

Brave New World

BACKGROUND:

Brave New World is a novel written in 1931 by Aldous Huxley and published in 1932. Set in London of AD 2540 (632 A.F. in the book), the vast majority of the population is unified under the “World State,” an eternally peaceful, stable global society in which goods and resources are plentiful (because the population is permanently limited to no more than two billion people) and everyone is happy.

Natural reproduction has been done away with and children are created, “decanted,” and raised in Hatching and Conditioning Centres, where they are divided into five castes and designed to fulfill predetermined positions within the social and economic strata of the World State. Fetuses chosen to become members of the highest caste, “Alpha,” are allowed to develop naturally while maturing to term in “decanting bottles,” while fetuses chosen to become members of the lower castes (“Beta,” “Gamma,” “Delta,” “Epsilon”) are subjected to chemical interference to cause arrested development in intelligence or physical growth.

The novel addresses a number of controversial issues, including human cloning (Bokanovsky's Process), governmental control, the use of antidepressants (soma), hypnopædia (sleep teaching), and censorship. While Huxley's dystopian work provides a frightening vision of the future, it is important to understand that *Brave New World* is not simply a warning about what could happen to society if things go wrong, it is also a satire of the society in which Huxley existed, and which still exists today. While the attitudes and behaviors of World State citizens at first appear bizarre, cruel, or scandalous, many clues point to the conclusion that the World State is simply an extreme—but logically developed—version of our society's economic values, in which individual happiness is defined as the ability to satisfy needs, and success as a society is equated with economic growth and prosperity.

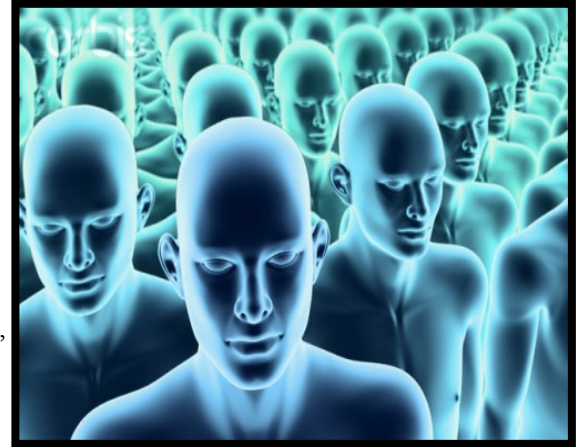
TASK:

Before you begin to read Huxley's work, you will need to complete a pre-reading assignment which will help to provide context for the novel, making this challenging work easier to comprehend as you work to make sense of some of the difficult and abstract concepts presented in the reading.

Additionally, there will be seven assignments that you will complete after reading assigned sections of the text to ensure that you are focusing on central issues throughout the novel. These assignments will eventually aid you in the completion of a summative group project that you will complete during the first week of school.

You will also be reading Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* during the school year and be asked to make connections to your summer reading, so it is important that you actually read the novel (not skim Sparknotes) in order to be successful. Because this novel is very challenging, it may be helpful to consult Sparknotes and/or Shmoop at the end of each chapter to ensure that you fully comprehended all that is presented in each section of the text. The analysis section of Sparknotes will also provide you with further explanation of your reading to help you be successful on any assignments for the novel and eventually your final summer reading test.

If you have questions as you are reading, email me (KischukS@epcusd401.org); I am more than happy to field questions throughout the summer. Also, consult the class website (www.wix.com/Kischuk/English). Here you will find the other online resources mentioned, which will be invaluable to you as you begin your reading. Don't worry if you are initially confused or struggle with the text; it is not necessary to understand every single element of the text. Make sense of what you can, ask questions, and be ready to discuss the work upon your return to school.



ASSESSMENT:

All of your summer reading work combined will account for 15% of your semester grade. During the first week of school, all students will take a test over *Brave New World* and *The Crucible*. At this time, students will also turn in their *Brave New World* and *The Crucible* summer reading assignments. Then, during the first week of class (either first or second semester depending on scheduling), students will work in groups to complete a project that will act as a summative assessment for *Brave New World* and lead into our first unit of study for the year *Fahrenheit 451*.

