



Audition & Subtraction

Amy Fellner Dominy

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For as long as Tatum can remember it's been:

Tatum + Lori = Best friends

They do everything together, including a yearly clarinet/flute duet for District Honor Band auditions. But when a new boy transfers to their middle school and their band, the equation suddenly changes to:

Lori + Michael – Tatum = One happy couple

With her best friend slipping away and her parents recently separated, Tatum's life has turned upside down. Plus her good friend Aaron thinks that they are secretly boyfriend and girlfriend, all because of one little lie Tatum told. Accepting change isn't easy for Tatum, but just how much is she willing to give up to hold on to her friendship with Lori and life as she knows it? For Tatum, the best way to move forward may require a whole new formula . . .

Audition & Subtraction Details

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Author : Amy Fellner Dominy

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From Reader Review Audition & Subtraction for online ebook

Evelyn Krieger says

This was a refreshing read--no swearing, violence, darkness, or controversy. Even though the main characters are fourteen, the story seems more fitting for ages 9-12. Audition and Subtraction is a fun story that tweens can get lost in. I enjoyed reading about middle-school band life, something I never experienced. Tatum's voice was authentic and humorous. Her problems and emotions will feel real to young readers. The themes of accepting change and facing one's fears are woven into a great story without being preachy. I could imagine some interesting book club discussions: What would you have done in Tatum's situation? Have you ever felt betrayed by a best friend? Did you expect (like) the ending? Bravo to Amy Feller Dominy for another great middle grade novel!

Michelle says

Great message about friendship and having confidence in yourself.

Jen Bigheart says

This is a book every band geek will enjoy! I say that with love.... When hottie Michael moves in to town, shy Tatum is determined to not let this boy come in between her and her BFF Lori. Lori on the other hand, is knee deep in her first relationship. Throw in a fight to the death band competition - well, almost - and you have a fun middle grade that tests the lines of friendships.

Check out a great blog post about the WORST SCHOOL PICTURE ever at the blog! Yes, WE both share pictures!

<http://www.jenbigheart.com/2012/09/re...>

Julie says

I enjoyed this book because it incorporated the school band into its main plot line.

Kami says

- This was a really cute book. There were a few things that were juvenile, but that was the target audience for the book, so I guess it's ok.

- I LOVED LOVED LOVED all the band geek stuff!! I also LOVED LOVED LOVED all the clarinet stuff! I can totally sympathize with a calloused thumb and a sore lip!

- I remember the competitive feeling in band. It was exciting and nerve wrecking! Good Times!

- Auditions are scary. I'm with Tatum! They suck! This book brought back all sorts of memories about regional and state solos!
 - This book made me want to play my clarinet more!
 - I loved Tatum's character development. She is a teen that is still trying to figure out who she is, and I liked how she resolved everything in the end.
 - I could relate to Tatum on several levels!
 - Lori was a very realistic best friend. Not everything is sunshine and rainbows with your best friend. There will be fights and disagreements, but they are always solved.
 - The little bits of romance between Tatum and Aaron were cute! I really liked Aaron.
 - Overall, this book is definitely for a younger audience, but I enjoyed it! I thought it was a charming little story!
 - CLARINETS RULE!
-

Kellee says

Reviewed at: <http://www.teachmentortexts.com/2012/...>

Can math equations change or does every problem only have 1 answer? Tatum believes that Tatum + Lori = Best Friends is an equation that will never change; however, she cannot predict variables that may change the problem as she knows it.

Amy Fellner Dominy is such a realistic voice in the world of middle grade novels. Her humor, story and emotions are spot on to the middle school experience. I also love that overall the book is such a positive look at life even though it does deal with a lot of what is complicated at that age. It is so pleasant to have this type of novel available for middle grade students. The protagonist also represents a population of middle schoolers that are not usually found in literature- a smart, math & music "nerd" thus making it so another group of girls will see themselves reflected in a book.

Terry Johnson says

Such a sweet story about friendship and family and growing up. The characters, especially Tatum, come alive through great choice of details.

