



# FINE-RICHLAND RAMPAGE

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"DELIVERING HIGH SCHOOL NEWS...ONE PAGE AT A TIME."



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- PR's Favorite Restaurants
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# Creative Writing Workshop

## PRHS Students Teach Middle School The Art of Writing

BROOKE DEEGAN STAFF WRITER

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For the past 31 years, the PRHS Gifted Department has been thoroughly organizing and executing a Creative Writing Workshop geared towards the innovative and imaginative minds of middle school students. On Tuesday, February 13th, the immersive workshop took place at the middle school, where students from several neighboring districts came together to learn from PRHS student mentors and create a myriad of miniature literary pieces under this guidance. The fostering and nurturing of creativity is a process that, undeniably, is important and valuable to students. Especially at such young ages, this is important, and PR takes this into utmost regard when working on it through this remarkable program.

The middle school students who indulge themselves in this day filled with writing activities are not the only ones who benefit from the experience-- high school students do as well.



Junior Eliza Lazzaro and her middle school friend

Then, the process of creating adequate prompts to both inspire and instruct the children begins, preparing for February.

The first step to this is deciding on a theme. This year, the theme which students chose was



Juniors Jillian Uzelac and Eliza Lazzaro, and freshman Allie Rishel, teaching at the workshop

"Creation Nation." It was far more unique and thought-provoking than the ideas in years past, which were normally something simple, such as "Hollywood" or "Ocean. Though those past themes were wonderful; however, the notion of "Creation Nation" was one that had never been done before, and therefore it truly challenged students to think even farther outside of the box than they ever had before. The whole goal of this theme was to focus on the concept of world-building, and to have the middle-school students sincerely hone in on their imaginations while characterizing a universe they could use in their works.

Through a series of prompts which the high school students wrote, they were able to accomplish this. **CONTINUED...**

Beginning sometime in September each year, a handful of students at the high school congregate with one another under the leadership of teachers Sra. Hines, Dr. Poole, and Mrs. Deal.



These prompts were in the form of fictional news stories, poetic anthems, citizen dialogues, and even more intriguing imagination igniters.

“All of the prompts really allowed the kids to experience all different sorts of writing, and overall was very beneficial to them. That’s one of my favorite parts of the workshop,” said sophomore Elizabeth Liebe.

During the workshop, the PRHS students had the opportunity to exercise their mentorship skills as they progressed through their prompts and assisted the younger students in fostering the inventive aspects of their brains. At the beginning of each station, the high school students presented their prompts and read the examples which they wrote.

They then allowed the kids to get to writing on their own.

Whether someone needed help with understanding the prompt, coming up with a fascinating idea, or spelling a word, the high school students remedied all of the little issues so that the children could write the absolute best booklet of writing possible.

Sophomore Ella Yanni said, “Teaching the kids is a valuable opportunity, and each year, I’m increasingly impressed with their creativity and talent.”

The Creative Writing Workshop was, yet again, a massive success for PR. The fact that it presents the most imaginative children of the area with even further inspiration and guidance year after year is simply fantastic. Allowing high school writers to immerse themselves in the art of leadership is priceless as well. For years to come, it will continue to inspire and encourage children to write fearlessly.

## CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE RECIPE

### *Directions To Bake The Most Delicious Treat*

ELLA DAVIS STAFF WRITER



We all recognize the glorious smell of freshly baked chocolate chip cookies filling the kitchen air and the taste of the chocolate melting in your mouth. Chocolate chip cookies are the cure to all sad days or tiring Mondays. They bring joy into your days. So, if you ever feel yourself longing for this delicious treat, here is the recipe that I use when baking these cookies.

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 ¼ cups of all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) of softened butter
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- ¾ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- 2 cups of chocolate chips

#### DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Combine flour, baking soda, and salt in a bowl. Beat butter, granulated sugar, packed brown sugar, and vanilla extract in a large bowl. Add large eggs one at a time. Gradually beat flour mixture into butter, sugar, and vanilla mixture.
3. Drop rounded tablespoon amounts of dough onto ungreased baking sheets.
4. Bake for 9 to 11 minutes or until golden brown.
5. Allow to cool for 2 minutes on a cooling rack.

