“The Pedestrian”
Ray Bradbury

Close Reading Questions
1. What adjectives would you use to describe the atmosphere (mood) established in the opening paragraphs?

2. List some words and phrases from the opening paragraphs that illustrate the mood.

3. What does Mead’s “brightly lit” house tell us about him? What evidence in the rest of the story supports this?

4. Bradbury describes Mead’s walks as being “…not unequal to walking through a graveyard….” In what ways is this city like a graveyard?

5. How would you describe life in this city in the year 2053? Quote a specific example of Bradbury’s use of language that enabled you to arrive at this answer.

6. When did you realize there was no one driving the police car? Why is the identity of the voice in the car kept anonymous? In your opinion, who is actually controlling the car?

7. Why is Mead arrested?

8. What is his punishment going to be? Why?

9. What is the effect of the repetition of the word empty at the end of the story?

Deep Thoughts
1. What social trends does Bradbury observe and see as potential problems for society?

2. What potentially harmful trends do YOU observe in today’s society?

3. How might those trends affect life in 2067?

4. How do you think television, computers, smart phones, or other modern technological devices could be used to suppress or control people’s thinking?

5. Does “The Pedestrian” comment on features of our present society? If so, which ones? How are we like the world of Leonard Mead?

6. What aspects of technology today do you see as isolating people from each other?