

## How does Bradbury use language to bring his dystopian setting to life in *There Will Come Soft Rains*?

As the story opens, it is not immediately clear that Bradbury is creating a dystopia. In the opening paragraphs, the descriptions sound calm and positive. For example, the voice clock 'sang' and the breakfast stove gave a 'hissing sigh'. Both 'sang' and 'sigh' express happiness and contentment. Moreover, the use of sibilance at the start of the story creates a soft, gentle tone. Bradbury adds to this effect by adding more descriptions with positive connotations; the 'warm interior' of the stove is made to sound pleasant rather than hot, and the eggs are 'sunnyside up', which creates positive connotations to help lull the reader into believing that all is well with the world.

However, there are early clues that something is not quite right: the word 'empty' is repeated and the clock voice sounds 'afraid that nobody would' (wake up). This is the first suggestion in the story of a vague sense of fear and paranoia on the part of the house – even a sense of delusion. The word 'afraid' personifies the house and turns it into the story's main (or only) protagonist, as everyone else is dead. Any emotion in this story is reserved for the house and its robotic inhabitants, who seem desperate to carry on as normal despite their grief.

### Other points to develop:

*As there are no real characters in the story, Bradbury fills his descriptions with **noise** and **movement** to make the empty setting into a dynamic environment... (discuss **strong verbs, alliteration, etc.**)*

*Bradbury also uses plenty of **imagery** to make the house seem alive... (**simile, metaphor**)*

*The writer builds a sense of **pathos** during the 'children's hour' section by making the occupants' existence seem **innocent, beautiful** and **idyllic**...*

*The final section of the story describes when the house 'began to die.' A key technique in this section is **personification**...*