

Name:

Date:

Before Reading

Part 1: In one paragraph, write a short story using all of the following words.

breakfast	clock	rain	mice	silhouette
skeleton	aluminum	vanished	clean	smoke

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Part 2: What comes to mind when you think of nature? In what ways in nature considered strong?

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“There Will Come Soft Rains” by Ray Bradbury
Vocabulary

Vocabulary Word	Part of Speech	Defintion
charred	adj	
paranoia	noun	
delicately	adv	
regiments	noun	
manifest	verb	
spoons	noun	
tremulous	adj	
quenching	verb (participle)	

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“There Will Come Soft Rains” by Ray Bradbury
Vocabulary

Vocabulary Word	Part of Speech	Defintion
charred	adj	Describes burned and blackened
paranoia	noun	suspicion and mistrust of something without justification
delicately	adv	carefully; with grace and gentleness
regiments	noun	a permanent unit of an army
manifest	verb	to display or appear
spoor	noun	the track or scent of an animal
tremulous	adj	Describes feeling nervous and trembling; quivering in fear
quenching	verb (participle)	Describes extinguishing a fire

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“There Will Come Soft Rains” by Ray Bradbury
Reading Questions

1. What is the setting?

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2. What is interesting about the house?

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3. Why is no one interacting with the house or responding to the house’s operations?

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4. Why does the house continue to “talk” to no one?

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5. What has happened to the rest of the houses in the neighborhood?

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6. What are the five spots of paint on the exterior of the house?

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7. What can you infer has happened to the family who lived in the house? Why is the world the way it is?

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8. Who is still alive? What does his appearance tell the reader about the time that has passed?

9. How does Bradbury make it evident that the house does not feel emotions despite all its human-like qualities?

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10. What similarities does the poem share with the story?

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11. What causes the fire in the house?

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12. How does the house react to the fire? What mood does it set?

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13. What unusual task does the house do, even while it's dying? Why?

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14. What themes are evident in this story?

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“There Will Come Soft Rains” by Ray Bradbury
Reading Questions

1. What is the setting?

August 4, 2026 in Allendale, California.

2. What is interesting about the house?

The house is a talking alarm clock. It also makes breakfast and gives the family reminders about important dates. It's self-cleaning.

3. Why is no one interacting with the house or responding to the house's operations?

No one is home.

4. Why does the house continue to “talk” to no one?

The house is automated technology. It can't recognize that no one is there. It's programmed to keep working no matter what.

5. What has happened to the rest of the houses in the neighborhood?

They are all gone—destroyed by a nuclear bomb. “The sun came out from behind the rain. The house stood alone in a city of rubble and ashes. This was the one house left standing. At night the ruined city gave off a radioactive glow which could be seen for miles.”

6. What are the five spots of paint on the exterior of the house?

The five spots are the silhouettes of a man, a woman, a boy, a girl, and a ball that the boy was throwing.

7. What can you infer has happened to the family who lived in the house? Why is the world the way it is?

They were all killed by the atomic bomb. There was a nuclear explosion that killed the whole city. Technology is to blame.

8. Who is still alive? What does his appearance tell the reader about the time that has passed?

The pet dog survives, but he is skin and bones, and covered in sores; a lot of time has passed.

9. How does Bradbury make it evident that the house does not feel emotions despite all its human-like qualities?

When the dog dies of radiation sickness, the robots quickly get rid of the body like nothing happened. The dog's death is an inconvenience to the house.

10. What similarities does the poem share with the story?

The poem states that Spring will still come, no matter what. No humans are left because of war; mankind has completely perished. But nature will not care; it will keep persevering. The short story is about a house that does not know its family is gone, and continues to perform its normal functions. Technology and nature are prevailing, although the city was bombed and the people are gone.

11. What causes the fire in the house?

A tree falls and spills a cleaning spray that catches on fire on the stove.

12. How does the house react to the fire? What mood does it set?

The house acts frantic and panicked. All of the robot voices are yelling at the same time to save the family that is already gone. The house works hard to put out the fire. There are several robot snakes spraying a clear cold venom of green froth on the flames. It creates a mood of distress, frenzy, and anxiety.

