



# The Drake Equation

*Bart King*

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## **The Drake Equation** Bart King

Noah Grow is a bird-watcher. If you're picturing some kid in a big floppy hat, peering up into trees through giant binoculars . . . well, good job. That's *exactly* what he does. Right now, Noah is on a quest to find a wood duck. According to his calculations, aka the Drake Equation, the odds are good-*really* good-for spotting one.

That's why he gets off the bus at the wrong stop. And that's how he ends up running down a hill, crashing into a fence, and landing right next to a strange, glittery disk.

Noah and his best friends, Jason and Jenny, soon discover that the mysterious disk is, well, *mysterious*. It gives Noah peculiar powers. As things go from odd to outrageous, Noah is swept up in a storm of intergalactic intrigue and middle-school mayhem. There's much more at stake than Noah realizes.

Bart King delivers a hilarious sci-fi adventure with just the right mix of heart and humor that will have readers looking out for birds-and strange alien objects.

## **The Drake Equation Details**

Date : Published May 10th 2016 by Disney-Hyperion

ISBN : 9781484725528

Author : Bart King

Format : Hardcover 320 pages

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## From Reader Review The Drake Equation for online ebook

### Erik This Kid Reviews Books says

Synopsis- Noah Grow loves birds. In first grade, he was his school's bird-watcher of the year. Now, he carries binoculars with him at all times, and has even done a science project on rare wood ducks, calling it the Drake Equation. One day, he hears what he is sure is a wood duck on the way home from school. So, he does the most logical thing he can think of – he decides to get off the bus at the wrong stop and follow it. But when he ends up running down a hill and hitting a fence, he wasn't expecting to find a shiny disc... or, when he takes the disc home, for the disc to give him mysterious powers... or that the existence of the whole human race is at stake...

What I Thought- This book is hilarious. That's the best word to describe it. I loved the fact that at really tense moments, Noah would get distracted by seeing a bird, and then questions why he was saving the Earth and wasn't doing what really mattered – recording that he had seen the bird to the Audubon Society! Noah was a great character for me. I read so much and usually the heroic main-character follows a formula – but Noah was fresh. It was nice having a character who didn't really care about doing the heroic thing (who also hated adventures), but was kind of forced into it. King's ability to engage and entertain a middle school audience shines through in the story. I also liked that there are "Field notes" footnotes, used to tell backstory, and entries similar to bird-identifying booklets, but for the characters. It really made the book feel like a journal. I enjoyed it a lot. The story and characters are believable and wacky at the same time.

NOTE I got a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review

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### Zachary West says

What I enjoyed about this book is the strong lead character, Noah Grow. This is a middle school boy obsessed with bird watching. I loved the unique perspective of the non-stereotypical boy. Other characters are compelling, such as Mr. Bright and Mrs. Sanchez. Witty dialogue also makes this a pleasurable read. This is a great book for the middle school boy who doesn't play sports.

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### T.J. Burns says

*I received a copy of this book from Disney-Hyperion via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.*

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### The Keepers of the Books says

Noah Grow is an avid bird watcher and is determined to see a wood duck. He develops an equation he calls the Drake Equation to help protect a rare species of bird near his house. While running from a school bully, he discovers a mysterious disc that gives him superpowers. The powers, however, are a bit unpredictable. Soon, however, Noah and his friends find themselves on an intergalactic adventure that causes them to run "afowl" of some otherworldly creatures. Will they get back home? What is the mystery behind the disc?

Humorous from start to finish, the author blend science fiction, bird facts, and adventure together with ease. The plot is engaging and draws the reader into the story. The characters are unique and complex. Fans of

Bart King, science fiction, humor, and adventure will have a hard time putting this one down.

This book was featured on The Keepers of the Books' Flippin Awesome, Last Chance Matinee, Three Dark Crowns, and More Weekly Reads Wrapup episode. For more book reviews, recommendations, or online librarian advice, please visit us at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCK3v...>

Please Note: This book was given to us in exchange for an honest review. All opinions expressed, however, are our own.

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### **Mairibethe says**

I won this book in a giveaway, and I count myself SO lucky for it! Although I haven't yet finished the book, I am in love with Mr. King's writing style! The characters are not only lovable but believable. (I should know, I teach middle school!) they go through the real trials and tribulations that today's kiddos do and I will be happy to share this book with my students in the fall. I've already added it to the suggested books for our school library! If you enjoy nature and comedy, check this one out!

