

Brave new world: active reading assignment

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



Sam Radice Brave New World Active Reading Assignment 1. 45, 63, 78, 89, 95, 99, 105, 141, 148, 156, 160, 161, 164, 212, 217 When Bernard travels throughout Brave New World, he never seems to take a long time, there is not much description about the length of time that it takes. It always seems like when Bernard travels, he does so extremely unconfidently. He is always either slouched or trying to pick himself up right before he arrives of 'hiding behind the agave'. Bernard never travels with confidence or with a specific intent, he seems very sly and like he is up to no good. 2. Page 225- Mustapha Mond reveals to John, Bernard, and Helmholtz what science and progress truly is in their civilization. He confesses to them that it is nothing but propaganda and that no one truly knows what science is and even though they spend their lives referring to it and worshiping progress as their 'religion', there is really no such thing. Page 130- John becomes very curious about science and progress when his mother teaches him how to read and write. She gives him the only book she has in order to let him practice his reading. The book is called The Chemical and Bacteriological Conditioning of the Embryo. Practical Instructions for Beta Embryo-Store Workers. When John asks Linda what exactly chemicals are, she can only respond with a very vague answer. She then rationalizes why she doesn't know by saying that she only worked with the embryos. John notices that Linda never seemed to know much about anything and that the locals seemed to know much more. Even though the civilization in Brave New World is supposed to be centered around Progress and Science, the people living in it don't seem to know much about anything and it reveals how these two things are in reality almost non-existent. Page 55- Mustapha Mond begins to teach a class of

students about the nature of progress and the contrast between the old civilization and the current. He explains how people used to get old and retire and find themselves, religion, and books. They had time to think; which was absolutely unheard of. The new civilization is filled with progress. The old and the young all work, they have no time to spend leisurely, and certainly no time to think. Page 160- Bernard is showing John all parts of civilization in the world state. He decides to show John a factory with which Gama-Plus workers were in an assembly line making things for the world state. They're were hundereds of twins that were all working in a line on either side of a conveyer belt. The science and progress of the world state has turned people into machines. They are being mass produced in identical forms in order to easily do the same job just like machines are. The progress of society has sacrificed the individual and the nature of humanity. The World State comes across in Brave New World to encourage science and progress. All their slogans and mottos are revolved around such things like Ford and the Model T, however, when you actually look below the surface, science and progress is virtually non-existent. No one creates and questions and reinvents anything, they all do simple mundane jobs that keep them from learning any amount of skills of knowledge that would make them be able to contribute to science. Mustapha Mond even confesses to John, Bernard, and Helmholtz that he wants to citizens to think they're contributing to science and progress but knows that if these things actually existed there would be world chaos and the order of things would be disrupted. 3. 138- This passage was when Bernard first meets John and asks about his entire life story. John reveals how he is different and how once he

tried to punish himself by attempting to feel what Jesus felt when he was being crucified. Bernard becomes incredibly squeamish and can't stand it when John shows his scar. This is because Bernard's conditioning has made him unable to cope with anything associated with pain or discomfort, no one in the world state can easily deal with anything other than 'happiness'. 185- When Helmholtz and John begin to take a liking to one another, John decides to share Shakespeare with him. Helmholtz is very different from the others in the world state and is the closest, that we know of, to becoming an individual like John and to shedding the value system he was conditioned to obey. This is what brought the two together, however, Helmholtz's conditioning was what prevented their relationship to get any further. There would always be a certain barrier between the two. Helmholtz couldn't help himself but to laugh when John recites lines having to do with mothers and fathers and marriage, and no matter how hard he tries, he cannot get past his controlling conditioning. Even the most strong minded like Helmholtz could not escape the civilization's conditioning. 235- In this passage, John wonders why civilization cannot embrace God or religion, he challenges Mustapha Mond's reply by saying that it is man's inherent need to wonder about greater beings such as God. Mond, however, argues that civilization's conditioning has made it impossible to wonder about such things and has also made isolation obsolete thus overtaking man's inherent abilities and maintaining all control over God and religion. 4. Chapter 3 is a great example of how Huxley uses modernism in Brave New World. This chapter has three main events going on at the same time. One; Bernard overhears the Assistant Predestinator and Henry Foster talking about Lenina as if she were 'meat'

and getting angry because she was so willing to accept herself as so. Two; Lenina proclaims to Fanny that she doesn't want to have anyone but Henry which is obscured and that she has decided that she finds Bernard Marx rather desirable. Three; The World Controller, Mustapha Mond, explains to a crowd of students about the atrocities of the previous world making them laugh at such words as mother, father, and democracy. The modernism comes into play with the alternating scenes, one line from Lenina, one line from Marx, the next of narration and so forth bringing all three different plots, objections, and contrasting stories into one. It makes the reader have to concentrate on what exactly is being said, by whom, and for what purpose. 5. Isolation- 136, 163, 181, 230, 235 Isolation, in the world state of Brave New World, is very obviously repressed. Throughout the novel, the powers that be continually try to keep the inhabitants out of isolation and working as a whole, as a community. There is no such thing as an individual and if one was to act as such, there would be serious consequences. However, as much as isolation was prevented, it still existed. Some of the main characters were defined by their isolation. Bernard was isolated from society because he was said to have been decanted differently and wasn't like everyone else which caused him to hate civilization. Helmholtz was much too smart to get along with anyone besides Bernard and John and which caused him to question almost anything. John's isolation made him a true individual, he was unlike anyone that existed in the entire planet. The society as a whole was stupid and predictable, everyone acted like everyone else or simply went along with the social order of things instead of questioning and embracing their true potential. They had shallow and