13. What unusual task does the house do, even while it's dying? Why?

As the house is burning down, it hurriedly tries to make breakfast. It's either malfunctioning or is just continuously doing the job it is programmed to do: to accommodate the owners and make their lives easier. This just shows how tragically disconnected from reality the technology is.

14. What themes are evident in this story?

Any of the following:

- Technology can be dangerous.
- Life goes on after you die.
- We are replaceable by technology (technology has blended with and taken on the characteristics of humans and animals).
- Death is instantaneous and doesn't change the world. Death and time progress no matter what.
- Nature is more powerful than whatever man can create.
- Nature is powerful, immense, and self-sustaining (even after the bomb there are still trees, birds, foxes, cats, and dogs).
- We don't need others to live if we have technology. Technology can isolate us.

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“There Will Come Soft Rains” by Ray Bradbury
Figurative Language Quote Analysis

Directions: fill out the following chart by analyzing each quote and explaining its significance or effect/impact on the plot of the story.

Quote	Figurative Language	Significance/Effect
In the living room the voice-clock sang, <i>Tick-tock, seven o'clock, time to get up, time to get up, seven o'clock!</i> as if it were afraid nobody would.	Personification	
At four o'clock the tables folded like great butterflies back through the paneled walls.	Simile	
Outside, the garage chimed and lifted its door to reveal the waiting car. After a long wait the door swung down again.	Personification	
At eight-thirty the eggs were shriveled and the toast was like stone.	Simile	
The house was an altar with ten thousand attendants, big, small, servicing, attending, in choirs. But the gods had gone away, and the ritual of the religion continued senselessly, uselessly.	Metaphor	
There, down tubes which fed into the cellar, it was dropped into the sighing vent of an incinerator which sat like evil Baal in a dark corner.	Allusion	

There was the sound like a great matted yellow hive of bees within a dark bellows, the lazy bumble of a purring lion. And there was the patter of okapi feet and the murmur of a fresh jungle rain, like other hoofs falling upon the summer-starched grass.	Imagery	
The dinner dishes manipulated like magic tricks, and in the study a click.	Simile	
The fire crackled up the stairs. It fed upon Picassos and Matisses in the upper halls, like delicacies, baking off the oily flesh, tenderly crisping the canvases into black shavings.	Personification	
The fire backed off, as even an elephant must at the sight of a dead snake. But the fire was clever. It had sent flames outside the house, up through the attic to the pumps there.	Personification	
The house shuddered, oak bone on bone, its bared skeleton cringing from the heat, its wire, its nerves revealed as if a surgeon had torn the skin off to let the red veins and capillaries quiver in the scalded air.	Personification	
Heat snapped mirrors like the first brittle winter ice.	Simile	
And the voices wailed Fire, fire, run, run, like a tragic nursery rhyme, a dozen voices, high, low, like children dying in a forest, alone, alone.	Simile	
Deep freeze, armchair, film tapes, circuits, beds, and all like skeletons thrown in a cluttered mound deep under.	Simile	

