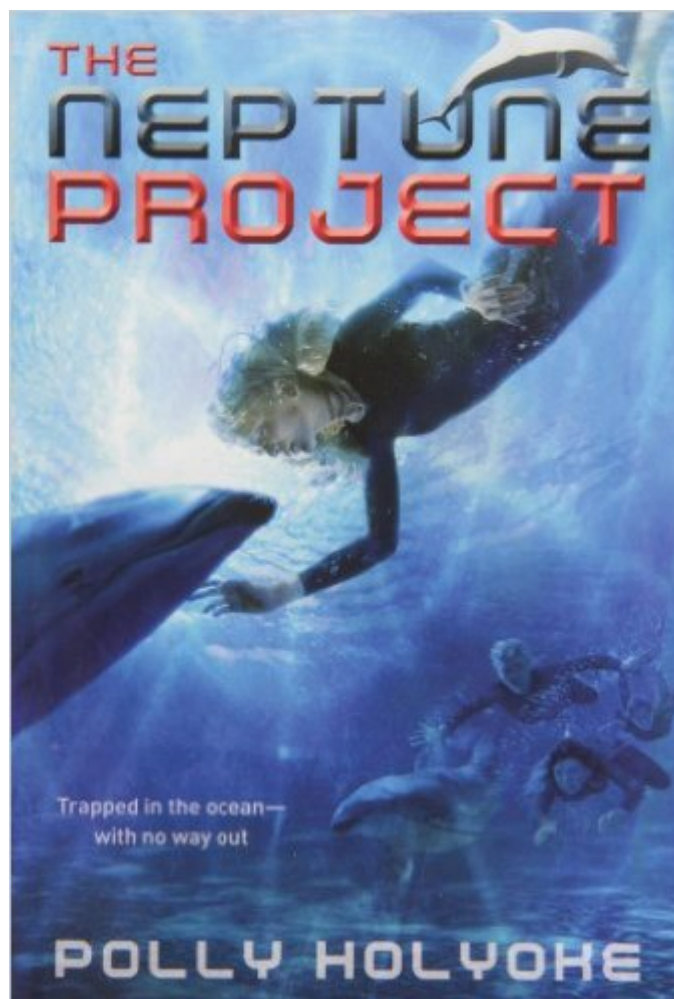# The Neptune Project

# Synopsis

Nere feels more at home swimming with the dolphins her mother studies than she does hanging out with her classmates. Nere has never understood why she feels so much more comfortable and confident in water than on land, but everything falls into place when Nere learns that she is one of a group of kids who-unbeknownst to them-have been genetically altered to survive in the ocean. These products of "The Neptune Project" will be able to build a better future under the sea, safe from the barren country's famine, wars, and harsh laws. But there are some very big problems: no one asked Nere if she wanted to be a science experiment, the other Neptune kids aren't exactly the friendliest bunch, and in order to reach the safe haven of the Neptune colony, Nere and her fellow mutates must swim through hundreds of miles of dangerous waters, relying only on their wits, dolphins, and each other to evade terrifying undersea creatures and a government that will stop at nothing to capture the Neptune kids...dead or alive.Fierce battles and daring escapes abound as Nere and her friends race to safety in this action-packed aquatic adventure.

# Book Information

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: Disney-Hyperion; Reprint edition (April 1, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1423159799

ISBN-13: 978-1423159797

Product Dimensions:  5.2 x 0.8 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review:  4.7 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (131 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #18,764 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)   #61 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Animals > Marine Life   #243 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction   #857 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy & Magic

Age Range: 10 - 13 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

# Customer Reviews

I have mixed feelings about this title. I disliked the lack of character development in the introduction of this story and found it very hard to connect to any of the characters. I couldn't even remember the name or gender of the main character for the first 30 pages! I enjoyed the premise of the story, and all of the action that took place once the kids are on the run in the ocean was pretty entertaining.

However, it feels like not much ever happens besides the constant fighting off sharks and various government nasties. I would have enjoyed this story more if there had been more character development, intriguing plot points, humor, or even some introspection throughout the book. And don't even get me started on this story's almost non-existent climax and conclusion. The characters do nothing but swim until the last chapter, where they briefly meet other mutant kids who bully them- then they arrive at the colony they've been trying to reach and the book is over. No resolution between the two groups of fish kids, no happy reunion between father and daughter- there's not even an intriguing cliff hanger to make sense of why the book just ends. After all of the build up for this dystopian world, I felt that there needed to be more of a conclusion- even if the author is planning on writing a sequel.All of that being said, I do think that kids ages 10 and up would enjoy this book (and would likely be less critical that I am). There is sharks, dolphins, lots of adventure, and a complete lack of adults- what more could a kid ask for?

