Chapter 1

1. What are some indications within the first several pages that suggest *Brave New World* is a futuristic novel?

2. In *Brave New World*, Huxley provides the necessary exposition by having the expert explain the situation to the novice who knows little about it. Specifically, the Director is explaining the activities of the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre to a group of students. At the start of the novel, why do you think the reader is not told directly what is being hatched?

3. In a short summary, explain what happens in the Hatchery. Include details about the process as well as definitions for any of the terminology.

4. The process that each egg undergoes is not only related to the work that particular individual eventually will do, but it is also directly related to the *type* of person he or she will become. List the five types of people in this world.

5. Explain the differences among the five types of people. How is a person’s classification determined? What is the reason for categorizing people this way?

6. In this World State, what is the primary function of The Hatchery and Conditioning Centre?

7. In what way is Huxley’s presentation of the Director satirical? Provide an example from the text to support your answer.

8. Describe and explain the response of the students to the Director.

9. Who are Henry Foster and Lenina Crowne? What is your opinion of each?

10. What might be annoying about the Director’s and Mr. Foster’s explanations?

11. According to the Director, in what way is the Bokanovsky process a major instrument of social stability?

12. Explain the motto, “Community, Identity, Stability.”

13. What are some actual scientific principles presented in this chapter? According to Mr. Foster, what problem exists in the Hatcheries that is “all but solved”?

14. Considering the scientific principles that have been established in the new world, what do you think the State sees for the future of society?

Chapter 2

1. Briefly explain what happens in the Conditioning Centre. Through what process do the infants become conditioned?

2. In Chapter One, the date was given as “this year of stability, A.F. 632.” In this chapter, Huxley hints at the meaning of this odd dating system. What does A.F. stand for, and what does A.D. stand for?

3. Describe the type of religion practiced in Huxley’s futuristic world. Whom do these people consider as their god? Why?

4. Why are the Delta children conditioned to dislike books and nature?

5. Why can hypnopædia be used to inculcate moral beliefs and emotional attitudes but
cannot be used to learn science?

6. Near the end of Chapter Two, what does Huxley state is the aim of the new world’s conditioning?

7. At the end of the chapter, the Director says that the conditioned mind is made up of suggestions from the State. He begins to add, “It therefore follows….” However, he is interrupted before he can finish the sentence. What do you think he would have said to complete that thought?

Chapter 3

1. Throughout the novel, Huxley uses names symbolically and satirically, often referencing notable thinkers, politicians, and historical figures within his characters’ names. For example, as previously noted, Lenina’s first name resembles the last name of Communist leader Vladimir Lenin. What other significant names can you identify up to this point in the novel?

2. What is meant by the paragraph following the Controller’s declaration, “History is bunk”?

3. Throughout Mond’s lecture, Huxley switches back and forth to other scenes and conversations that are happening elsewhere at the same time. How are these other scenes and dialogues related to Mond’s lecture?

4. What contradictions do you see between what Mond says and what the others are expressing?

5. Find an example of something in this society that you find disturbing. Explain the reasons this idea disturbs you.

6. What are you able to understand about the drug “soma,” and what is your opinion of this drug?

7. In your opinion, why do people in this new world need soma?

8. As the chapter progresses, what do you notice about the shifting of scenes and speakers?

9. How do the Controllers of the new world define happiness? State why you agree or disagree with the Controllers’ definitions.

10. Why does so much effort go into conditioning people to be consumers? What aspect of his own society might Huxley be satirizing?

11. According to Mond, what social problems have been eliminated in Brave New World?

12. What are people giving up to achieve these goals?

13. Do you think that anything like this is happening now or might happen in the future? Consider the fact that Huxley wrote this book in 1931, and take into account the many scientific advances since then.

14. At this point, what is your opinion of Huxley’s new world? Is it a utopia or a dystopia? What, if anything, appeals to you about the new world? What aspects, if any, do you find unpleasant or disagreeable?

Chapter 4

1. What is your opinion of Lenina? Include some specific examples of things Lenina says or
does that have influenced your point of view.