ANSWER GUIDE

“There Will Come Soft Rains” by Ray Bradbury Figurative Language Quote Analysis

Quote	Figurative Language	Significance/Effect
In the living room the voice-clock sang, <i>Tick-tock, seven o'clock, time to get up, time to get up, seven o'clock!</i> as if it were afraid nobody would.	Personification	The house is worried that no one will hear it, which is the first clue that something is not right and that the home has unique, futuristic qualities. The house cares that the owners are up on time. The effect is curious.
At four o'clock the tables folded like great butterflies back through the paneled walls.	Simile	The house is self-operational, but even the advanced technology resembles and imitates nature. It is ironic.
Outside, the garage chimed and lifted its door to reveal the waiting car. After a long wait the door swung down again.	Personification	The garage door opens and the car waits for someone to drive it, but no one comes. This scene creates a foreboding, ominous mood and it is an indication that something is wrong and that no one is home.
At eight-thirty the eggs were shriveled and the toast was like stone.	Simile	This foreshadows that the family is elsewhere because all the food has gone to waste and no one is there to eat it. It also shows that the house is completely unaware that no one is home. There is a sense of emptiness and vacancy.
The house was an altar with ten thousand attendants, big, small, servicing, attending, in choirs. But the gods had gone away, and the ritual of the religion continued senselessly, uselessly.	Metaphor	An altar is a place of worship. The metaphor compares all of the robots and technology in the house to worshippers because they were created to serve the humans. In this case, the “gods” are dead, meaning the residents of the household. And even though the family is gone, the house continues without them. These lines support the theme/message that technology can survive without humans.
There, down tubes which fed into the cellar, it was dropped into the sighing vent of an incinerator which sat like evil Baal in a dark corner.	Allusion	Bradbury compares the incinerator to Baal, a pagan God, strongly associated with evil. The purpose is to demonstrate how the house has a sinister purpose and to create a dark, creepy atmosphere.
There was the sound like a great matted yellow hive of bees within a dark bellows, the lazy bumble of a purring lion. And there was the patter of okapi feet and the murmur of a fresh jungle rain, like other hoofs falling upon the summer-starched grass.	Imagery	These lines show the reader how the house works to comfort and please the family in all aspects of life, including entertaining the children. The quote demonstrates to readers how far technology has come in year 2026. The effect is playful yet sad because readers know the kids are dead. It is also another example of technology imitating nature. The kids' form of entertainment is playing outside (irony).

The dinner dishes manipulated like magic tricks, and in the study a click.	Simile	The purpose of this quote is to show how efficient the house can operate on a regular basis, even without the presence of any humans.
The fire crackled up the stairs. It fed upon Picassos and Matisses in the upper halls, like delicacies, baking off the oily flesh, tenderly crisping the canvases into black shavings.	Personification	The fire is feeding on all the things in the house. The house, who is the main character in this story, is dying. Even the most valuable memories and possessions can be destroyed by death. The effect is horror and this quote supports the theme that nature is more powerful than whatever man can create.
The fire backed off, as even an elephant must at the sight of a dead snake. But the fire was clever. It had sent flames outside the house, up through the attic to the pumps there.	Personification	This shows hesitation on the part of the fire because the technology in the house is working hard to defeat it. However, the fire outsmarts technology, showing that nature always prevails. These lines show that in the epic battle of technology vs. nature, nature will win.
The house shuddered, oak bone on bone, its bared skeleton cringing from the heat, its wire, its nerves revealed as if a surgeon had torn the skin off to let the red veins and capillaries quiver in the scalded air.	Personification	The reader may think of technology as immortal because it is not actually alive, but these lines assign the house human anatomy to show how the house is dying just as a human would. Bradbury emphasizes that even technology is temporary.
Heat snapped mirrors like the first brittle winter ice.	Simile	These lines show the fire is strong and is winning. It illustrates destruction and the collapse of the house.
And the voices wailed Fire, fire, run, run, like a tragic nursery rhyme, a dozen voices, high, low, like children dying in a forest, alone, alone.	Simile	The house calls out to the humans proving again that the house is completely unaware that the humans are gone. The technology in the house is capable of serving the family in many ways, but when there is an emergency, the house can't save the family—it's only their chaotic voices that function and then die, sacrificing themselves for the humans.
Deep freeze, armchair, film tapes, circuits, beds, and all like skeletons thrown in a cluttered mound deep under.	Simile	The house is completely destroyed except for the one wall. The remains are compared to a pile of skeletons. The effect of this simile is the resolution of death and failure of the home. These lines also support the theme that death and time progress no matter what.

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"There Will Come Soft Rains"
After Reading

Part A: "There Will Come Soft Rains" was written in 1950 and is set in the year 2026. How close was Bradbury's prediction of the year 2026? What do you think life will be like 76 years from now?

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Part B: 3-2-1

What are at least **three** daily operations the house completes as part of its routine?

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What are **two** ways the technology in the house takes on characteristics of animals or humans?

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What is **one** question you have that was left unanswered in the story?