DUE DATE:

Brave New World & Crucible Assignments: **August 20, 2012**

Summer Reading Test: **August 20, 2012**

Brave New World Project: **TBD (in class)**

Anyone who fails to turn in work and/or take the test by this date, will earn a zero for those portions of the summer reading grade. This means that your semester grade will automatically drop one full letter grade. Make sure you stay on top of your work throughout the summer—don't put this off until a week before school starts!

Pre-reading Assignment

Part I: Acquiring Background Knowledge

Directions: Research the concepts below and write an explanation of each in your own words. Use complete sentences in writing your explanation—do NOT copy information from a website word for word. Some concepts will require more explanation than others; however, you should be detailed in all of your explanations to illustrate your understanding of the concept. You can either record your responses in the chart provided below or on a separate sheet of paper.

<u>CONCEPT</u>	<u>EXPLANATION</u>
1. Utopia vs. Dystopia	
2. Satire	
3. Allusion	
4. Ford Model T	
5. Pavlov's Theory/Dogs	
6. Prozac	
7. Consumerism	
8. Propaganda	
9. Censorship	
10. Technocracy	

PART II: IDENTIFYING HISTORICAL FIGURES

Directions: In his fictional novel *Brave New World*, Huxley makes many **allusions**, or references to real-life people. Below you will find a list of character names and a corresponding historical figure. Research each of the people listed on the chart below to provide an overview of the historical figure's **role in history**, **beliefs**, and **accomplishments**.

<u>CHARACTER</u>	<u>HISTORICAL FIGURE</u>	<u>ROLE IN HISTORY</u>	<u>BELIEFS</u>	<u>ACCOMPLISHMENTS</u>
1. Bernard Marx	Karl Marx			
2. Lenina Crowne	Vladimir Lenin			
3. Helmholtz Watson	John B. Watson			
4. Benito Hoover	Benito Mussolini			
5. Mustapha Mond	Mustapha Kemal Ataturk			

CHAPTERS 1-3: SATIRE

BACKGROUND:

Many students are familiar with the different genres, or categories, of literature—fiction, nonfiction, poetry, autobiography, biography, plays, newspaper, folk tales—to name a few. However, there are often many subgenres of literature within these genres. For example, under the broad genre of plays, there are the subgenres of comedy, tragedy, and history. Under the genre of mystery, there are the subgenres of thriller, detective, historical, romantic, and suspense.

Brave New World falls under the genre of fiction (or science fiction) and the subgenre of satire. Satire is a piece of work that tries to expose, attack, and/or ridicule the foolishness, wrongdoings, or strange behavior of society. Satire is often humorous, using exaggeration, irony, sarcasm, and parody to catch the attention of the reader and promote changes in behavior. Modern satire can be seen on television shows such as *Saturday Night Live*, *The Simpsons*, or in political cartoons in newspapers and magazines.

Brave New World is a satire of the political and social values of the early 1920s and 30s. In Great Britain, the Industrial Revolution occurred between 1750 and the 1900s, with an influx of workers moving from farming and agriculture to big city factories. Innovations such as the steam engine, cotton gin, Morse Code, dynamite, electricity, and the telegraph were invented during this time. In 1903 the Ford Model T, the first mass-produced automobile, was produced by Henry Ford. It was a time of great advancement and change, which often brought feelings of instability and vulnerability to the people of the time.

Many philosophers, artists, authors, and politicians questioned the need for these rapid changes and wondered: are they really beneficial? Many were certain that machines were taking over the world and believed human beings would one day become useless and obsolete. In *Brave New World*, Huxley certainly challenges these scientific and technological changes and questions whether they represent progress or the obliteration of the world as we know it.

