Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Sci-Fi Short Story Unit

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ “Omelas” Study Guide Qs.

Part One: The Story

1. How would you describe the city of Omelas? What do we know about it from the opening pages?
2. Why do you think the narrator questions our ability to accept and believe that Omelas exists? What details might the reader question?
3. What is the “function” of the suffering child?
4. Why do the people of Omelas understand that the child “has to be there”?
5. How and when do they explain the suffering child to their children? (What is the argument used to justify not freeing the child?) How do the children respond?
6. What “terrible paradox” must those who observe the suffering child face? Why do they come to accept the child's confinement as “the terrible justice of reality”?
7. Who are the ones who walk away from Omelas? Why do they leave? And why go alone? Is it a brave act or something else?
8. Why do some people stay? What do you think of those who stay?
9. Have you ever made a decision to walk away from Omelas? What happened?
10. Does the action of walking away from Omelas represent integrity or failure?
11. How does Omelas resemble our current society, if at all? Do we have “a suffering child” on whom our lives depend?
12. What would it take for communities and societies to end suffering in our world?

Part Two: The Class Discussion

1. How do we remain loyal to our heritage and traditions?
2. What is the impact of our actions—on ourselves and others?
3. Can there be justice without equality?
4. Is justice for all possible?
5. What are the causes of injustice and inequality?
6. What would you be willing to give up for equality?
7. What would you not be willing to give up?