

Name: _____

Pre-Reading Questions

What is the trolley problem? In what ways might it apply to society?

What is utilitarianism?

Vocabulary

Archaic –

Treason –

Copulate –

Pragmatic -

Benality –

Arcana –

Imbecile –

Decorous –

Poignancy –

Profundity –

Uncouth -

Rapture –

Languor -

The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas
STUDY GUIDE

Post-Reading Questions

1. At what point did you feel the mood in the story shifted? How did this abrupt shift change your perception of Omelas?
2. Why do you think Le Guin creates a narrator who continually reminds us again and again that she is creating a world *as we read*?
3. How does the knowledge of the child allow the people of Omelas to truly know the joy and splendor of their city and lives?
4. What is morally ambiguous about the choice of a few to walk away from Omelas? What do you think is going through their minds?
5. Do you think it is possible for your utopia to exist without anyone else suffering for it. Perhaps not quite to the extreme that we see here, but none at all? How do you ensure that no one suffers for the sake of everyone else's happiness?
6. What, in the end, is the story suggesting about this complicated concept? What brings people happiness?
7. What power structures exist in this society?