TASK:

After you have read chapters 1-3, complete the assignment below. In the first column is a fictional process or entity made up by Huxley, along with an explanation. In the second column, compare these inventions to something that exists in our world today. Then, in the third column, explain the similarities. In the last column, answer the following questions: 1) Knowing what we know today, what might have been Huxley's reasons for including these in his novel? 2) What social or political statements could Huxley be making about human beings and society? An example has been done for you:

<u>FICTIONAL EXAMPLE & EXPLANATION</u>	<u>REAL (MODERN) SIMILARITY</u>	<u>EXPLANATION</u>	<u>HUXLEY'S REASONS/STATEMENTS/MESSAGE</u>
Example: Bokanovsky's Process/Bokanovsky Twins <i>Process of creating numerous human beings (up to 96) from one egg</i>	<i>Cloning</i>	<i>Duplicating a single gene or segment of DNA to create an identical cell (Dolly the sheep)</i>	<i>Huxley didn't realize it, but this was a real possibility—and in the 20th Century, we have achieved it. Huxley may have been warning of the loss of individuality and identity for the sake of science.</i>
1) Hypnopaedia <i>Sleep teaching</i>			
2) Malthusian Belt <i>Contraceptive belt</i>			
3) Soma <i>Legal drug with no side effects or social stigma</i>			
4) Social Conditioning <i>Teaching people to appreciate and fully accept their position in life</i>			

CHAPTERS 4-6: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

BACKGROUND:

One of the most captivating aspects of *Brave New World* is Huxley's use of figurative language, or ideas communicated beyond their literal meaning to create an image in the reader's or audience's mind. Huxley is able to create an image in our minds of the environment of this new world, just by his choice of words. There are several types of figurative language, called figures of speech:

- **metaphor**- a comparison made between two unlike objects: "the pillow was a cloud"
- **simile**- a comparison between two unlike objects using the words "like" or "as" in the comparison: "the pillow was like a marshmallow"
- **imagery**- using words to appeal to the senses, i.e. sight, sound, taste, touch, and hearing
- **personification**- giving human qualities or characteristics to non-human objects: "the wind sang its sad song"

TASK:

After you have read chapters 4-6, complete the exercise below. For each excerpt, identify the type of figurative language that is being used: metaphor, simile, imagery, or personification. Then identify the effect of these particular words on the reader. An example has been done for you:

Example: The overalls of the workers were white, their hands gloved with a pale corpse-coloured rubber.

Type: Imagery **Effect:** A feeling of stark lifelessness in this place that is supposed to be giving life (the Hatchery); the author uses the word "corpse," which again reiterates death.

1. The light was frozen, dead, a ghost.
a. **Type:** _____ b. **Effect:** _____

2. Machinery faintly purred.
a. **Type:** _____ b. **Effect:** _____

3. And in effect the sultry darkness into which the students now followed him was visible and crimson, like the darkness of closed eyes on a summer's afternoon.
a. **Type:** _____ b. **Effect:** _____

4. Like chickens drinking, the students lifted their eyes towards the distant ceiling.
a. **Type:** _____ b. **Effect:** _____

5. Thousands of petals, ripe-blown and silkily smooth, like the cheeks of innumerable little cherubs...
a. **Type:** _____ b. **Effect:** _____

6. There was something desperate, almost insane, about the sharp spasmodic yelps to which they now gave utterance. Their little bodies twitched and stiffened; their limbs moved jerkily as if to the tug of unseen wires.
a. **Type:** _____ b. **Effect:** _____

7. Torrents of hot water were splashing into or gurgling out of a hundred baths. Rumbling and hissing, eighty vibro-vacuum massage machines were simultaneously kneading and sucking the firm and sun burnt flesh of eighty superb female specimens.
a. **Type:** _____ b. **Effect:** _____

8. Not so much like drops of water, though water it is true, can wear holes in the hardest granite; rather, drops of liquid sealing-wax, drops that adhere, incrust, incorporate themselves with what they fall on, till finally the rock is all one scarlet blob. (*Referring to hypnopædia*)
a. **Type:** _____ b. **Effect:** _____