meaningless thoughts because they were never alone long enough to truly develop them. The individuals with the most power like Mustapha Mond and with the most cleverness and common sense were the ones who had spent time on their own to really reach their true individual potential. In Huxley's World isolation made the individual, made a person strong and smart rather than shallow and incoherent. Soma- 154, 161, 164, 166, 171 The significance of soma in Brave New World is huge. This was one of the main themes that ran throughout the story. Soma was the entire control of the World State, it kept each inhabitant in order and from truly getting to be an individual or to feeling anything other than 'happiness'. The people took it in any situation that made them uncomfortable or sad or mad or alone. They glorified it making it seem like their god or religion, it was in their words 'Christianity without tears'. Through soma, no one was able to have true feelings or to go through anything that was in any degree hard. John proclaimed to Mond that the civilization he was maintaining was much too easy; whenever there was a problem, it was just eliminated, through soma no one was willing to simply cope with it or learn how to successfully work through it. Soma was the epitome of the degradation of civilization. Happiness- 182, 215, 220, 227, 242, 224, 138, 91 The entire basis for the World State in Brave New World was justified by happiness. Mustapha Mond had continually exclaimed how the greatest accomplishment in this world was the elimination of all things bad and the exemplification of all things happy. Everyone in civilization was to truly be happy and only happy and to feel nothing but happiness. It was, as Mond said, his entire life's work; to make other people happy. There was a sacrifice of many things that belonged to the previous civilization like

Shakespeare and God and Families and Love in order to make true and isolated happiness a possibility. No one could feel love so that no one could feel heart break and no one could feel exclusiveness so that no one could feel jealousy. However, John was not going along with this so called happiness that existed in civilization. He confessed to Bernard that he would rather feel unhappiness than the kind of fake happiness that Bernard had. No one in the world state was truly feeling happiness, just the illusion of it. You can't truly feel if you have nothing to contrast it with. You can't have love without heartbreak or happiness without sadness. While the world they were living in was advertised to be everything and anything happy, it was only shallow and masked happiness that truly existed 6. The passage surrounding pages 192 and 193 in Brave New World exemplify how one of the characters desires affected themselves and another person's actions. Lenina was becoming very attracted to John as they came to know each other better and better. She thought he was strange and uncivilized yet could not stop thinking about him and even confessed to Fanny that she had never wanted someone so much as she wanted John. However, when she had acted on these desires with a little help of soma, she had unleashed a part of John that she never expected to. John had liked Lenina however when he discovered that she had only desired him for one disgraceful reason, he became very rageful and called her terrible names. Lenina's desire for John had caused him to reveal an undesirable side to him and feel even more anguish with civilization. 7. At the end of Brave New World, John tells Helmholtz and Bernard that he is sick because he 'ate civilization'. This statement is a figurative representation of what John actually meant. He ate civilization and

then became poisoned by it. He was completely emerged in this civilization that he had dreamed about for his whole life and tried to embrace every last bit of it, however, he did not know that in doing so he was ultimately making himself sick. He could not bear to see all of the dreadful things that were taking place in the world state and believed that everything was all so wrong and all too easy. The civilization he was talking about was the world state and all the people in it; Mustapha Mond, Lenina, Bernard, soma, science and progress, embryos, ect. He is saying this now when he finally realizes the true extent of the world he has been emerged in. Mond tells him all of the secrets behind everything and explains that nothing can and will be changed; he is in complete and utter control. John wants to be the hero of the civilization however realizes that civilization does not 'need' a hero when everything is 'socially stable'. Bernard chooses to be unhappy rather than have a sort of fake happiness that exists in the world state. All of this knowledge and disappointment has left John helpless and sick thus explaining why John says he 'ate civilization'. 8. Huxley uses the literary technique of modernism stream of consciousness in order to tell his story in Brave New World. This technique means that he reveals the character's thoughts and actions as the book is going along and tries to portray each character's mind 'at work'. This significantly enhances the meaning of the work as a whole in that you can connect with each character in each specific situation. You know exactly the thoughts and feelings that are running through their minds. It makes you a part of their situations and makes you feel as though you are inside their head as everything is going on giving you a very in depth point of view. This story has much to do with feelings as it

has to do with plot and story line; the modernist stream of consciousness style of writing helps to give the feeling aspect.