Now you can enjoy your warm cookies with a cool glass of milk in order to make your day just a little less stressful. Share them with friends or family. Maybe even giving them to a neighbor or someone going through a tough time. Everyone should be able to enjoy some fresh cookies. Not only are these cookies the most delicious treats, but they also fill our hearts with happiness.

## Perspective From The Stage

### How PR Students Feel While Performing

ELISE DUCKWORTH STAFF WRITER

As we get down to our last month before the first Mamma Mia performance, the nerves are beginning to kick in for all the performers. To perform, especially in front of a high school audience, can often be frightening. It is a moment in which you are extremely vulnerable. While it is absolutely terrifying, it is also the most fun you will ever have.

I have been acting since the age of 5, and yet nerves still bother me. It can be terrifying to portray someone else, especially if you have trouble understanding the character. Some line you might say are lines that you know someone would never say in real life. It is your job to make it sound realistic and believable. You may receive a costume that makes you feel self-conscious, and you have to act as though it's your favorite outfit. Confidence plays a huge role in the process of acting. And while I've listed a few negatives about the acting experience, there are so many amazing things.

One thing I have always treasured is right before you step onto stage for your first show. You stand behind the curtain, as hundreds/thousands of people await your entrance. In that moment you take a deep breath, step out, and feel the bright lights hit you. Its petrifying, and exhilarating.



*Front Row: Sophomores Bella Fritz and Elise Duckworth as young Anna and Elsa*

would ever be performed by students in front of an audience. As young Elsa, I remember my and Bella Fritz's (young Anna) first entrance. The second we walked out, we saw the first row of seats and that was it. It was the most exciting moment and the second we left the stage, we both began crying. It was unlike anything we had ever experienced.

In 2019, with the acting company Jeter Backyard Theater, my competitive team flew to Atlanta, Georgia.

An audience of over 6000 eager students, directors, and Broadway performers awaited our performance of Frozen Jr. It was the first time Frozen

(link to performance-  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vvmd9NfxhkE>)

Since that day, my love of performing never faltered. Sophomore Aubrey Myers has been in 18 shows in her six



*PR Musical's pit orchestra standing in the pit, photo by junior Mackenzie Mercuri*

years of acting. Many performers like Aubrey, get so into the state of performance, they don't even recognize the audience in front of them. "You don't realize there is an audience until you take that final bow and see the audience. You get into such a mindset of being this one character, for me at least you forget that you're in front of an audience and you get transported into this world that you portray to the audience." Aubrey is also in the high school musical this year. "With Mamma Mia being such an intricate show, and being the first ever jukebox musical I've ever done, I am a bit nervous. However, it's a lot of fun and the cast is amazing. The seniors are very talented and everyone just fits the roles they were given perfectly, so I know we will all do amazing," she said. Having a cast to support you, is so important. The Mamma Mia cast being so tight knit, allows for all members to be comfortable on stage.

Junior, Mackenzie Mercuri is doing her first year of pit. The pit works incredibly hard to give all of the music for the show. "This is my first year playing in the pit orchestra and it is definitely a lot of work. There are so many songs to learn, especially for Mamma Mia. Even though it's a lot, I've had so much fun so far! Everyone is so talented and it's really cool to hear the music come to life. I'm super excited for when it all comes together, and I can't wait for the shows," she said.

Although being an actor or in pit can be stressful, students have a lot of fun being engaged in this fun activity.

## CONTINUED...

### What is a jukebox musical?

**A:** A musical in which the songs within the show are well known songs. For Mamma Mia, Abba wrote the music for the show.

Junior Jake Pazin, who plays Sky in Mamma Mia, also gave insight on what it feels like to perform.

“When performing, you get very nervous, and often those nerves affect the shakiness of your voice and can make you forget your material. This is very scary. The most nerve-wracking part I ever played, was Damien from Mean Girls.

With the show being put together in 5 days, I felt less prepared,” he said.

For performers, nerves can be hard to control.

However, as the show goes on throughout the night, performers become more and more confident.

Performance of any kind is demanding. So now, I challenge people to consider. Could you be a performer?