9. ...the propeller shrilled from hornet to wasp, from wasp to mosquito...
a. **Type:** _____ b. **Effect:** _____

CHAPTERS 7-9: TONE & MOOD

BACKGROUND:

Tone is the emotional quality of the words that the author has chosen. It is also the author's attitude and point of view toward a subject; it reflects the feelings of the writer, and can affect the emotional response of the reader to the piece. While we have all heard, "Don't use that tone of voice with me!" a writer does not have the advantage of the sound of his voice to reveal the tone of the piece. As we read the words on the page, the author hopes that the words he or she has chosen and the way he or she has arranged those words will help us hear a voice in our heads, supplying the emotional appeal. Tone can be formal or informal, humorous or serious, personal or impersonal, subjective or objective, casual or passionate, cynical or sentimental, simple or elaborate, and more.

When learning to recognize tone, it is also important to understand mood, a general feeling that is created by the tone. In literature, writers carefully choose their words, wanting the reader to feel love and hate, joy and sadness. Mood is usually described in expressions of feeling and emotions, such as fear, surprise, anger, hatred, contentment, or jealousy, to name a few.

In short, tone is how the author says something, and mood is how it affects you, the reader. For example, an author writes "Justin turned slowly, whispering under his breath, 'I am going to kill you.'" By just reading this sentence, did you guess that the next sentence is: "With a sweep of his arms, he held her close, and for the first time, they shared a passionate, warm kiss"? By the choice of the author's words (diction), and how they are arranged (syntax), he has created a tone which is suspenseful, passionate, and sentimental. The mood changes once we find out the real situation: the mood is one of anticipation, passion, and romance.

BACKGROUND:

After you have read chapters 7-9, complete the assignment below. First, on a separate piece of paper, list as many **moods** as you can think of (see list of moods above for help). For the following excerpts, underline the words that contribute to the mood, such as adjectives, adverbs, or other strong sensory words that catch you. Then use your list to identify the tone that Huxley is using (see above for help), and how it affects you (mood). Finally, write your analysis of the excerpt, or how the mood and tone work or don't work together in the excerpt. Attach your original list of moods to this worksheet when you finish. Since there are several steps in this process, an example has been done to help you:

Example: "Ninety-six identical twins working ninety-six identical machines!" The voice was almost tremulous with enthusiasm. "You really know where you are. For the first time in history." He quoted the planetary motto. "Community, Identity, Stability." Grand words. "If we could Bokanovskify indefinitely the whole problem would be solved."

Tone: enthusiastic, self-assured, confident, assuring, optimistic, pompous

Mood: curiosity, inspiration, intrigue, fascination

Analysis: With the D.H.C.'s confident and unwavering optimism about the state of the world and its future, as the reader, I am intrigued and fascinated by the idea of 96 twins. I am also curious about what the D.H.C. (or the author) means by "the whole problem would be solved." I wonder what "problem" he is referring to.

1. At the sound of his voice the Director started into a guilty realization of where he was; shot a glance at Bernard, and averting his eyes, blushed darkly; looked at him again with sudden suspicion and, angrily on his dignity, "Don't imagine," he said, "that I had any indecorous relation with the girl. Nothing emotional, nothing long drawn... Furious with himself for having given away a discreditable secret, he vented his rage on Bernard.

Tone: _____

Mood: _____

Analysis: _____

2. In the end she persuaded him to swallow four tablets of soma. Five minutes later roots and fruits were abolished; the flower of the present rosily blossomed.

Tone: _____

Mood: _____

Analysis: _____

3. His heart beat wildly; for a moment he was almost faint. Then, bending over the precious box, he touched, he lifted into the light, he examined. The zippers on Lenina's spare pair of viscose velveteen shorts were at first a puzzle, then solved, a delight.