2. State why you think that Lenina can or cannot be any different than she is.

3. What makes Bernard stand out among the people of the new world?

4. In Section Two of Chapter Four, the narrator gives an explanation of Bernard’s problems. List the things that trouble Bernard. Do you think Bernard is in any way responsible for his own problems?

5. What evidence indicates that Bernard believes people are spying on him? Assuming he is being spied upon, what might be the reason(s) for it?

6. Compare Helmholtz to Bernard. Explain both their similarities and their differences.

7. Huxley has introduced two characters that stand in opposition to the new world. What do you see as the significance of these characters?

8. What is the meaning of the frequently repeated word, “pneumatic”?

9. Chapter Four offers vivid scenes and images of a future world. Describe one clear mental image that you have of Huxley’s imaginary world. Include some description of the dress and color system of the different castes.

Chapter 5

1. Briefly summarize the Solidarity Service that Bernard attends. What happens at the service? What is the goal of it? Include details from the scene in your description.

2. How does Bernard feel about the Solidarity Service?

3. Near the beginning of the chapter, Henry states, “Everybody’s happy now,” to which Lenina agrees. What is wrong with this assessment?

4. What satire do you find in this chapter?

Chapter 6

1. The style of *Brave New World* is “dialogic,” which means several people with different points of view interact, but no one voice is able to predominate. Consider the interaction between Lenina and Bernard in Part One of this chapter. What point of view does each express or represent? Cite examples from the text to support your answer.

2. Consider Lenina’s reaction to Bernard. She refuses to look at the sea; she insists on taking soma; she attempts “to stop the ears of her mind.” The narrator tells us she is “determined to preserve her incomprehension intact.” What conclusions can you draw about Lenina’s attitude and position? Find examples to demonstrate your conclusion.

3. Find examples from Chapter Six to support the assertion that Bernard’s protest is more talk than action. What is Helmholtz’s reaction to his friend’s description of the encounter with the Director?

4. What other conclusions can you draw regarding Bernard?

5. What is your opinion of the Director’s treatment of Bernard?

6. In the exposition, what information about earlier events is the reader given in Chapter Six?
What can you infer from the Director’s story? What two literary terms can you identify in relation to the Director’s story?

7. When Bernard learns that the Director is actually going to send him to Iceland, what is his reaction?

8. What can be considered amusing about the scene with the Warden of the Reservation?

Chapter 7

1. What is ironic about Lenina’s comment, “And you feel so small when you’re on the ground at the bottom of a hill”?

2. Bernard and Lenina meet a woman on the Reservation. Who is this woman, and how is she connected to the new world?

3. In what ways is Huxley’s description of Lenina’s reaction to the Indian Reservation satirical? What makes Lenina seem foolish? How might this apply to our attitudes today?

4. What is the effect of Huxley’s focus on Lenina’s reaction to the woman nursing a child? What is your reaction to Lenina’s response?

5. How do you feel about Linda? Why, in your opinion, has Linda had problems?

6. Compare Linda and Lenina as they stand together.

7. Explain the irony in Linda’s speech about life on the Reservation.

8. What do you predict will take place between John and Lenina and between John and Bernard?

9. Do you think that Lenina would have ended up any different than Linda if Lenina had been left behind on the Reservation? Cite specifics to support your generalizations.

Chapter 8

1. What do you find the most interesting about the details of John’s life as described in Chapter Eight? Explain your choices.

2. Compare John and Bernard.

3. Why does Shakespeare have such meaning for John?

4. What theories about “the Other Place” does John have? What gave him these ideas? On the final page of this chapter, an example of irony occurs as John reveals his expectations about the new world. Identify and explain this instance of irony.

5. What do you think will happen to John and Linda in London? Support your prediction with details from the chapter.

Chapter 9

1. What are Bernard’s motives for bringing John back to London with him?

2. When John is alone looking at Lenina sleeping, what are his thoughts?

Chapter 10

1. This short chapter contains several instances of irony. Identify as many as you can.

2. What is your opinion of the Director’s statement: “…no offence is so heinous as unorthodoxy of behavior. Murder kills only the individual—and, after all, what is an individual?…” We
can make a new one with the greatest of ease…Unorthodoxy threatens more than the life of a mere individual; it strikes at Society itself…”?

