



# Turn It Up!

*Jen Calonita*

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The Nightingales are in a serious funk. Bradley Academy's all-girl a cappella group used to be the pride and joy of the sunshine state, but the Nightingales have fallen out of harmony. Best friends and co-captains Lidia Sato and Sydney Marino aren't speaking. A boy has come between them -- none other than Griffin Mancini, the obnoxious lead singer of Bradley's smug all-boy a capella group, the Kingfishers. The Nightingales have no chance at winning the big state final if their captains are at each other's throats. Their only hope is new girl Julianna Ramirez. She's super shy, but she has some serious pipes. The three girls -- and the whole group -- will have to come together if they want to beat the Kingfishers and their rivals from Julianna's old school. Told from alternating points of view, this novel explores the ups and downs of friendship, romance, competition, and finding the perfect song!

## Turn It Up! Details

Date : Published January 2nd 2018 by Scholastic Press

ISBN : 9781338161151

Author : Jen Calonita

Format : Hardcover 272 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Realistic Fiction, Music

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# From Reader Review Turn It Up! for online ebook

## KatieLMae says

As a huge fan of Pitch Perfect I couldn't pass up this book and I have to say it was Acadorable (forgive the pun but I couldn't pass up the opportunity there)

Turn It Up centers around The Nightingales, a struggling female a cappella group at Bradley Academy in Naples, FL. (I have family in Naples so it was an added bonus that I recognized places that were talked about) We follow the team as they try to reclaim their former glory and fend off sabotage from their campus rivals, the all male group The Kingfishers. When a fight between best friends and co captains Lidia and Sydney puts the future of the team in jeopardy the girls have to learn to work together and discover what it truly means to be a team.

Yes it was predictable and yes there was plenty of high school drama but I got what I expected which was a fun, quick read, full of friendship and of course music.

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## Cindy Mitchell \*Kiss the Book\* says

Calonita, Jen Turn It Up: Practice Makes Pitch Perfect , 272 pages. Point (Scholastic), 2018. \$18. Content: Language: PG (2 swears); Mature Content: PG (kissing); Violence: G.

High school sophomores, Sydney and Lidia are co-captains of the Nightingales, an a cappella group at Bradley Academy. They are best friends and have been looking forward to getting the Nightingales out of their past slump and building a successful group. Right before the season starts, Lidia sees Sydney kissing her long time crush, Griffin. Lidia feels like she can't trust Sydney anymore and thinks she is going to pursue her dance dreams instead of singing. Sydney doesn't know how to apologize to Lidia and she doesn't know if she can get the Nightingales to succeed without the help of her best friend.

This is a clean teen drama with the themes of friendship, boy trouble and following your dreams. Although it's a bit predictable and Lidia's poor-me whining grated on my nerves, the plot line moved along and the characters were likable. If you have seen the movie Pitch Perfect, there are a lot of similarities, but this is the clean version. Although the characters are sophomores in high school this book feels younger than that.

MS – ADVISABLE. Reviewer, C. Peterson.  
<https://kissthebook.blogspot.com/2018...>

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## Kat says

Ugh, this book was so super predictable, from about the third paragraph I'd figured out the entire plot, but that isn't necessarily bad if the characters we spend the time with are interesting and full. These weren't. I may be above the generally recommended age for these books but I've fully enjoyed this author's other books as fun, light reads. This one I rolled my eyes at the entire way through, not a single character seemed developed beyond a series of traits, a character likes Sailor Moon because it's a plot point for her and the guy to get

together, we don't hear why they like those characters what about them is enjoyable. I literally would have given this book if I wasn't so close to the end of the year needing to hit my goal.

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## **Wisty says**

Very much a one-sitting, adorable read from one of my most trusted authors! It was just really, really cute. Made me one to jam out to some a capella!

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## **Mehsi says**

DNF ~ 37%

This was one of the books I was really looking forward to in 2018, this month specifically. Music, a Capella stuff, multiple POVs, a cute cover, boys, competitions, what more could I want. Well, what I wanted was less effing drama.

Because within those 37% there is so much drama that I was just rolling my eyes so much they popped out of my eye sockets and I had to put them back again. Yes, if this book can do over drama, I can as well. :P I am not sure who of the two bickering girls I did like, but I guess neither. Sydney for being a total bleh bleh and not being honest to her best friend (really, you kissed her crush, you don't just not tell anything, you go to her, you talk to her, you don't let it simmer/rot). Lidia for not understanding that maybe some things are meant for private, and not in the middle of auditions or a recruitment party. I mean, I get that you feel pooppy about the fact your friend betrayed you, and yes she is acting all high and mighty about it, instead of talking about it she just squirms and tries to dodge out of it, or when she finally tries to talk she makes bad excuses and then uses a film script, but there is a time and a place for everything. These times were not times to do this.