Tone: _____

Mood: _____

Analysis: _____

4. Very slowly, with the hesitating gesture of one who reaches forward to stroke a shy and possibly rather dangerous bird, he put out his hand. It hung there trembling, within an inch of those limp fingers, on the verge of contact. Did he dare? Dare to profane with his unworthiest hand that...No, he didn't. The bird was too dangerous. His hand dropped back. How beautiful she was! How beautiful!

Tone: _____

Mood: _____

Analysis: _____

5. Then suddenly he found himself reflecting that he had only to take hold of the zipper at her neck and give one long, strong pull...He shut his eyes, he shook his head with the gesture of a dog shaking its ears as it emerges from the water. Detestable thought! He was ashamed of himself. Pure and vestal modesty...

Tone: _____

Mood: _____

Analysis: _____

CHAPTERS 10-12: IRONY

BACKGROUND:

Irony is a literary device in which words are used to express a contradiction between appearance and reality—usually the reality is the opposite of what it seems. There are several types of irony:

- **Verbal Irony** is the use of words to express something different from or opposite to its literal meaning. In other words, don't take what this person is saying as the bare truth! Sarcasm, overstatement, and understatement (or hyperbole), are all examples of verbal irony.
 - For example: *A mother opens the door to her son's disaster area of a bedroom and says, "I am so glad you found the time to clean today—your room looks better than ever!"*
- **Dramatic Irony** is when the audience knows something that is going to happen to a character, and that character has no idea of his fate.
 - For example: *Think of a scary movie in which you see the killer and where he is hiding, but the soon-to-be victim has no idea that a killer is in her house!*
- **Situational Irony** is a contradiction between what we expect to happen, and what actually happens.
 - For example: *You spend hours washing and waxing your car in the sunshine, only to have it rain the next day, or the fact that the Titanic was hailed as "unsinkable" before it made its mortal voyage!*

TASK:

After you have read chapters 10-12, complete the following assignment. For the following examples from *Brave New World*, identify first the type of irony; then, explain the irony of the situation. An example has been done for you:

Example: As John realizes he will be going to the "new" world, he says "O brave new world that has such people in it." Later, as he gets to know this civilization, he again says, "O brave new world that has such people in it."

Type of Irony: *Verbal Irony*

Irony: *John initially looks forward to the new civilization and all it has to offer, but as he realizes how these people live and what they are subjected to and kept from, he becomes disgusted with the shallowness and soulless society. He said "O brave new world..." the first time with anticipation and excitement; the next time is with disgust and disappointment.*

1. As Henry and Lenina fly over the Crematorium, Lenina says, "What a marvelous switchback!" and laughs. The switchback, we learn, is the hot air created by the burning of bodies.

Type of Irony: _____

Irony: _____

2. In Chapter 10, the D.H.C. has decided that he will make a public example of Bernard, and finds the most populated room in which to do it. Bernard arrives, and after being reprimanded by the D.H.C., Bernard introduces Linda and John.

Type of Irony: _____

Irony: _____

3. Bernard attends the Solidarity Service, which is supposed to make him feel closer and more connected to Ford and to the other citizens. However, he feels even more uncomfortable and must take soma to relax even a little.

Type of Irony: _____

Irony: _____

4. As the D.H.C. tells Bernard about his visit to the reservation, he reminds Bernard that his relationship with the woman was not “indecorous” and to be assured that it was “Nothing emotional, nothing longdrawn. It was all perfectly healthy and normal.”

Type of Irony: _____

Irony: _____

5. In the new world, society is happy and healthy. Everyone knows their place in society, and are thankful for the jobs they have been given and for the technology that has made them who they are. There is no war, poverty, or disease. Family, art, religion, philosophy, and uncertainty have been eliminated.

Type of Irony: _____

Irony: _____

CHAPTERS 13-15: LITERARY RESPONSE

BACKGROUND:

A **Response to Literature** prompt asks you to take your own personal opinions/ideas and answer the prompt, using examples from the literature to support your ideas. It is necessary to know exactly how to take quotations from the text and make them work for you in your essay. Additionally, it is necessary to have the text in front of you in order to find quotes to support your response. To practice extracting and using quotations for an essay, complete the activity below.