Chapter 11

1. At this point in the novel, how do you feel about Bernard? What are your feelings toward Lenina? Consider how people in the new world, including Bernard’s friend Helmholtz, feel about Bernard.
2. What do people say behind Bernard’s back? How might these comments act as foreshadowing?
3. At the feely, John and Lenina view/experience what would today be considered a pornographic movie. What happens afterward?
4. What do you see as the main difference between John and Linda and the other characters, those of the new world?

Chapter 12

1. “Pierced by every word that was spoken, the tight balloon of Bernard’s happy self-confidence was leaking from a thousand wounds.” What figure of speech is employed in the quotation? How does Huxley extend this particular figure of speech over the next two pages?
2. John clashes with the people, the ideas, and the practices of the new world. Describe two specific incidents that illustrate these conflicts.
3. In each of the incidents, one of the characters of the new world tries to make his or her position clear to John. Explain each person’s opposition to John, and copy a short quotation that best expresses the person’s argument. Then, explain John’s response to this person, and state whether you agree or disagree with John’s point of view.
4. In the middle of Chapter Twelve, Huxley describes the Controller rejecting a paper called “A New Theory of Biology.” The Controller will not allow the paper to be published because it challenges the idea of “happiness as the Sovereign Good,” and he thinks this might unsettle people in the higher castes. However, the Controller agrees with the paper’s idea that the goal of life is outside the human sphere, and “the purpose of life [is] not the maintenance of well-being, but some intensification and refining of consciousness, some enlargement of knowledge.” What do you think is Huxley’s point in this section?
5. Although scientific advances of the past have given humans the ability to control human reproduction and disease in the new world, what seems to be the attitude of the government toward science? How is this attitude demonstrated as Mustapha Mond reads the paper called “A New Theory of Biology”?
6. Using quotations and examples, support the statement that Bernard is miserable, vengeful, jealous, resentful, and ashamed of his weaknesses, which makes him even more resentful.
7. Do you think Bernard has less character than most people would in his circumstances? Remember that he is undersized for his caste and has suffered persecution as a result. Consider his behavior and personality so far. Would you be friends with Bernard? Explain why or why not.
8. At this point in the novel, Bernard, John, and Helmholtz have all exhibited unorthodox behavior. Give examples to support this statement.

9. What do you predict will happen to Bernard, John, and Helmholtz?

10. The power of great art to influence and affect people is a theme in this chapter. For example, Helmholtz views *Romeo and Juliet* as a “superb piece of emotional engineering.” He later describes Shakespeare as a “marvellous propaganda technician” and tells John that a person has to hurt to write “penetrating, X-rayish phrases.” Do you think that great art or writing can impact or control people’s feelings? Do you agree with Helmholtz that great art is necessarily related to passion and pain? Illustrate your opinion with real-life examples.

**Chapter 13**

1. People in the new world do not experience passion, so they have to be given treatments. For instance, Henry Foster tells Lenina to get “an extra strong V.P.S. treatment.” In addition, women get a “pregnancy substitute,” and the characters take soma on a regular basis so they can escape feeling passions. What conclusion can you draw from these facts?

2. According to gossip, Bernard’s small size is the result of an accident in which alcohol had been poured into his bottle by mistake. What detail is the reader given at the start of Chapter Thirteen that might suggest that the gossip is true?

3. Summarize what happens between John and Lenina when she comes to his house. What is each of them thinking and feeling? How do they communicate and interact with one another?

4. In the first few pages of the chapter, Lenina confides to Fanny her feelings for John, stating, “I shall always like him.” However, at the end of the chapter, her response to John’s remarks about marriage is genuine shock. What do you find ironic about this? What idea about love is suggested to you by this contradiction?