*Picture of Mamma Mia Performers from above the stage, photo from PR Musical's Instagram*



## Phone Eats First

CALLE HENNE STAFF WRITER



## Popular Snacks Over the Years

### *Evolution of Favorite Foods*

IZZY BANJAK STAFF WRITER

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Starting off with the 80's... their favorite snack was Jello

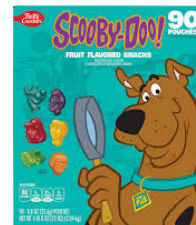


was chocolate.

Now with the 90's, their favorite was a mini snack called "Dunkaroos." Now I know some of us may not know what these are, and I didn't at first either, but I'm here to tell you. They're a cookie-like snack produced by Betty Crocker. The idea is for the cookie to be dunked in the icing instead of it already being on the cookie. They come in a small little pack that most kids put in their lunches and these are still made today.



Next up is the 2000's. The best snack to have in this decade was "Gripz." These are made by Cheez-It and normally have a cheesy flavor. They're mini crackers that are almost a mix of Cheez-its and goldfish. But they can also come in other flavors, like cinnamon and chocolate chip. Gripz are only sold in small rectangular bags but are still sold today.



Now on to 2010's favorite snacks... Scooby-Doo Snacks. They're based off of the hit show Scooby-Doo and since it's popular, the fruit snacks were too. They're basically just fruit snacks with the shapes of the characters on the gummies.

Lastly, 2020's most popular snack. During the Covid times everyone turned to the Hostess cupcakes. They're packaged cupcakes but instead of the icing on top, they're filled with an icing.



## Childhood Classics

### *Growing Up With Your Favorite Foods*

ELLA BARKLEY STAFF WRITER



If there's one thing that happens as you grow up, it's that you miss the snacks you ate as a child. Whether it be your after school snack after you got off the bus, the snack your mom packed you on your way to your soccer practice, or even just classic snacks that you lived off during the summer, we can all agree that we miss them. When you see a picture of a certain snack, it can easily bring you right back to the summer of 2013 where our diet was made up of most of these foods.

Starting off strong are the Flavor Ice popsicles that every kid would eat. There were ranges of flavors in your eyes that would light up when you saw the arrangement of different colors to choose from. Even if you tried to savor the popsicle, it was always gone in an instant. Although it was always a struggle trying to find scissors to open up the popsicle after it had been sitting in the freezer waiting for you to eat it.

Next up are Fruit Roll Ups and Fruit by the Foot. I'm sure that at one point in your childhood you at least had a taste of one of these snacks. With Fruit Roll Ups, you would always try to get the tattoos to stick on your tongue and show all your friends in the cafeteria at lunch. And with Fruit by the Foot, unrolling the long snack from the paper it was attached to and trying to shove it into your mouth the fastest was always a competition. These two never disappointed.

Following two classics are Capri Sun's, what every kid wanted at their birthday party. This drink was always a hit in the summer sitting by the pool or just eating outside on the porch. There were so many flavors to choose from that it was hard to pick which one was your favorite. No wonder we miss this popular juice so much.



CONTINUED...

From here comes Gogurts, the beloved snack that kids would enjoy at any time of the day. Gogurts were loved by all kids and still are. Most would either have a funny joke or a cartoon picture on it which made the kids love them even more. And on top of all of this, you could even freeze them and eat them as a nice sweet treat after playing outside in the sun all day.

And last but not least are Teddy Grahams, a cracker that would satisfy any kid's hunger. Teddy Grahams came in many different flavors for a great variety for kids. The cherished bear shape of each one was something so unique to a kid that made them so memorable. They were definitely a staple for on-the-go trips and outings.



When you think back to your childhood, I'm sure that these snacks and drinks definitely bring back tons of memories. These foods were so memorable. Sometimes it's best to go back in the past and reflect on some of your favorite things as a kid. Hopefully this article brought back some good memories and reminded you of your favorite snack. It's never too late to run out to the store and pick them up.



Amateur Tries Making Cupcakes

Sorry Mom, I Guess the Cooking Gene Didn't Get Passed Down

ADDISON BARNES DESIGN EDITOR

My baking skills are decent, but my cupcake decorating game needs work. Case in point: my attempt at making homemade royal frosting turned into a soupy mess. Following a recipe may sound simple, but it's trickier than it seems.