PROMPT:

In Chapter 14, the reader is exposed to the way death is regarded in the new society. Compare our own society's views and feelings towards death to the views and feelings of the new world. Support your response with references to the text.

TASK:

In order to write a paragraph response using quotations from the text, re-read Chapter 14, noting with a sticky note or other marking every quotation you can find that deals with the views and feelings of the new world regarding death. You will want to find as many as you can—that does not mean you will have to use them all in your response.

Once you have found your quotes, you will need to decide HOW you are going to use them in a paragraph response. Complete the following chart to help organize your ideas and views. An example has been done for you:

Page	DIRECT QUOTATION	SIGNIFICANCE	COMPARISON: OUR SOCIETY
EX: 199	EX: "Why, whatever is the matter?" she asked. She was not accustomed to this kind of thing in visitors. (Not that there were many visitors anyhow: or any reason why there should be many visitors.)"	The nurse has no sympathy; people do not care about others dying since there is no family; no visitors come to visit anyone in the hospital.	Nurses and doctors generally do all they can to gently break the news of death to family; family and friends visit their loves ones in the hospital.

CHAPTERS 16-18: SYMBOLISM

BACKGROUND:

Symbolism is the creative use of objects, or **symbols**, to represent or indicate a deeper meaning or to represent something larger than itself. Just as a heart is a symbol of love, or a turkey is a symbol of Thanksgiving, colors, animals, weather, numbers, and even people can act as symbols in a piece of literature. It is important that we recognize the author's use of symbols to indicate a deeper message in his or her work.

TASK:

For each of the symbols and situations below, match the symbol with the best symbolic meaning from the text. Then, choose FIVE of the symbols and explain, using specific examples from the text, how each symbol is depicted in the novel and what evidence there is in the text to suggest that this character, item, etc. is a symbol for what you have matched it to.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. soma | a. a failed attempt at pure perfection |
| _____ 2. the feelies | b. core elements and basic emotions of human beings |
| _____ 3. Malthusian Belt | c. the new, socially accepted "mother" |
| _____ 4. slogans, sayings | d. the acknowledgment of the best of the old and new |
| _____ 5. Ford, "T" | e. obsolete and incomprehensible concepts |
| _____ 6. Lenina | f. cleansing; atonement |
| _____ 7. John the Savage | g. science; mass production; religion |
| _____ 8. Helmholtz | h. control by intoxication |
| _____ 9. Mustapha Mond | i. the danger of mental excess and free thought |
| _____ 10. The Bible | j. paradigm of a woman |
| _____ 11. Cyprus Experiment | k. replacement of free thought |
| _____ 12. bottle | l. promiscuity, duty and responsibility to society |
| _____ 13. whip | m. failure of the new world in an old environment |
| _____ 14. Linda | n. substitute for true emotion and sensory pleasure |

Symbol: _____

Explanation of Symbol: _____

Symbol: _____

Explanation of Symbol: _____

Symbol: _____

Explanation of Symbol: _____

Symbol: _____

Explanation of Symbol: _____

Symbol: _____

Explanation of Symbol: _____

POST READING ASSIGNMENT

BACKGROUND:

Brave New World depicts a dystopia: a world of anonymous and dehumanized people dominated by a government made overwhelmingly powerful by the use of technology. Through the use of propaganda, the citizens of the society are conditioned and manipulated to believe in and support the governmental agenda, which promotes inequality and blind acceptance to conform to societal norms without question. Though the vast majority of the population believes they are happy, as the novel progresses it becomes clear that this state of contentment is not all that it initially seems to be.

TASK:

Now that you have finished reading Huxley's novel, you will reflect on the "utopia" presented in the novel to identify the positives and negatives of this society. Answer the questions below about the novel, pointing out benefits and/or flaws in regards to the way society seems to function. Be sure to use specific examples from the text in your responses.