Kelly Hager says

I was so excited to read this book because I loved OyMG so much. The two are very different and while I definitely preferred OyMG, I really enjoyed this one, too.

I think everyone can relate to the idea of being left behind. Tatum tries so hard to cling to her friendship with Lori that she's very willing to sell herself short. And, like most of us (or, at the very least, like me), she won't admit to being upset or hurt because it may cause a fight or accusations of being jealous that Lori has a boyfriend and she doesn't.

She even goes out on a fake date with her friend Aaron so that Lori will wonder what else Tatum has going on that she isn't sharing. (And honestly, Aaron is so much cooler than Lori's boyfriend Michael.)

This is a very sweet, fun book. And it's impossible not to cheer for Tatum. Highly recommended.

Ms. Yingling says

Tatum and Lori are best friends and band mates and do everything together, especially a duet for band competition. When hot new guy Michael moves to town, everyone swoons over him, especially Lori. Lori has recently lost a lot of weight and isn't used to boys thinking of her as hot, so when Michael starts paying attention to her, she is elated. Tatum is glad for her friend, but misses her, and feels awkward about the whole middle school romance thing, especially when she starts looking at her friend Aaron in a new light. Are they dating, or are they just friends who kiss? Tatum is also dealing with her parents' separation, and with her mother being sad and yet trying to move on by doing embarrassing things like community theater. When Michael and Tatum have to compete against each other for a place in District Honor Band and Lori is more supportive of Michael, the girls' friendship is tested. Ah, middle school. It's never easy. By the author of OyMG.

Strengths: Perfect middle school romance book for girls. I especially liked Aaron and Tatum's relationship. Tatum's other problems were realistically portrayed. This is the sort of book I would read all the time if I had my druthers.

Weaknesses: The importance of auditions, duets, wind ensemble, etc., seemed more like high school than middle school to me, especially with the overnight trip for auditions. Middle school girls love to read books about high school students, so it would have been set there. Still putting this one on my order list right now! Will be a hard sell to boys, though!

Stephanie Redwine says

I would be lying if I said the title had nothing to do with my decision to read this book. I am a math teacher and the title is so close to 'addition and subtraction' that I was immediately drawn to it! Then I found out it was written by Amy Fellner Dominy and I was sold!

This story is about a 14 year old girl, Tatum, whose world is turned upside down when a new boy shows up at school and seems to take everything away from her. She had been planning on taking the third spot in the District Honor Band until he came along and tried to take it away from her. Not only is he ruining her band life, but he is trying to turn her best friend against her. What is a girl supposed to do when her best friend sides with her boyfriend instead of her?

This book was a quick read and I loved it! Being an 8th grade teacher, I felt like I saw a lot of my students represented in this book. There is the girl who has been overweight her whole life and has recently been able to slim down, the guy who is in love with a friend who doesn't have a clue, the boy who just can't seem to do anything to get his dad's attention, and the girl who wants to hide out in her best friend's shadow. This

book had some great moments where I was able to connect with the character because I had been in that situation before. This is a book that I will most certainly be putting in my classroom library and recommending to my students. Not only is it a cute story, but I think everyone can learn from the mistakes that are being made during the course of the book.

Sarah says

Looking for an appropriate book for middle graders that tackles middle school, friends and romance? Look no further than Audition & Subtraction by Amy Fellner Dominy.

Synopsis: For as long as Tatum can remember it's been:

Tatum + Lori = Best friends

They do everything together, including a yearly clarinet/flute duet for District Honor Band auditions. But when a new boy transfers to their middle school and their band, the equation suddenly changes to:

Lori + Michael – Tatum = One happy couple

With her best friend slipping away and her parents recently separated, Tatum's life has turned upside down. Plus her good friend Aaron thinks that they are secretly boyfriend and girlfriend, all because of one little lie Tatum told. Accepting change isn't easy for Tatum, but just how much is she willing to give up to hold on to her friendship with Lori and life as she knows it? For Tatum, the best way to move forward may require a whole new formula . . . (Goodreads.com)

I enjoyed Amy Fellner Dominy's book, OyMG but I think this author shows even more promise writing for a middle grade audience. She just got the dynamics so, so right and I was very excited that this is another book that focuses on the arts. There can never be enough positive books about band and orchestra experiences for readers.