I was inspired by Gracie Abrams' "Mess It Up" music video. She keeps making the same pink cake over and over again because she keeps on dropping it which symbolize her messing up her relationship, but she's willing to fix it



Addison Barnes's Cookie, photo by Addison Barnes

Now, you might be wondering what my mom has to do with any of this. Well, she's a kitchen wizard, except when it comes to making chili—I won't spill that secret. Meanwhile, I seem to have inherited her love for cooking but not her skill.

Going back to my Valentine cupcake vision: imagine mini heart-shaped delights with swirls of pink and white icing, topped with pink, white, and red heart sprinkles, plus a hint of raspberry puree.

On baking day, armed with icing, cake mix, and cookie mix, instead of baking on Valentine day like I planed, a classmate of mine said why not bake the day before so you can give them out to your friends on Valentine day.

I had to divide my bowls because I was making gluten-free cupcakes and sugar cookies. I then decided to tint them both pink and molded them into hearts.

As for the icing, my plan for white and red icings turned into a beautiful pink blend, but not without a lesson learned about filling piping bags. Mix the color before putting them in the bags; if you try to mix the color after you put the icing in the bag you are going to have a huge mess, which was stressful because earlier that day the cleaners came to my house, and my mom made sure that she tell me the kitchen must look how it did before I started baking.



Addison's mini heart cupcakes, photo by Addison Barnes

Once everything was baked, it was time to decorate. Each cookie and cupcake has a pink icing base, sprinkled with white pearls, shimmering pink and white, pink hearts, and white sprinkles. After a brief wait for the icing to set, the cookies were ready for sharing, while the cupcakes chilled in the fridge.

The verdict? A batch of beautifully decorated treats that won over friends and fellow enthusiasts.

# Pine Richland’s Favorite Restaurants: Which is the Best?

MADDY HOMER STAFF WRITER

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I sent a google form out to the entire school and asked for their opinions on what restaurant is their favorite. The form included the following options: Texas Roadhouse, Olive Garden, Longhorn, Applebees, Eat N’ Park, Ichiban, Melting Pot, Hard Rock Cafe, Sir Pizza, Cracker Barrel, Emilianos, Buffalo Wild Wings, Cheesecake Factory and an option of other so that you could vote for a non listed restaurant. There were 33 responses.

Ichiban came tied in first with 20% of the votes. Sophomore Isabela Pader expressed, “It tastes good and it is entertaining.”

Junior Tiffany Gathers said, “Good food and a show.”

Junior Madison Hogan says, “The hibachi is amazing and the chicken is fire.”

“I love Ichiban due to its entertaining chefs and great food. My family also goes on special occasions, making this specific restaurant my favorite,” said freshman Teagan Rich.

“I really love their crab rangoons, and I think the tricks and techniques the hibachi chef’s use are entertaining and make a memorable experience,” said senior Julianna Abraham.

Olive Garden was also tied for first with 20% of the votes.

Junior Ojas Santpure said, “They have good food and free breadsticks.”

Freshman Katie O’Neill says, “Olive Garden has always been known for a great Italian meal and family friendly atmosphere. Tradition has always been a strong part of the experience as each meal starts with soup or salad and their patented breadsticks.”

“I think nothing hits more than a great bowl of pasta, a steaming bowl of soup, a crisp salad, and a bunch of hot, juicy breadsticks,” said freshman Cameron Wincko.

Cheesecake Factory came in second with 11.4% of the votes.

Sophomore Addilyn Nichols explained, “The cheesecake is so so good.”

“The cheesecake is obviously my favorite,” said senior Jordan Becker.

Eat N’ Park was tied in third with 8.3% of votes.

“Their breakfast food is very good, and not overpriced. Good for a chill night out,” says junior Chase Lavezoli.

Freshman Gilany Metos Nunez says, “I love eating breakfast and I love how they give you free cookies.”

“It has a homey feeling to it and is good for more casual dining,” said senior Melanie Kratz.

Texas Roadhouse was tied in third. Freshman Thomas Tecnh says, “The rolls and steak are delicious.”

“The food, the music, and the dancing,” said sophomore Faith Kellogg when asked what she liked most about Texas Roadhouse.

Buffalo Wild Wings was tied for fourth with 5.6% of the votes.

Sophomore Chase Ogden said, “The wings are top tier.”