Human Rights:

1. Are all citizens equal within the society? Explain.

2. Reflecting on your response to question 1, do you think this is a moral way to construct a society? Explain.

3. Would you like to be a part of a society that functions like this? Explain.

4. What would you change about the level of equality amongst citizens? Explain.

5. How does the absence of religion affect the citizens of the society in *Brave New World*? Explain.

6. What benefits do you see to eliminating religion from a culture? Explain.

7. What problems do you see to eliminating religion from a culture? Explain.

8. Does religion do more harm or more good in a society? Explain.

Politics:

9. How would you describe the government in *Brave New World*? Explain.

10. What benefits do you see with the way in which the government functions in the novel? Explain.

11. What problems do you see with the way in which the government functions in the novel? Explain.

12. In what ways does the government use propaganda in the novel? Explain.

13. What affect does the propaganda have on citizens? Explain.

14. Is the government's use of propaganda an effective tool or a manipulative tactic? Explain.

15. What changes would you make to the way government functions in *Brave New World*? Explain.

Economy:

16. How is consumerism promoted in *Brave New World*? What effect does this consumerism have on the economy in the novel? Explain.

17. How are goods and services produced in this society? How are jobs determined for citizens? Explain.

18. What benefits do you see to the way in which the economy functions in the novel? Explain.

19. What problems do you see to the way in which the economy functions in the novel? Explain.

STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS

**** These questions will help give you focus as you read and also ensure that you comprehend each chapter; this will be helpful for the summer reading test. Completing these questions is optional and will not be collected for a grade****

Chapter 1

1. What is the World State's motto?
2. Where does the story begin? In what year?
3. What is Bokanovsky's Process? What is the result?
4. In what conditions are the bottles stored? Why?
5. What are freemartins? What symbol are they given?
6. What is the point of conditioning, according to the D.H.C?

Chapter 2

1. What happens to the Delta babies after they were lured to the books and flowers?
2. Why were they conditioned to hate flowers?
3. In a short paragraph, describe how the idea of hypnopaedia was discovered. Why were the first experimenters on the "wrong track" according to the D.H.C? What does this society teach?
4. What word or words are "Our Ford" and "his Fordship" replacing in this society?

Chapter 3 *(Be careful to keep track of the different scenes going on at the same time in this chapter. Huxley jumps from one conversation to another between Mustapha and the students, Henry and Bernard, and Lenina and Fanny—look for the extra line space for the shifts)*

1. What unusual behavior is encouraged in the childrens' play?
2. What does Mond mean when he says "History is bunk"?
3. What are a few of the "smutty" or "vulgar" words in their language?
4. Why does Fanny chastise Lenina for going out with Henry again?
5. Lenina wears green for her date, but of what class is she?
6. Why does Bernard dislike Henry Foster?
7. What is soma?

Chapter 4

1. Of what class is the elevator operator? Describe him.
2. How is Bernard different from other Alphas? What is rumored to have caused his differences?
3. Why do Bernard and Helmholtz Watson feel out of place?
4. What thoughts have been recently plaguing Helmholtz?

Chapter 5

1. What is the crematorium and for what is it used? What is the point of this process?
2. What is unusual about the "Bottle of Mine" song?
3. Why is Lenina able to remember her birth control precautions despite the fact she took too much soma?
4. From what age did she begin training for this experience?
5. In one or two paragraphs, describe the events of the Solidarity Service.
6. What does Bernard do that makes him feel even more out of place at the Solidarity Service?

Chapter 6

1. What does Bernard want to do on his date with Lenina that she finds odd?
2. What did Bernard regret doing after his first date with Lenina?
3. What happened to the D.H.C and his Beta-Minus date when he visited the New Mexico Reservation 25 years ago?
4. To where does the D.H.C warn Bernard he will send him if he continues his current behavior?
5. Rather than the soap, hand lotion and shampoo that we are used to, what do Bernard and Lenina find waiting for them in their hotel room?
6. What did Bernard remember that he left running back at home?

Chapter 7

1. How does Lenina react to the environment and people at the Reservation?
2. How does Lenina react to Linda? Why?
3. What about Linda is different from the other savages?