And come on Sydney, just be honest with Griffin, tell him why you are hesitant. Now you are just pushing him away, hurting him, and being a total bitch about it. He can't read minds, you know? If you want to tell him to not do anything, you will have to tell him why.

Next to the whole dramarama between two supposedly best friends (though I don't see it anywhere) we also have two mean girls who can just rot away for all I care.

Julianna was the only one I cared about, the only one I want to see, the only one.. well you get the idea. Sadly, she is just one of our three POV, but I would rather have hers be the only one. I don't care that we then still would see the drama, but it would be from afar, and not close by.

I really liked Julianna, from the moment we saw her I knew I would like her. Sometimes that happens with characters.

I love that she likes to do singing (she can deny it all she wants, but I can see it, especially given what she did on 37%), but also can play instruments, and that she loves songwriting (though sad to see she is not winning prizes).

Also Lidia? Girl? Just be honest that you actually want to do dancing more.

So yeah, nice idea, and I was really looking forward to it, but drama drama drama is not what I was looking for. I can see that drama will probably go on through the whole book, and no thank you.

Review first posted at <https://twirlingbookprincess.com/>

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### ♥ Aly ♥ says

Was looking through my Hoopla and found this. I saw it had to do with a cappella and singing so I decided to give this book a try. Of course this book reminded me of Pitch Perfect! but there was a different story going on besides the competition. I did like concept but it just didn't do it for me.

Lidia and Sydney are best friends. Lidia goes to meet Sydney and finds her kissing her crush. Lidia then leaves and doesn't let Sydney know that she saw it. Lidia then decides to quit the a capella group due to this fight and pursue another passion. Along the way, the two set aside their differences and help each other out plus fix their friendship. This book does feel younger than what it is supposed to. I only gave it a 3 due to several messages that this book/author presents throughout.

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### Jo Beth says

Had some much fun reading this Middle grade/YA book. The main characters, girls at a boarding school are best friends and have planned to revive the a cappella singing group that has fizzled out over the years. The two captains, best friends, cannot wait to implement their plans to make their leadership what turns things around. BUT, as so often is the case, when there is a complete misunderstanding, the girls trust what they think they know instead of honestly talking and that leads to a cascade of imagined and real hurts which puts the a cappella group in a downward spiral. Layered into the story are 2 sweet crushes, and of course, the music. Throughout the book, the reader is rooting for both girls to be honest with each other, and with themselves. Strong characters and realistic dialogue kept this book engaging and thoughtful. Highly recommend

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### Allison says

Basically a junior high version of pitch perfect, but I did especially like Lidia and Jack.

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### Sophia (Bookwyrming Thoughts) says

*Turn It Up!* was a totally random pick I chose from my library's OverDrive catalog because they didn't have the book I so desperately wanted in my hands right at the very moment. Come on, American Panda. Come to meeee.

Or maybe they did but I didn't feel like reading any fantasy. I've been wanting more and more cute contemporary romances lately. **Give me all the cute contemporaries, bookworms.** I need to feed my latest addiction until I'm tired of it and go back to my usual fantasy groove.

Anyways...

**Jen Calonita's latest novel is about acapella groups.** I love and admire acapella (Pentatonix is one of my favorite groups) so this novel caught my eye *really* quick. ***Turn It Up!* is essentially Pitch Perfect set in a high school setting instead of college.** I was hoping that I would enjoy the book a lot since it *is* about music and acapella.

Unfortunately, **the book focuses too much on Lidia's and Sydney's problem with little to no progress** and an ending that was basically handed over to the characters on a plate adorned with musical notes and shoes. *Boom.* Happily ever after for everyone.

This is basically the summary of the book:

Girl has a crush on a guy  
Other girl ends up falling in love with the guy  
Girl catches other girl and guy kissing, creates tension among friendship  
Girl develops other interests and chases after it because it conveniently keeps her away from other girl and guy as well  
Other girl tries to push guy but really, she's in love but she values friendship  
Girl falls in love slowly with another guy  
Guy somehow gets between girl and other guy by accident - oopsies  
Girl and other girl realizes they don't have to be this way  
Somehow they become best friends again and everyone lives happily ever after

I was expecting more... I don't know, music to be involved? There's certainly conflict among the acapella group, but it felt like the musical angle wasn't even needed to create drama among the characters since there seemed to be issues well before the acapella group became a thing. ?

