

### **Discussion Questions for *The Neptune Project***

1. What if someone said that you HAD to start living in the sea tomorrow? What aspects of living in the ocean would you enjoy? Are there some aspects you might hate?
2. What is life on land like for Nere and her classmates before she goes into the sea? What events or factors may have led to the wars and climate disasters that have clearly taken place since our time?
3. Do you think Gillian was right to keep the project a secret from Nere? How does Nere view her mother at the onset of the story and how does her perspective of her mother change?
4. Nere's telepathy is so strong that she can break through other people's mental shields and read their thoughts. So can Dai. Do you think this is a positive or negative ability? If you could be telepathic, would you? Why or why not?
5. Reviewers claim that *The Neptune Project* vividly depicts the world under the waves. Is there anything that surprised you about that world?
6. James refers to himself as a "flawed prototype." How does his failed Neptune transformation isolate him from others? How does his ability to be a "controller" isolate him further?
7. What do Lena and Nere have in common? How are they different? How does their relationship change in the course of the story, and what does it tell you about Nere?
8. Some of the dolphins in the story can actually communicate with Nere in human words, but only because Mariah was smart enough to pick up human speech when she was young. Do you think some animals do communicate with each other? Do you believe some animals are capable of thinking?

9. At one point Dai says to Nere: “Dolphins are here to serve us... Humans are the most important species in the ocean.” How would you have responded to him?

10. Nere, to her surprise, becomes a leader in the course of the story. Do you think she was the right choice versus Kyel or some of the other characters? What qualities do you think a good leader should possess?

11. When Kyel is dying, he says to Nere, “I wanted to fight the Western Collective until the day I died. Now that’s here and everything I did and all the friends I lost, we didn’t change anything. Maybe the best way to beat them is to survive and build something more free and fair in the sea.”

Do you think the best way to “beat them” is for the Neptune kids to build something better? Can you think of a time in your own life or in history when this was true?

12. Over 70% percent of our earth’s surface is covered by oceans and only 5% of those have been fully explored. Would you like to explore them some day or study marine biology and learn about the incredibly diverse species that live beneath the waves?