Chapter 8

1. Why do the other women hate and therefore, whip Linda?
2. What substance satisfies Linda's craving for soma?
3. What do we learn John can do that the others cannot?
4. What gift did Popé bring John when he was nearly twelve?
5. Who did John stab? Why?
6. What does Bernard say that he has in common with John?
7. What does Bernard propose to John? Why does he do this?
8. What is John's reaction to this proposal?

Chapter 9

1. What does Lenina do immediately upon returning to the rest-house?
2. How does Bernard get permission to bring John and Linda back to the civilized world?
3. What does John do when he finds Lenina's personal belongings and then finds Lenina sleeping?

Chapter 10

1. Why does the D.H.C. dislike Bernard? What does the D.H.C. do to humiliate Bernard?
2. How does Bernard turn the tables to humiliate the D.H.C.?
3. What causes an uproar of laughter from the workers in the Fertilizing Room?
4. How does the D.H.C. react to this news?

Chapter 11

1. What happens to the D.H.C.?
2. Why do the people not want to see Linda? What is the plan for her?
3. How does Bernard become such an important and popular figure?
4. What word does Bernard omit in his letters to Mond? Why?
5. How has Bernard's attitude toward women changed, as evidenced in his tour with John?
6. What was the plot of the feely that John and Lenina attended? Describe the feely experience.
7. What does Lenina expect from John after their date? What happens?

Chapter 12

1. How do Bernard's party guests react to John's refusal to make an appearance?
2. What happens to Bernard as a result?
3. Why was Helmholtz in trouble with the authorities?
4. Why is Bernard jealous? What does he do out of vengeance?
5. Why does Helmholtz burst out in laughter? What is your reaction to Helmholtz's laughter? Is it what you expected from him? Explain.

Chapter 13

1. What does Henry suggest Lenina do for her bad mood?
2. What is Lenina thinking about when she makes a mistake at work? What is the result of her mistake years later?
3. What does John try to tell Lenina? What is her reaction?
4. How does John respond to Lenina's reaction?
5. What "saves" Lenina from being trapped in the bathroom?

Chapter 14

1. To where has John been summoned by the phone call?
2. While John is by his mother's bedside, who interrupts his visit? Why? What is John's reaction?
3. Who does Linda think is actually there? What is John's reaction to this?
4. What are the children given to reinforce their death conditioning?

Chapter 15

1. What does John see in the hospital vestibule? To what does he compare the khaki mob?
2. Why do you think John keeps repeating the phrase "O brave new world"? How is his tone different now from when he first arrived in the new world and quoted the phrase?
3. Who arrives at the hospital? What does Helmholtz do? What does Bernard do?
4. How do the police suppress the riot?

Chapter 16

1. How does Mond justify the banishment of Shakespeare and other beautiful things?
2. What does Mond say has taken the place of high art?
3. Why can't everyone be Alpha-decanted and conditioned, according to Mond? What does he assert would be the result?
4. What was the Cyprus Experiment? What was the result? Why?
5. What does Mond say is a "menace to stability"?
6. What does Mond say is a "possible enemy"? Do you agree or disagree?
7. What is a "cookery book" according to Mond? What nearly happened to him as a result of his "cooking"?
8. What is Bernard's reaction to the hint that they were to be sent to an island? What do you think about his reaction?
9. To where does Helmholtz prefer to be sent? Why?

Chapter 17

1. What does Mond call the old books about religion, including the Bible?
2. Explain what a VPS does. What does it attempt to replace?
3. What rights does John claim? What exactly does this mean for him?

Chapter 18

1. What does John say metaphorically made him ill? What literally made him ill?
2. Why does he do this?
3. To where does John go to be left alone?
4. What does John do to himself in order to purify and rid himself of his feelings of guilt and disgust?
5. What interrupts John's independence?
6. Why does John kill himself? Besides the uproar and breach of his privacy, what factors do you think lead to this decision?