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| Huxley: Brave New World |
| Round vs. Flat Characters | |
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***Directions***—A *round* character is defined as one who is unique and who achieves through experiences some degree of self-realization. A *flat* character is a stock or typical character, one who remains essentially unchanged by any experiences. One way by which a reader can perceive the depth of characters’ understandings or feelings is by noting the way they respond to others in conversation. The chart below gives quotations from four characters in *Brave New World*. In the right hand column, note what qualities the speaker reveals in the quoted passage. (Page numbers are from the 1969,t hen the 1989 setting of the Harper edition.)

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| ***Character*** | ***Quotation*** | ***Qualities Revealed*** |
| Bernard Marx | “I want to look at the sea in peace…. It makes me feel as though… I were more *me*… more on my own…” (60 / 90)  But wouldn’t you like to be free to be happy in some other way, Lenina? In your own way… not in everybody else’s way? (61 / 91)  “What? He’s looking out for someone to take my place?”… So it’s actually decided? Did he mention Iceland? You say he did? Ford! Iceland… I’m going to be sent to Iceland.” (69 / 104) |  |
| John “The Savage” | “If one’s different, one’s bound to be lonely.” (92 / 139)  “I don’t think you should see things like… this horrible film…. It was base… it was ignoble.” (114 / 172)  “I wanted to *do* something first… to show I was worthy of you. Not that I could ever really be that. But at any rate to show that I wasn’t absolutely *un*-worthy I wanted *something*.” (128 / 193)  “Damned whore!…. Go… get out of my sight or I’ll kill you.” (132 / 198-99) |  |
| ***Character*** | ***Quotation*** | ***Qualities Revealed*** |
| Helmholtz Watson | “I’m thinking of a queer feeling I sometimes get, a feeling that I’ve got something to say and the power to say it—only I don’t know what it is, and I can’t make any use of the power. If there was some different way of writing… Or something else to write about…” (46 / 69)  “I feel… as though I were just beginning to be able to have something to write about. As though I were beginning to be able to use that power I feel I’ve got inside of me—that extra latent power.” (123/ 185)  “You’ve got to be hurt and upset; otherwise you can’t think of the really good, penetrating, X-rayish phrases… We need some other kind of madness and violence. But what? What? Where can one find it?” (125 / 185-89) |  |
| Lenina Crowne | “But, Bernard, you’re saying the most awful things…. I don’t know what you mean. I am free. Free to have the most wonderful time. Everybody’s happy nowadays.” (61 / 91)  “Too awful! That blood!…. oh, I wish I had my *soma*.” (77 / 116)  “You silly boy! I wanted you so much. And if you wanted me too, why didn’t you?… Hug me till you drug me, honey… Kiss me,… kiss me till I’m in a coma…” (130-31 / 197-98) |  |

***Assignment*—**Summarize your findings by writing one paragraph about each of the four characters describing each as a ‘round’ or “flat’ character.

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