I really liked Tatum and Lori's story because it felt so genuine and real to the middle school experience, both being in eighth grade. Unfortunately, when one friend starts to mature a bit quicker than another, oftentimes, conflict arises. In this case, not only is Tatum competing against Michael for a spot in the District Honor Band, but she is competing against him for Lori's attention, and losing. These two friends are not necessarily hurtful intentionally towards each other, but neither really understands each other's perspective on the situation.

At the same time, Tatum is watching her family fall apart, at least in her mind. Her parents are separated and she hates visiting her dad because it doesn't feel right. Her mom cries and is throwing herself into a local theater production playing a character that is, quite frankly, very funny! But I can totally see how Tatum is embarrassed by her mom's nurse/spy character. Again, Tatum's emotions are all over, very much a roller coaster of trying to understand and deal with her parents and it felt real.

And did I mention the romance because there is a sweet romance between Tatum and her good friend, Aaron, that is just the right amount of romantic and awkward as these two reconcile that they are both friends but maybe, something more. It's very clean and natural and just right in the context of the story. It felt very age appropriate to get right down to it.

Audition & Subtraction is a book I read very quickly because I just enjoyed it! Amy Fellner Dominy has a talent for just the right amount of laugh out loud moments balanced by the emotions Tatum is being bombarded with. This is a very tween friendly book!

From my review at YA Librarian Tales: <http://www.yalibrariantales.com/2012/...>

Kristi says

Tatum and Lori are inseparable. When Tatum found out her parents were getting separated, she basically lived at Lori's. Their friendship should be able to overcome everything. Right? There is a new boy at school, Michael. Not only has he caught Lori's eye, he's also up for the same spot as Tatum in the District Honor Band. Tatum isn't sure that Lori is in her corner now that Michael is her boyfriend.

This book was adorable! It was sweet, fun and just enjoyable to read.

I loved the relationship between Tatum and Lori. Middle school is such an intense time, friendships are bound to be tested just as the characters were in this book. Poor Lori. I wanted to be mad at her and disappointed in some of the positions she puts Tatum in. I mean seriously, what kind of friend would do that! But then it's easy to forget what it felt like at that age when a boy likes you and you can't believe it because you never thought in a million years a boy would like you. It's intoxicating. I know I made stupid decisions just like Lori because of a boy.

I loved the fake date with Aaron. How Tatum could not see how obviously head over heels that boy was for her, is beyond me! I think that Tatum definitely beat Lori out on the awesome boyfriend. Maybe Michael irked me a bit since he was the reason for some of Lori's insane actions.

In addition to dealing with losing her best friend and worrying about getting a spot on the District Honor Band, Tatum is also facing challenges at home with the separation of her parents. I loved how Amy intertwined all of that and made it seem seamless. It could have gotten really hairy there and it didn't.

Great characters, a wonderfully told story and just plain fun.

Katie Fitzgerald says

Audition & Subtraction is the latest middle grade novel from OyMG author Amy Fellner Dominy. This time, Dominy takes her readers into the world of middle school band competition. Tatum is a clarinetist, and Lori plays flute. They have been best friends forever, and Lori has always been there to play duets with Tatum so she doesn't have to face the District Honor Band judges on her own. This year, though, there's a new clarinetist in town, Michael, and not only does he present serious competition for Tatum, he also starts dating Lori. As Lori becomes more and more focused on her relationship with Michael, Tatum worries that she will be more interested in helping her boyfriend succeed than in making sure Tatum plays well at their audition. Tatum thinks the solution might be to play a solo this year instead - after all, her teacher and her good friend Aaron both think she can do it - but it will never be possible until Tatum believes it herself.

I, too, was a middle school clarinet player, and though I never willingly entered any sort of competition, I could relate to Tatum's desire to play well, and to her fears about doing so on her own in front of strangers. I think the author did a wonderful job of capturing the details of the middle school band environment. I loved

the way Tatum and Aaron subtly goofed off during rehearsal, and I nearly cheered when I saw a mention of “Air for Band.” (To this day, when I hear that piece, I am transported back to 7th grade symphonic band.)