“I love all of their food. Especially the wings. Every time I go there, I get the next spiciest thing on the menu,” expressed freshman RhiAnna Crader.

Applebee’s was tied for fourth place.

Senior Hunter Petzuk says, “It’s close to where I live, cheap, and has a wide selection of good food. Overall, Applebee’s very convenient.”

“Food is cheaper than others and it’s a good place to go with friends,” said sophomore Mackenzie Dry-Henich.

Bravo had 2.8% of votes. Sophomore Annabella Orlando said, “It has some of the best Italian food and everyone there has always been beyond kind to my family.”

Chipotle had 2.8% of votes. Junior Addison Barnes expressed, “Chipotle is just so delicious right after a workout.”

Primanti Bros had 2.8% of votes.

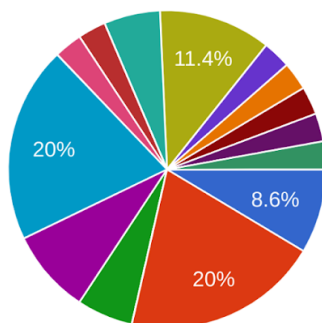
“Their cheese fries are heavenly,” explained freshman Tatiana Statina.

Supremo’s Pizzeria had 2.8% of votes. “They have french fry pizza that’s really good and have really good breadsticks,” said sophomore Kahler Salva.

Melting Pot had 2.8% of votes. “It is a different style of dining, with the fondue and cook top at your table,” said junior Calle Henne.

Which restaurant is your favorite?  
35 responses

- Sir Pizza
- Texas Roadhou
- Cracker Barrel
- Olive Garden
- Emilianos
- Long horn
- Buffalo Wild Wings
- Applebees
- Cheesecake Factory
- Eat N’ Park
- Supremo’s Pizzeria
- Ichiban
- Primanti Brothers
- Melting Pot
- Bravo
- Hard Rock Cafe
- chipotle
- Wendys





## If You're Hungry...

### What is Truly the Best Fried Chicken Chain?

JACK HADLEY STAFF WRITER



## POPEYES

Last weekend on a trip to Virginia I was able to try Raising Canes for the first time. After finishing my chicken it got me thinking what restaurant chain has the best fried chicken. I decided our contenders will be Chick-Fil-A, KFC, Raising Canes and Popeyes.

KFC comes in last place for me, while their chicken is greasy which is nice sometimes but I would say it's a bit overdone here. While their breading is one of my favorite's their chicken quality is good I would say but certainly not great. Even with my criticisms a bucket of fried chicken really does hit the spot occasionally.



Next entry is Chick-Fil-A, now before you get mad if this is your favorite let me elaborate.

Chick-Fil-A would rank higher for me if this was just purely on my

favorites of these but this list is exclusively

about chicken therefore the sauce, Mac and Cheese, Fries, Salads, Milkshakes, and more don't affect the list.

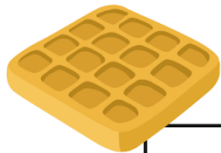
Either their chicken is still top notch and the chicken itself might be the highest quality of chicken. The only thing that hurts Chick-Fil-A is that sometimes it lacks a bit of the flavor of our next two and can seem just a bit dry sometimes. It's also easiest to criticize them since this is where I personally eat the most.

Taking silver we have Raising Canes. Like Chick-Fil-A not having their sauce included takes a toll on them, also their texas toast is phenomenal texas toast. Either their chicken alone is amazing. I would say their chicken is the most homemade style which they use in their favor.

And finally the best fried chicken you can get, at least in my opinion , goes to the Louisiana Kitchen, Popeyes. Whenever I think of what perfect fried chicken tastes like it's popeyes for me. Their chicken not

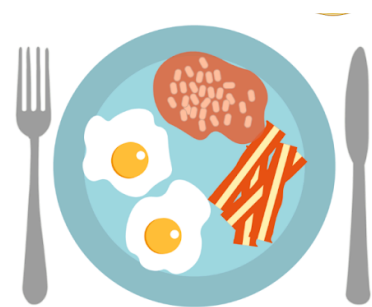
only tastes high quality but is filled with flavor every bite.

But these are just my opinions, where do you think you can get the best?