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### **Aaron Judd says**

I never expected to read a book that successfully combines birdwatching, middle school high jinks, and sci-fi adventure – but here it is! "The Drake Equation" is a fantastic read. It has plenty of action and excitement (the earthquake is a highlight) and a memorable encounter with a mysterious, otherworldly presence (I won't say more – you'll have to read to find out). You'll also learn about birds and how they survive in a habitat dominated by humans, although the conservation message is not at all preachy. Finally, the middle school characters and scenes hit home for this reader.

I'll be recommending this book to all the young readers I know. Can't wait for another novel from Bart King.

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### **Melinda says**

Bart King has a great knack for generating a cadence in this book that is very savvy to the teenage reader. He creates likable and well detailed characters and I love the way he "catalogs" each character in a taxonomy format. This story is engaging and unique and I can't wait to read more books written by him.

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### **Mr. Steve says**

I liked this story, especially the first 3/4 of it (then it lost me a bit). The main character, Noah, loves bird-watching and that plays a sizable part in the story, but do not think the book will be boring (you non bird-watchers). Silly, yes. At times, thought-provoking. But not boring.

As an adult, though, I am not the target audience; nine to 12 year olds are, and I think they will really like this story. After reading it, I already can think of many kids who will really enjoy it and I am looking forward to recommending it to them.

The author is a middle school teacher and he really gets the way kids talk to each other - especially boys. The witty dialogue is my favorite part of the book. I was nervous that the story was going to get a little heavy-handed near the end, but the author veered away (thankfully). And look out for a sequel!

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### **Kari Karp says**

I heard good buzz about this book at an ALA Midwinter panel, which inspired me to read it. I think my teen patrons who enjoy funny YA books by Gordon Korman, Josh Berk, Neal Shusterman (*The Schwa Was Here*), Tim Carvell, Joe Schreiber, etc. will enjoy this story because it's good, clean fun!

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### **Cole Shepherd says**

I enjoyed reading this book. It was a worth reading and I would be interested in reading a sequel if one ever came out. the book was published on May 10th, 2016, but I read the uncorrected advance proof that was released earlier. Author Bart King introduces characters in a unique way. When a significant character is introduced traits such as their "appearance" and "range" are directly described as if someone had taken notes on the person. This book is different from his other works. His other books typically contained various fun facts, tips, and tricks while this was an actual story. This book focuses on Noah Grow, a nerdy, middle school bird-watcher who is often bullied. Noah finds a strange frisbee shaped disc that gives him special abilities that change his life and the lives of those around him. The way the characters are introduced gives too much knowledge about them all at once instead of developing them throughout the story. The characters are authentic and to some extent relatable (other than the part with magical powers). It is hard to say whether they would be better if they were introduced in a normal way rather than in the way they were. The plot is original and is not predictable in the long run at all. It kept me interested the entire time reading it. Being a sci-fi fiction novel it was a bit far-fetched. The geography of the area played a large role as Noah was attempting to protect the habitat of a rare bird species throughout the novel. This novel reminds me of *I am Number Four* by Pittacus Lore because multiple young individuals receive powers that they must learn to use. This book is similar to other sci-fi books and movies where a character acquires powers. The characters acquire the powers and do not know how to use them until they are in a situation where they need to. The only thing readers should be aware of before reading this is that a bully frequently picks on the main character Noah. Habitat destruction also plays a role but a reader does not need to be aware of it. A theme that can be taken from this is that all life is precious and that humankind needs to preserve that life or all life will be at risk. I think this book would be good for middle school or high school students. Gender would not matter when reading this. It was a very easy read so it is not a book I would recommend for advanced students, but it was an overall fun read that anyone could enjoy.

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### **Jana says**

I had the opportunity to read a digital ARC of this book from NetGalley. I'm really glad that I did, because I enjoyed it even more than I expected to. This middle grade science fiction adventure novel has compelling action that sweeps you up into the story from the very beginning. It also has true-to-life characters that kids will definitely be able to recognize and identify with.