Aside from the wonderful details about band life, I also appreciated the depth of the emotions experienced by Dominy’s characters. Tatum’s doubts in herself are the doubts of every tween girl, which gives the book this great universal girl appeal, but Lori and Michael come across as complex and flawed individuals as well. Lori revels in her newfound attention from boys after her recent weight loss, and Michael frets over the opinions of his professional musician father, who promises to come visit only if his son gets into the Honor Band. The characterization is the strongest aspect of the story because Dominy takes the time to add layers to each character, not just to the protagonist.

The last couple chapters of this book are a little sappy, I won’t deny that, but the ending is so satisfying. I think girls will really see themselves in Tatum, and root for her, and when they finally see her learn how to stand on her own, I hope they feel the same relief and love for her as a character that I felt. I got a little bit teary-eyed reading this story; anyone who had a tough time in middle school will probably do the same.

Audition & Subtraction is a logical read-alike for *How to Rock Braces and Glasses*, *Ten Miles Past Normal*, and *Notes from an Accidental Band Geek*, since all three books have a strong musical theme. It also compares well to some of Lauren Barnholdt’s tween fiction, which also focuses on friendships and dating, but not as much on sex or puberty. (Fun fact: The cover illustration for *Audition & Subtraction* was done by Nathalie Dion, who also does the covers for Lauren Barnholdt’s tween novels!) *Audition & Subtraction* is a perfect bridge book between things like the *Cupcake Diaries* and the *Baby-sitters Club* and the more mature themes of books by authors like Lauren Myracle and Judy Blume. It’s one of my favorite books from 2012, and I can’t wait to see where Amy Fellner Dominy takes us next!

Stacey says

OyMG . . . Amy has done it again!!!!!! This book is the perfect tween book. My daughter and I each read it within a single night. Reading about tweens and their friendships and the relationships, some of us are well beyond the tween stage. It was nice to revisit it. This book is full of twists and turns and surprises! I have now read the book three times and plan on reading it a few more times! It was a great read. Look forward to more of Amy's books!!!!!!

Liviania says

Confession time! I thought AUDITION & SUBTRACTION was a young adult novel before I started reading it. I know, I know, the cartoon cover should've given it away, but I didn't. I was kind of disappointed because I wanted to read about high school band. (Not that I don't have fond memories of middle school band, too. I'm just hostile to surprise.)

Tatum is a second clarinet in the Dakota Middle School band, but she still has a chance of being one of three clarinets from the school that earns a spot in the District Honor Band. But there's a new student in town - and he plays the clarinet too. To make it worse, he starts dating Lori, Tatum's duet partner for the auditions. She doesn't have a chance if her secret weapon is distracted by the competition. And it isn't just about District Honor Band - Tatum may have a shot at making the Wind Ensemble as a freshman if she impresses the high school director at her audition.

(Okay, that last bit really bugged me throughout the book. There are about seven clarinets in the middle school band. First off, that indicates there should be enough students that the high school needs at least three bands, not just a Wind Ensemble and Concert Band. Now, a high school Wind Ensemble should have no more than six clarinets - two per part. There are three clarinets who are better than Tatum in the middle school. That means there would have to be less than three upperclassmen better than the freshmen for Tatum to make the band. That's highly unlikely. Band geekery over!)

AUDITION & SUBTRACTION is both about friendship and believing in your own abilities. Lori acts like a bad friend during the novel, but part of her attitude was encouraged by Tatum's lack of belief in herself. Meanwhile, stand buddy Aaron is clearly way into Tatum but she can't see it because she's too busy obsessing over Lori and Michael. But perhaps he needs to be more direct about his feelings. Tatum's life is also complicated by her parents' separation.

I think current, past, and prospective band geeks will enjoy AUDITION & SUBTRACTION. It's a cute, fun read. I think I would've preferred it as a YA novel, but that's probably just me being cranky.