## Breakfast Foods

F	C	S	A	U	S	A	G	E	N
M	H	E	G	X	C	Z	K	J	P
U	O	P	R	E	G	G	S	U	X
F	P	V	A	E	O	I	M	I	W
F	O	Y	J	N	A	S	I	C	A
I	J	Z	O	I	C	L	L	E	F
N	A	N	N	G	T	A	K	D	F
O	M	Q	U	R	U	C	K	L	L
W	B	A	C	O	N	R	E	E	E
J	R	U	T	O	A	S	T	M	S



Word list:

BACON  
CEREAL  
EGGS  
JAM  
JUICE  
MILK

MUFFIN  
PANCAKES  
SAUSAGE  
TOAST  
WAFFLES  
YOGURT





## Foreign Foods

### *Delicious Foods the U.S is Missing Out On*

LILLY REMBECKI STAFF WRITER

The U.S.A is probably the most diverse country there is on this planet, being a mixing pot for lots of different cultures from all over the globe. However there still seems to be masterpieces that Americans are missing out on.

This article will be a little bit biased, being that I come from Germany and most of the food I'll talk about is German. Starting off with the best food I have ever tried, the "Doener." This dish can be considered to be both Turkish and German.

After WW2, Europe was really disheveled, and as result a lot of Turkish people migrated to Germany. The guy that made the first modern style Doener, Kadir Nurman, took inspiration from a already existing Turkish dish where stacks of seasoned sliced



Photo of a doner kebab

meat were cooked on a horizontal rotisserie and combined it with a other ingredients like a bread (Pide), lettuce, tomatoes and many other vegetables that you can choose, topped with garlic sauce. Nowadays Doener is so popular, no matter how small a town is, it will have a Doener shop 99% of the time.

Another absolutely delicious food we have in Germany is a pastry called "Berliner." Depending on where in Germany you are, they may be called differently like "Kreppel" or "Pfannkuchen."

Berliner often get confused with a Polish pastry called Paczki and I get why, but after trying the Giant Eagle ones, I can point out a few significant differences.

I also found the history of the Berliner on Wikipedia. Sugar was very costly until the 16th century, and early doughnuts were usually stuffed with savory fillings like cheese, meat and mushroom. When imports from Caribbean sugar plantations made sugar more affordable, fruit preserves gained in popularity. In 1485, the first German-language cookbook to be published in printed form Kuechenmeisterei was published in Nuremberg and remained in print at least until 1674 with 20 editions (it was later translated into Polish in 1532).

It was one of the first cookbooks printed using the Gutenberg press and contains the first known recipe for a jelly doughnut, called Gefüllte Krapfen made with jam-filled yeasted bread dough deep-fried in lard. It's unknown whether this innovation was the author's own or simply a record of an existing practice.



Photo of Berliner pastries

Compared to Paczki, Berliner are a lot more lightweight. Paczki (at least the ones sold in the U.S.) are filled with more of a thick, sugary version of jam, while Berliner are filled with the actual light, less sweet and less processed version of it. So if you ever ate a Giant Eagle Paczki and thought they were way to sugary or hard to eat, try a Berliner instead (I'm not biased, my dads family is Polish).

Hopefully this article inspires you to try a new food. America is missing out on a lot of cuisine, so try something you've never tried before.

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FAJITA KIT TACO KIT NACHO KIT

## Thirteen Hot Takes on Food

### My Opinions on Different Foods

MARIANNA ZAHORCHAK STAFF WRITER

#### 1. Soggy Fries are Better than Crispy Fries, Specifically in Our Cafeteria

Starting off strong with this one, my dear friend, sophomore Nikita Nevzorov and I have argued many, many times at lunch over this exact subject. Somehow, he believes that the burnt, crunchy, teeth-grinding, dark-brown fries are the holiest of all foods. I, on the other hand, believe soggy fries are simply the way to go. Most people would probably disagree with both of us. However, the scale tends to tip slightly more in Nikita's favor due to the fact that I also think soggy fries are better than the supposedly perfect, golden, crispy fries.