A lot of the issues seemed to have roots since middle school/early high school - they just seemed to have escalated. And **while the Pitch Perfect movie had their drama, it was at least entertaining and catchy.** I can't say the same for the book.

**The writing felt off** - there were times where it felt awkward due to punctuation usage, mainly exclamation points. Sentences that didn't need an exclamation had one, or maybe it's just the phrasing of the sentences themselves. It didn't really help me enjoy the book more.

And then there were the characters. I don't know if it's just me, but I have a hard time thinking of how old most of the characters are. I know *Turn It Up!* is set in high school, but there were times where I felt they were a little younger. ?

**But hey, there were *maybe* a few parts that were good!**

Eventually, everyone got past their differences - hooray  
There *is* a cute romance, and I definitely ship it  
Sometimes I wanted to smush the two characters together

Lidia's family is cute and adorable

Anyways, those smol little bits that were good didn't make up for the bad. I wanted more from *Turn It Up!* and **I got a Pitch Perfect version in book form that was less entertaining than the movie.**

This review was originally posted on Bookworming Thoughts

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### **Rachael Fryman says**

What does it remind me of? The movie Pitch Perfect.

What is it about? Dueling acapella groups and lots of teenage angsty drama.

What did I love? The fact that one of the MCs finds love via nonpareil candy shopping - a.k.a. a dream meet cute! Also, I am digging this cover. I like how, even though its through lots of angsty drama, it really has a good message of girls coming together to build each other up, not tear each other down.

What I didn't love? The angst - seriously. I nearly DNF'd this one, but I persevered for the save of the upcoming book fair featuring this title. It was way too much for me, but I think the middle school kiddos will love it.

Overall? C-

Way too dramatic for me but preteens and teens will love this Pitch Perfect read-a-like.

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### **Cara says**

This was so boring. I couldn't get into it. I didn't really care what happened to them. And there was a lot of running away from situations. Not metaphoric running away; actual running away. \*eye roll\*

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### **Chelsea says**

Very bad Pitch Perfect rip off

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### **Liralen says**

Pet (conspiracy?) theory for this book: It was originally written as pure Middle Grade, and the characters were supposed to be 12 or 13...but the editor or literary agent thought it would sell better as YA, so someone find-and-replaced things like ages and grades and mentions of middle school so that the characters were ~15 and in high school, and added a smidge more kissing, and said 'that should do it!'

I actually really love Calonita's books, which I find fun and usually on-point (even if I'm a decade and a half too old to be the target audience). This is fun too, but it feels to me like it's trying to straddle the line between

MG and YA and missing the mark. Too juvenile to be young adult (prank wars? The male a cappella group heckling the girls trying out for the female a cappella group? A girl who communicates through her puppet? There's no way these kids are out of middle school) but with characters in high school, significant boy drama, part-time jobs...doesn't feel quite MG either. I'd probably have loved this if it had the maturity of the Secrets of My Hollywood Life books (I only recently gave up my copies, and a part of me still mourns that decision, because I'd had them for years) or even taken itself a little more over the top, à la VIP: I'm With the Band...but it's just a little too grey-area for me.

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### **Julie says**

This was...pretty much what I expected. Cute, predictable, lots of girl friendship. Nothing particularly great, but a fun read.

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### **Barbara says**

If there are still any fans of the early seasons of Glee out there, they will certainly enjoy this romp about a high school musical singing group. The Nightingales, an all-girl a cappella group that once brought home prizes to Bradley Academy, has fallen on hard times, and after a series of mishaps over the years, the group will be lucky if it manages to find enough singers to compete. Things go from bad to worse when the co-captains, best friends Lidia Sato and Sydney Marino stop speaking to each other after Lidia spots Sydney kissing Griffin Mancini, her long-time crush and member of the school's talented all-male group. Various misunderstandings, drama, and confusion ensure, and just as Sydney is ready to throw in the towel, the Nightingales start singing in harmony again. Although there's plenty of music in the book and some additional stories about Juliana Ramirez, a talented singer with stage fright, much of this is predictable and it all leads to a happy ending. Of course, Lidia decides to forgive Sydney and move on from Griffin once she has her own love interest and has chosen to focus on dance. Wouldn't it have been nice if the two girls had just stopped to talk or call each other and sort things much earlier in the book? I know this one will have an adoring audience, but I just wanted to get to the end of it so that I could turn off the whining of all those girls in my head. GOSH! Chorus and glee club teachers must be the most patient individuals around.

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