5. The chapter ends with a frightened Lenina tiptoeing out of John’s door and then running toward the elevator, desperate to get away. How do you feel about her situation? What do you think will happen to her in the coming chapters?

6. By referring to the text, support the statement that John is not a hypocrite.

**Chapter 14**

1. Explain John’s behavior in the hospital with his dying mother. What does he do, and why does he behave this way? How does the nurse react to him, and why does she react in this fashion?

2. Summarize what happens in the incident with the children who are being death-conditioned. How does John react toward them, and why? What is the nurse’s response?

3. Describe the mental picture you have of the Hospital for the Dying.

4. Find a quotation in this chapter in which Huxley satirizes the loss of any knowledge of God.

**Chapter 15**

1. How does John disrupt the soma distribution process? What are his reasons for doing so? What is the reaction of the crowd and the police?
2. Explain the context and meaning of the following quotation from Chapter Fifteen. What is Huxley satirizing in this particular passage?
The Savage stood looking on. “O brave new world, O brave new world…” In his mind the singing words seemed to change their tone…Miranda was proclaiming the possibility of loveliness, the possibility of transforming even the nightmare into something fine and noble.

3. What is your opinion of Bernard and Helmholtz’s behavior at the soma distribution riot? What do you expect will happen now that Bernard, Helmholtz, and John have all been taken away by the police?

4. What is ironic about the fact that the new world still has a police force, which appears on the scene quickly?

Chapter 16
1. In this chapter, what surprising information does the reader learn about Mustapha Mond?
2. As he explains why Othello and other classic tragedies could not be written in the new world, Mond uses an analogy to make his point. He explains, “You can’t make flivvers without steel—and you can’t make tragedies without social instability.” Explain the analogy. What does Mond mean? What other reasons does he give for the inability of people in the new world to understand tragedy?
3. What happened with the experiment of an all-Alpha society?
4. Why is Bernard ignored during Mond’s discussion with John and Helmholtz?

Chapter 17
1. As Huxley summarizes his ideas, the dialogic quality of the novel is heightened. This is demonstrated in the dialogue between John and Mustapha Mond. The argumentative nature of their discussion appears in four ways: A.) Their goal is to arrive at truth by exposing the contradictions in each other’s argument. B.) Parts of the discussion are in a question and answer format. C.) There is a logical structure, which holds their continuous argument together. D.) Each man voices a set of principles. The two sets of principles are in opposition, creating an interplay of contradictory principles. Find an example of each of the points listed above. You can quote some of the dialogue in your answer.
2. As this debate progresses, with whom do you find yourself agreeing?
3. Do you see any evidence of Mond’s viewpoint in today’s world?

Chapter 18
1. At the beginning of the chapter, Bernard and Helmholtz visit John to say goodbye. What is your impression of this final meeting between the three of them?
2. Describe John’s new home.
3. How does John feel about his new home?
4. One day after arriving at the lighthouse, John finds himself pleasantly lost in a particular activity. What type of work gives him such pleasure? After realizing how content he had
been feeling during his work, what are his thoughts? Why does he feel this way?

5. Shortly after the three Delta-Minus workers witness John whipping himself, a reporter from the new world arrives to intrude upon John’s solitude. What does the reporter want? How does John react to the reporter’s questioning?

6. When John is resting one afternoon, he suddenly finds himself having lustful thoughts of Lenina. How does he deal with these thoughts? Why does he react in this manner?

7. As John is busy in his garden, a swarm of helicopters arrives, and hundreds of people from the new world descend upon him. What causes the people to come to the lighthouse? What do they begin chanting?

8. As the mob continues chanting, another helicopter descends and Lenina steps out. Describe her behavior and body language as she looks at John. Based on this description, do you think that Lenina has changed? Explain your answer.

9. How does John react to Lenina? What causes him to respond this way? How is the crowd partially responsible for John’s reaction?

10. Explain the events leading up to John’s suicide. Why do you think he kills himself?

11. How does Huxley describe John’s suicide? What is symbolically significant about the description?