Listen, listen. I hate the texture of perfectly cooked fries. The potato becomes dry but the outer coating remains soft. It's nasty. Soggy fries, alternatively, are typically soggy because they're greasier (at least that's the case if you're getting them from McDonald's). That extra grease provides a more salty taste which I quite enjoy. I mean, truly, who enjoys the flavorless fries that you have to put your own salt on because the fast-food workers don't wanna make it "too salty"? Nah man, I want that salt and I want it from the restaurant – table salt never tastes as good, and not having salt as a whole takes the joy out of the fried food experience.

Now, I know what you're thinking – "Okay, maybe that's understandable for McDonald's fries, but the school cafeteria fries are terrible when soggy, Nikita's right." Allow me to return to my original point – medium-cooked fries are dry and gross. The soggy fries have such a more satisfying texture. At least, you have to admit soggy fries are better than burnt ones. The grating sound of teeth crunching the burnt cafeteria fries literally makes me shudder.



*Fry Mountain of the School's curly fries, photo by Marianna Zahorchak*

#### 2. Hot Tea Trumps Iced Tea Every Time

I honestly didn't think this opinion was that controversial until I casually brought it up to my lunch table, expecting responses of agreement, and instead receiving hurt, deer-in-headlight stares, filled with confusion and anger from everyone around me.

So, I guess I have some explaining to do.

Iced tea tastes so bitter, no matter which flavor you buy. Lemon iced tea may be the only exception and even then people manage to mess it up at least half the time. Then, after the ice melts, it's all over – you go from bitter to just plain sad; it becomes like drinking soda water – the acid without the fizz or sugar. Disgusting. Even adding sugar makes iced tea worse; it just tastes wrong.

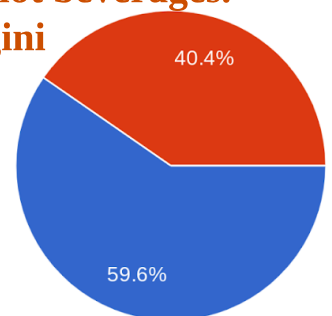
Hot tea, on the contrary, is enjoyable in any one of its many varieties of flavors. I, for one, have a strong liking towards black tea and raspberry herbal tea. Hot tea leads to relaxation and serenity; it soothes the soul. Plus, it can be a great source of caffeine, yet doesn't contain an excessive degree, unlike coffee or energy drinks. I absolutely adore hot tea and drink it almost every morning during the school week. In addition, adding sugar to hot tea makes it – *shockingly*, or rather, expectedly– sweet, as nature intended it.

Seeking validation, I sent out a Google Form to all the students in our school to see what they had to say.

**“Iced beverages, regardless of current weather conditions, are far superior to hot beverages due to their drinking versatility. While waiting time is required for a hot drink to cool to tolerable temperatures and it is difficult to regulate their temperature, cold drinks can be consumed right away and can be kept cold to be consumed later without worry of keeping them too hot or cooling down and having to be reheated like is a common issue with hot beverages.”**

**–Sophomore Davin Biagini**

● Iced tea  
● Hot tea



CONTINUED...

**“Hot tea is GROSS.” –Sophomore Natalie Stewart**

“While they can theoretically both be enjoyed year-round, outside of their intended drinking seasons, I usually have a bigger craving for iced tea than I ever do for hot tea. I also think the flavor is also better when it is cold.” –Freshman Cameron Wincko.

“I don’t understand how people like iced tea. Like the coldness of the tea takes away from the tea flavor. IT RUINS THE TEA.” –Sophomore Sammy Vacula.

Perhaps Senior Drew Thomas said it best, claiming that “Iced tea and hot tea have entirely different functions; it feels wrong picking one over the other.”

Many students made sure to mention that hot tea and iced tea are each best for own their respective seasons: winter/fall and spring/summer. Overall, however, the majority decided that iced tea is worthier than hot tea.

**3. Oh, and by the Way, I Microwave my Tea.**

Forgive me, okay? I don’t own a tea kettle, and I see no reason to buy one. What else do you want me to do?

**4. Coffee Makes Me Cry (Literally)**

This one’s a little more common – my distaste for coffee. It’s bitter, and just like tea – its partner in crime– it’s even worse when you add ice to it.

A few weeks ago, I went to a cafe with my friend, Sophomore Sammy Vacula. They knew I didn’t like coffee but wanted me to give it another go.