***Review posted on The Eater of Books! blog***The Neptune Project by Polly HolyokePublisher: Disney-HyperionPublication Date: May 21, 2013Rating: 3 starsSource: eARC from NetGalleySummary (from Goodreads):THE NEPTUNE PROJECT is set in a future where the seas are rising and wars and famines wrack the surface world. Nere Hanson and her teen companions are shocked to learn that they have been genetically altered by their desperate parents to live in the sea. Protected by her loyal dolphins, shy Nere leads the rest on a perilous journey to her father's new colony. Fighting off government divers, sharks and giant squid, can Nere and her companions learn to trust each other before their dangerous new world destroys them?What I Liked:I was not sure what I was expecting from this book, but I know for a fact that I did not realize it was a Middle Grade novel! I love Middle Grade, and I am really glad I got the chance to read this book. I believe it is my first Middle Grade read of the year.Anyway. The concept of this book was very interesting! I haven't read many books that deal with an underwater setting, and I thought that Ms. Holyoke did an excellent job of describing the ocean and underwater. I was blown away by the depth of her knowledge of the ocean (no pun intended), and how she went from talking about one type of fish to another with ease. It was clear to me that Ms. Holyoke had a vast knowledge of the underwater world, and that she did her research well. I have to say, that is my favorite thing about this entire book - the description of below the surface, and the use of many different fish species and other ocean-related things that added to the authenticity of this novel.The novel is set in a futuristic time. In this novel, the world has been heating up drastically due to global warming, and there is garbage everywhere, and the Marines basically own the ocean. I didn't get a good feel for what was going on

above the surface, because the majority of the book is spent underwater. But I thought that it was awesome that Ms. Holyoke used an environmental problem to get her novel going (because I'm all about the environment, as an environmental engineering major).So Nere (the protagonist) and a bunch of other kids have been subjected to change from land-loving humans to sea-loving humans. Nere's parents perfected some sort of shot that made Nere and two other kids from Nere's island able to survive underwater. Nere and the other two kids meet up with other kids from other areas of the world, and they all must swim across the sea to meet Nere's father in an underwater community.The romance threw me off. It wasn't that I was torn between two guys - because Nere wasn't torn between two guys (though there was the presence of two guys). I liked the obvious guy well enough, but his predicament at the end... I didn't really buy it. I won't spoil anything, but I was not impressed with the male love interest at the end of the book.The ending is a bit of a cliffhanger, and the author did say she had another book written. Hopefully that book takes care of the cliffhanger!What I Did Not Like:It's not to say that I didn't like this book... I just didn't love it. I didn't feel impressed at the end of the book, despite my fascination with the overall idea of the story. And there were little things that bothered me throughout the book.For one, I seriously thought this book was a Young Adult book (for older teens, I suppose) for a good portion of the book, because Nere's voice and actions are pretty developed. I guess that can be seen as a good thing, that she's mature, but it just didn't make sense when I found out her age. She didn't act like an adolescent. So I was confused about that.And you already know that I can't stand the love interest's decision at the end of the story. Why can't he just run away? What's so hard about swimming away? I hope I didn't spoil anything - but you all probably have no idea what I'm talking about.I also didn't really see a climax in this book. It just kept going and going (which was really boring), and there would be a problem pretty often (like, sharks, or the Marines), but I didn't see a ton of buildup, and then the "climax" wasn't really a climax. And getting to the end took some effort, because I felt like the story just drifted on and on for a sizable percentage of the story.And the cliffhanger ending. I was a tad bit irritated with it, and I have half a mind not to read the next book (if it gets picked up by Disney-Hyperion), because I don't really care to see where this story is going.Would I Recommend It:If you liked Middle Grade, yes! Go for it! You might enjoy it. If you're a Young Adult fan, then probably not. I'm glad I got the chance to read this one, but if it weren't for the tour, I probably wouldn't have picked it up.Rating:3 stars. Not bad, but not amazing either.

'The Neptune Project' is a wholly original and unique young adult fantasy/dystopian novel that follows leading lady Nere as she lives in the dystopian future where she struggles to come to terms

that she is a part of "The Neptune Project" - one of several children who were genetically engineered to survive in the ocean. Nere and the other children of the project are supposed to help build a better world underneath the water, where the wars and famine of the current earth won't effect them. Now, on top of dealing with the startling news of her origins and destiny, Nere must learn to get along with the aloof Neptune kids, swim hundreds of miles in the ocean in order to reach the undersea colony, and stay ahead of the government who will stop at nothing to get their hands on her and the other Neptune kids.This was a really fun novel that takes the reader on a journey and adventure that you'll never forget. The plot is completely refreshing and brings a whole new level to the YA genre. It mixes several genres together, including action, fantasy, science fiction, adventure, dystopia, and even some romance - and creates a beautiful novel like none other. The characters were all well written, especially the main character of Nere. She's a typical teenage girl who has health problems and family issues like everyone else, but underneath all of that she is courageous, smart, strong, and resilient. She's also an extremely devoted friend, which shows a lot throughout the book. The plot was totally fresh and original - I've never encountered a novel like this one before. The author did a fantastic job intertwining several genres and story lines to create a wonderful novel that will appeal to fans of all genres and readers of all ages. The writing itself was incredibly well done with a quick pace and effortless flow to the book that had me flying through the pages. Definitely recommended for YA fans of all genres!Disclosure: I received a copy of the book in exchange for an honest review.

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