For my complete review, please visit my blog: <http://janatheteacher.blogspot.com/20...>

## Gayle Slagle says

The Drake Equation by Bark King is aimed at a middle school audience. As an adult reader who has taught middle school, I had mixed feelings about this book. The main characters are presented in a realistic manner, but the minor characters are sometimes portrayed as stereotypes and the reader is not given much insight into his or her life. For example, the bully has all the characteristics the stereotypical bully always has, but in the end, the reasons for his behavior are summarized in one paragraph and he unrealistically changes in front of our very eyes because he is suddenly "understood." Not very likely to happen. On the other hand, the main character, Noah Grow, is presented in an interesting manner; he is a nerdy middle school kid whose passion is bird watching. The author draws a very perceptive picture of Noah. He is basically a good kid who tries to do the right thing but sometimes lets his fears get in the way. His friends Jenny and Jason are also presented in a realistic manner. The book also gives many interesting and informative facts about birds and I found it quite effective for the author to describe each of Noah's friends and the people that he encountered in scientific terms as a bird watcher documenting a bird sighting would do. The realistic parts of the book I enjoyed, but found the sci-fi nature of the book less than satisfying even though I am a fan of sci-fi. I found the sci-fi aspects of the Drake Equation to be a wee bit farfetched, but perhaps this was just the adult in me. I am sure that some middle school readers would love this aspect while others would be a bit taken aback as was I. While King has written several non-fiction books for kids, this is his first attempt at fiction. I have not read his non-fiction books, but as I said, he presents the facts about birds and science in an interesting manner, so I can imagine that these books are both interesting and informative just as The Drake Equation. Also, as I said, for the most part, he has great insight into the minds and the behavior of middle school aged students. I would like to see books in the future from Mr. King that simply stick to the facts. I have a feeling that is where his strong points as a writer lie.

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## Annette says

THE DRAKE EQUATION by Bart King is a humorous science fiction adventure.

While on a quest for an elusive bird, Noah instead finds a mysterious, glittery disk. This middle-school youth suddenly acquires strange powers that lead to funny adventures.

Librarians will find that young readers empathize with the young birdwatcher and his friends. While the science fiction aspects don't really take off until the second half of the book, most children will enjoy the school and friendship aspects of the story.

To learn more about the author, go to <http://www.bartking.net/>.

Published by Disney-Hyperion on May 10, 2016. ARC courtesy of the publisher.

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## Aelvana says

Noah Grow watches birds obsessively. But when he attempts to follow a call that might be a wood duck, he discovers a strange sparkly disc. And life gets rather strange after that, because the disc proves capable of more than he ever imagined. What is it? Where did it come from? And what does it all mean?

I liked this well enough up until the end. Noah is consumed with his hobby, which tends to isolate him from others in a number of ways. So it's not surprising he's dealing with a bully, Coby, along with everything else. His habit of cataloging the characters he meets as though they were birds is amusing, and some of the incidences with the powers he's granted are also funny.

For me the biggest problem I have is the ending. Coby's bullying stems from two factors, one minor and one major, which is nice---but the way the situation gets resolved, AFTER he's asked his brother to come beat up Noah? It doesn't make sense. Noah's eco-friendly stance is hardly a surprise, but it's interesting to me the book makes such a point about bird species going extinct without mentioning any human-versus-human atrocities (which from an alien point of view that says "all life is sacred" seems an oversight). And it leaves Noah in the unenviable position of trying to prove humans can be good without giving him any standard about what "good" constitutes. Why should the aliens have the same ideas about good and evil, when even cultures on Earth differ in their approaches?

(view spoiler)

So it was an okay read, but due to the weird way it all ties up, I ended up liking it less after I finished it than I had while I was reading it. I rate this book Neutral.

See my reviews and more at <https://offtheshelfreviews.wordpress...>

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### **Alexa Hamilton says**

Noah is an interesting kid, with a love of bird watching and parents who design playgrounds for a living. This allows him a lot of time to run off and do his own thing, which is very important when he finds an alien device that only he can read. Is it really from an alien world? There's some fun action in this book, but I struggled to handle all the parts of the story that didn't come with enough explanation, even at the end of the book. I appreciated the depth and back story of the secondary characters, Jason and Jenny. Will there be a sequel? Set up certainly makes it seem like there should be.

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