in years and you go home at ten o'clock."

"Nerves, I suppose."

"What I wonder is how you ever managed it. I've been trying to get you out for ten years for a quiet drink. And now, on the one night, you insist on turning in early."

"Mustn't crowd my luck," said Braling.

"What did you do, put sleeping powder in your wife's coffee?"

"No, that would be unethical. You'll see soon enough."

They turned a corner. "Honestly, Braling, I hate to say this, but you have been patient with her. You may not admit it to me, but marriage has been awful for you, hasn't it?"

"I wouldn't say that."

"It's got around, anyway, here and there, how she got you to marry her. That time back in 1979 when you were going to Rio——."

"Dear Rio. I never did see it after all my plans."

"And how she tore her clothes and rumpled her hair and threatened to call the police unless you married her."

"She always was nervous, Smith, understand."

"It was more than unfair. You didn't love her. You told her as much, didn't you?"

"I recall that I was quite firm on the subject."

"But you married her anyhow."

"I had my business to think of, as well as my mother and father. A thing like that would have killed them."

"And it's been ten years."

"Yes," said Braling, his gray eyes steady. "But I think perhaps it might change now. I think what I've waited for has come about. Look here."

He drew forth a long blue ticket.

"Why, it's a ticket for Rio on the Thursday rocket!"

"Yes, I'm finally going to make it."

"But how wonderful! You do deserve it! But won't she object? Cause trouble?"

Braling smiled nervously. "She won't know I'm gone. I'll be back in a month and no one the
“Give the man your card, Braing Two.”

Braing Two did a magic trick and produced a white card:

MARIONETTES, INC.

Duplicate self or friends; new humanoid plastic 1990 models, guaranteed against all physical wear. From $7,600 to our $15,000 de luxe model.

“No,” said Smith.

“Yes,” said Braing.

“Naturally,” said Braing Two.

“How long has this gone on?”

“I’ve had him for a month. I keep him in the cellar in a toolbox. My wife never goes downstairs, and I have the only lock and key to that box. Tonight I wished to take a walk to buy a cigar. I went down cellar and took Braing Two out of his box and sent him back up to sit with my wife while I came on out to see you, Smith.”

“Wonderful! He even smells like you: Bond Street and Melachrinos!”

“It may be splitting hairs, but I think it highly ethical. After all, what my wife wants most of all is me. This marionette is me to the hairiest detail. I’ve been home all evening. I shall be home with her for the next month. In the meantime another gentleman will be in Rio after ten years of waiting. When I return from Rio, Braing Two here will go back in his box.”

Smith thought that over a minute or two. “Will he walk around without sustenance for a month?” he finally asked.

“For six months if necessary. And he’s built to do everything—eat, sleep, perspire—everything, natural as natural is. You’ll take good care of my wife, won’t you, Braing Two?”

“Your wife is rather nice,” said Braing Two. “I’ve grown rather fond of her.”

Smith was beginning to tremble. “How long has Marionettes, Inc., been in business?”

“Secretly, for two years.”

“Could I—I mean, is there a possibility——” Smith took his friend’s elbow earnestly. “Can you tell me where I can get one, a robot, a marionette, for myself? You will give me the address, won’t you?”

“Here you are.”

Smith took the card and turned it round and round. “Thank you,” he said. “You don’t know what this means. Just a little respite. A night or so, once a month even. My wife loves me so much she can’t bear to have me gone an hour. I love her dearly, you know, but remember the old poem: ‘Love will fly if held too lightly, love will die if held too tightly.’ I just want her to relax her grip a little bit.”

“You’re lucky, at least, that your wife loves you. Hate’s my problem. Not so easy.”

“Oh, Nettie loves me madly. It will be my task to make her love me comfortably.”

