

Possible Crossover Discussion Questions: “The Pedestrian,” “The Veldt,” and “Omelas”

Directions: Read over the following possible discussion questions. Choose your top 10, and tonight, look for textual evidence to support your opinion. **Disclaimer: Not all questions will be discussed in all classes.

1. Why do people continue to pursue the concept of a utopian society?
2. When should an individual take a stand in opposition to an individual or larger group?
3. When is it appropriate to challenge the beliefs or values of society?
4. When a person’s individual choices are in direct conflict with his/her society, what are the consequences?
5. What turning points determine our individual pathways to adulthood?
6. What purpose or function do ethics / philosophy have in governing technological advances?
7. What is the meaning of life and does that shape our beliefs regarding death?
8. What is oppression and what are the root causes?
9. What is community and what are the individual’s responsibility to the community as well as the community’s responsibility to the individual?
10. What impact does family have during different stages of our lives?
11. What happens when belief systems of societies and individuals come into conflict?
12. What does it mean to be an insider or an outsider?
13. What are the responsibilities of the individual in regard to issues of social justice?
14. What are the responsibilities of the individual / society / superpowers in regard to the health of the environment? (local, regional, national or international context can be used)
15. What are the purposes and/or consequence of creating and/or maintaining a dystopian society?
16. What are the factors that move individuals / communities / nations to great sacrifice, and what are the consequences?
17. What are enduring questions and conflicts that writers (and their cultures) grappled with hundreds of years ago and are still relevant today?
18. To what extent do belief systems shape and/or reflect culture and society?
19. Should people sacrifice freedom in the interest of security?
20. Is humankind inherently good or evil?
21. How is language used to manipulate us?
22. How do competing notions of what a utopian society should look like lead to conflict?
23. How do authors use the resources of language to impact an audience?
24. How can a person’s decisions and actions change his/her life?
25. Can literature serve as a vehicle for social change?