

ONE WRONG TURN

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YEAR LEVEL: Y4–7

ABOUT THE BOOK

Amelia's whole world revolves around ballet. Her sights are set on becoming a professional dancer just like her parents, and she won't let anyone, or anything, get in her way.

But when Valentina turns up at the Academy and quickly establishes herself as the new talent, Amelia's spot as the class favourite is in doubt. While Amelia is solely focused on beating her new rival, Valentina has bigger concerns to juggle – a family who doesn't understand her passion for ballet, and trying to fit in with classmates that just see her as an outsider. As the two girls vie for the lead role in Cinderella, the pressure intensifies. And one big lie could destroy everything.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chenée Marrapodi is an Australian writer and podcaster. She has worked in media for many years, currently for Channel Nine News, and formerly as a reporter for Channel Seven's Today Tonight, as well as online news and radio. Chenée's love of words is rivalled only by her love of dance. Combining the two, *One Wrong Turn* is her first novel.

THEMES

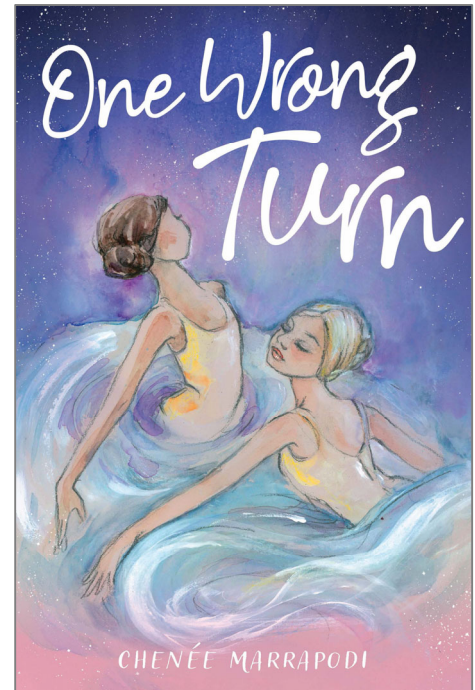
- Dance
- Friendship
- Family
- Perseverance
- Gender roles
- Culture
- Traditions
- Language

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Y4-7 English
Y4-7 Humanities and Social Sciences
Y4-7 Health and Physical Education
Y4-7 The Arts: Dance

USEFUL WEBSITES

- Author's website: cheneemarrapodi.com



CLASSROOM IDEAS

Discussion questions

1. Before you start the story, make a prediction based on the title.
2. Based on the front cover, who do you think is the target audience for this book?
3. Ballet has its own vocabulary. What do these ballet terms used in the story mean? *Pirouette* (p. 13), *frappé* (p. 34), *plié* (p. 33), *pas de deux* (p. 55), *soutenu* (p. 132), *piqué* turns (p. 133), fish dive (p. 157).
4. This story switches between Amelia's and Valentina's points of view. Why do you think the author has chosen to write the story this way? Did you enjoy the changing points of view?
5. What does Anna-Maria's use of the term 'the Australians' on page 23 tell the reader about how she sees herself.
6. How do Valentina's dreams and expectations differ from those of her family and elders? Find three quotes from the text to support your ideas.
7. Valentina feels it is unfair that Salvatore is allowed more freedom than her. Do you agree that the way the siblings are treated is unfair?
8. What do you think Nonna means when she says, 'Boys will be boys'? (p. 30)
9. How would you describe the relationship between Valentina and her mother? How would you describe the relationship between Valentina and her father?
10. Why do you think many of the ballet students were not welcoming towards Valentina?
11. Compare the families of Amelia and Valentina. Which one is most like your own family?
12. Valentina says that '*fare la bella figura*' (to give a good impression) is her family's favourite motto (p. 236). Come up with a motto to represent your family or your friends.
13. Valentina says, 'My family was very superstitious.' (p. 215) What does superstitious mean? Do you believe in any superstitions?
14. Valentina feels like there are two sides to her life. Draw a picture of Valentina with a split down the middle. On one side draw her home life, and on the other side draw her school life.
15. Which character from the story do you relate to the most? Explain your choice.
16. How do each of these characters feel at the end of chapter 22 when Valentina dances triumphantly: Amelia, Khalila, Sam, Kate and Ava, Miss Lily, Valentina.
17. Summarise what each of these characters has learned by the end of the book, writing one sentence for each: Amelia, Valentina, Khalila, Valentina's father, Amelia's mother.
18. What genre is this story?

Creative writing

1. After reading the first chapter, divide a blank page in half. On each half, write what you know about the characters of Amelia and Valentina. As you continue reading, add more information about each girl.
2. On page 246, Amelia says, 'The scent of hairspray and well-loved dance shoes filled the air, giving me goosebumps. If someone made a perfume and called the fragrance "Show Time", that's exactly what it would smell like.' Create a print advertisement for the perfume Show Time.
3. On page 277, Valentina says, 'I felt like I was home for the very first time. The Old Town would always hold a special place in my heart, but lucky for me, there was enough room for Australia too. My new home.' Write a paragraph describing what you think makes somewhere 'home'?
4. The story switches between Amelia and Valentina's points of view. Choose another character from the story and rewrite a pivotal scene from their point of view.
5. Write a review of *One Wrong Turn*. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the book? Who would you recommend the book to?

Humanities and Social Sciences

1. Locate Calabria on a world map. How far is it from Valentina's new home in Perth, Western Australia? Search online to find five interesting facts about Southern Italy.
2. Create a mind map showing the main differences between the Old Town and Perth. Use headings such as values, expectations, language, family, etc.
3. Match these Italian phrases to their meaning in English.

4. Italian:
 - a. Tesoro mio! (p.29)
 - b. Che schifo! (p. 77)
 - c. Fatti i fatti tuoi (p. 68)
 - d. Mi dispiace (p. 140)
 - e. Aiuto, aiuto! (p.155)
 - f. Con la testa dura (p. 199)
 - g. Un fantasma (p. 251)
5. English:
 - a. A ghost
 - b. Help, help!
 - c. My darling! or (more literally) My treasure!
 - d. Mind your own business
 - e. With a hard head
 - f. Gross!
 - g. I am sorry
6. Valentina's family are immigrants. Why did they choose to move to Australia? Do you think it was a difficult choice?
7. What are some challenges immigrants may face when moving to a new place? Do all immigrants have the same experience?
8. On page 217, Valentina says, 'When I was younger, I'd asked if there was a recipe for the sausages. Everyone acted like it was the funniest question in the world.' Why did Valentina's family find this question funny?
9. Does your family make any traditional meals from your culture? Describe one of your favourite family recipes.
10. According to Valentina, the Southern Italians value three things above all else: family, food and tradition (p. 116). What are three things that you value?

Health and Physical Education

1. List some of the physical benefits of regular exercise.
2. In what ways can sport affect your mental health? Use examples from the story to support your ideas.
3. On page 272, Amelia's mum says, 'Ballet is just as much about friendship as it is about dance. It's a lonely life if you don't share it with the people around you. I'm not saying don't be competitive, you need to push yourself, but you also need to understand that it takes an entire team to put together a ballet production. It comes together much better if you're all working together towards the same goal.' What interpersonal skills do the dancers need to put together the production?

The Arts: Dance

1. Search online to find a video clip of a *Cinderella* ballet performance. Is the story easy to follow? How does the performance make you feel?
2. What personal attributes do you think a dancer needs to become a professional ballet dancer?
3. Choreograph a dance based on a scene from the book. Communicate meaning through your movements.