“Good luck to you, Smith. Do drop around while I’m in Rio. It will seem strange, if you suddenly stop calling by, to my wife. You’re to treat Braing Two, here, just like me.”
She did not stir. "What've you done with my money?" he bellowed.
She stirred fitfully. The light from the street flushed over her beautiful cheeks.
There was something about her. His heart throbbed violently. His tongue dried. He shivered. His knees suddenly turned to water. He collapsed. "Nettie, Nettie!" he cried. "What've you done with my money?"
And then, the horrid thought. And then the terror and the loneliness engulfed him. And then the fever and disillusionment. For, without desiring to do so, he bent forward and yet forward again until his fevered ear was resting firmly and irrevocably upon her round pink bosom. "Nettie!" he cried.
Tick-tick-tick-tick-tick-tick-tick-tick-tick-tick.
As Smith walked away down the avenue in the night, Braling and Braling Two turned in at the door to the apartment. "I'm glad he'll be happy too," said Braling.
"Yes," said Braling Two abstractedly.
"Well, it's the cellar box for you, B-Two." Braling guided the other creature's elbow down the stairs to the cellar.
"That's what I want to talk to you about," said Braling Two, as they reached the concrete floor and walked across it. "The cellar. I don't like it. I don't like that toolbox."
"I'll try and fix up something more comfortable."
"Marionettes are made to move, not lie still. How would you like to lie in a box most of the time?"
"Well——"
"You wouldn't like it at all. I keep running. There's no way to shut me off. I'm perfectly alive and I have feelings."
"It'll only be a few days now. I'll be off to Rio and you won't have to stay in the box. You can live upstairs."
Braling Two gestured irritably. "And when you come back from having a good time, back in the box I go."
Braling said, "They didn't tell me at the marionette shop that I'd get a difficult specimen."
"There's a lot they don't know about us," said Braling Two. "We're pretty new. And we're sensitive. I hate the idea of you going off and laughing and lying in the sun in Rio while we're stuck here in the cold."
"But I've wanted that trip all my life," said Braling quietly. He squinted his eyes and could see the sea and the mountains and the yellow sand. The sound of the waves was good to his inward mind. The sun was fine on his bared shoulders. The wine was most excellent.
"I'll never get to go to Rio," said the other man. "Have you thought of that?"
"No, I——"
"And another thing. Your wife."
"What about her?" asked Braling, beginning to edge toward the door.
Comparison/Contrast Essay Graphic Organizers

**HOW ARE THEY ALIKE?**

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Marionettes, Inc.
By Ray Bradbury

**Vocabulary**- Using a dictionary or electronic device, define the words below:

Marionette:
Ethical/Unethical:
Remorse:
Technology:

**Comprehension Questions**- Respond to each with a complete sentence that rephrases the question.

1. What technology do you notice in the story? List any advanced technology and explain how it is used.

2. Do we as a society use any similar technology today? From the technology you listed above, is any of it similar to anything we have today? Explain.

3. How would you describe Braling’s marriage? Why?

4. Explain what Smith thinks about his marriage and his wife. What problem is he having in his marriage?

5. What exactly IS Braling Two?

6. What is ironic about what Smith discovers about his wife?

7. What does Braling One think about Braling Two’s feelings? What do we learn at the end of the story about the marionette?

8. What do Braling and Nettie do to “solve” their marital problems?

9. Do you think it was ethical that Braling bought a marionette to take his place in his marriage when he didn’t want to be there? Explain.

10. How do we use technology now to avoid conflict? Explain a time when you or someone you know has used technology to avoid working through a problem face-to-face.

**Theme/Central Idea**- Using at least two pieces of supporting evidence, explain one central idea of “Marionettes, Inc.”
The Veldt
by Ray Bradbury

Pre Reading Questions: Respond to each with a complete sentence that rephrases the question.

1. Have your parents ever denied you something that you wanted more than anything in the world? Explain the situation.

2. What might happen if rooms in your house could become sensitive to the thoughts and feelings of people?

3. What is your perspective of the viewpoint held by some parents that “nothing’s too good for our children?”

Comprehension Questions: Respond to each with a complete sentence that rephrases the question. Follow directions provided carefully as you read.

Begin reading “The Veldt.” Stop reading after Lydia says, “Why don’t we shut the whole house off for a few days and take a vacation?” Answer the following questions:

4. Describe the setting of this story. Give proof from the story to back up your answer.

5. Why do you think Lydia wants to shut off the house? At this stage in the story, what do you think will be the children’s (Peter and Wendy) reaction to this idea? Support your opinion with evidence from the story.

Continue reading. Stop reading after George says, “I’m starting to wonder.”

6. What is the nursery? What do the walls of the nursery reflect?

7. In what way can the nursery serve the needs of both parents and children?

8. How does Bradbury describe the physical appearance of Peter and Wendy when they return home in the evening? How does their physical description contrast with what we know about their mental activities (their thoughts)?

Continue reading. At the conclusion of the story, answer the following questions.

Atmosphere in a story is the prevailing feeling or mood. It usually sets up expectations in the reader about the outcome of an episode or plot. It is created by descriptive diction, imagery and dialogue. Describe the atmosphere of the story, using adjectives only (such as “creepy” or “cold”). Use plenty of them to build a solid picture of the atmosphere.

9. Why was Peter screaming, “Don’t let father kill everything”? What was George actually doing? What does this suggest about Peter’s relationship with technology?

10. Do you think the children realize what they have done to their parents? Explain your answer.