“The way your face turned pale almost instantly was hilarious. While I will admit the coffee was a bit bitter, calling it a disgrace was bonkers. Coffee is so good; I don’t know how you don’t like it,” Vacula said.

To further execute my point, allow me to share a story. It was my second time at Barnes & Noble, and dinner time had arrived. My stomach rumbled beyond regulated levels, and although I behaved warily due to my disliking of coffee, I figured there had to be something that wasn’t a form of java which I could buy to quench my hunger. I ended up ordering a pizza pretzel and, essentially, the disappointing little brother of a milkshake; I don’t remember its official name, but it lacked the ice cream and substituted it with nothing but more milk. Blegh. The drink had the consistency of a grainy, wet disaster and failed to provide proper sweetness for a beverage of its denomination.

The pizza pretzel wasn’t much better, seeing as it had the most artificial cheese sauce known to man. After witnessing my struggle, my mom felt bad and wanted to cheer me up, so she decided to let me try a sip of her iced coffee, claiming it was

“sweet.”

It was so bitter, I cried.

**5. Speaking of Coffee, I’m Not Afraid to Drink Straight Coffee Creamer**

Coffee may not be the big whoop everyone makes it out to be, but coffee creamer? Man, coffee creamer is the BOMB. And the best part is, no matter what java-inclusive event you find yourself at, the little creamers that go with it are always free! Though I have full awareness of that fact that plain creamer tastes kind of... off, I think that may be the reason I like it, actually. Boring old milk (specifically, the skim milk I’ve suffered through my entire life) has never “done it” for me. Sipping mini coffee creamers like a fancy British person drinking tea? –Now that’s my jam.

**6. Eating Hot Chocolate Right Out of the Packet is Surprisingly Fun**

This one wasn’t my idea, okay? You could say I got peer-pressured into it... but I don’t regret my decision, nonetheless. I know it seems strange, but honestly, if you’re a fan of chocolate, there’s no reason for you not to enjoy such an indulgence. Yes, it does look a little funny when you stick a spoon into a hot chocolate pouch in public spaces, so if you do choose to give it a try, I’d recommend waiting until you’re at home, or surrounded by friends who will support your questionable (but delicious) lifestyle.

**7. Warm Milk is Therapy in a Cup**

I don’t understand why there’s such a stigma around this one. Heating up milk makes all the icky cow flavor melt away– just throw it in the microwave for 45 seconds and voila: you got yourself a cup of comfort. Warm milk truly does soothe the soul; it’s so calming and has the ability to induce sleepiness and gentle thoughts right before bedtime. Even my dog loves it. You ought to give it a try.

**8. Ripsticks are the Best School Cafeteria Food**

Hear me out here. Nobody is willing to allot the ripsticks the time of day since all they see is two little breadsticks with oddly colored sauces. Those students lack the vision. They lack the ambition needed to try new foods – and they’re severely missing out because of it. The spicy sausage dipping sauce? So good. Chef’s kiss. If you don’t believe me, find out for yourself, and I hope that you’ll be pleasantly surprised, humbled, and cultured.

**9. I will Publicly Cut my Sandwich with a Fork and Knife**

(story continues on next page)

**CONTINUED...**

“Nikita becomes a caveman as soon as he sees those two utensils of evil next to a sandwich in perfect condition, deciding violence is the only option.” –Sophomore Maksim Cenk

“It’s bad. Don’t do that.” –Sophomore Chris Lattari

Let’s be reasonable here, okay? Let me explain. See, I love putting an outrageous amount of dressing on sandwiches, and even I’ll admit that the sight of it is slightly repulsive. Nevertheless, I simply don’t enjoy sandwiches if they’re as dry as sand, and unfortunately it takes an excessive portion of dressing to enrich the bread into its proper state of softness. This is especially true when it comes to the sandwiches in the cafeteria. Because of this, my hands often become drenched in Italian dressing. Not fun. So what do I do to avoid this? It’s quite simple: I stop using my hands and opt for their more civilized fork and knife counterparts.

**10. I Don't Break the Kit Kat (Also Kit Kats are Overrated)**

Calm down! Well actually... I'm fully aware of how bad this action is, yet I do it anyway. So honestly, you have every right to want to tear me to shreds. But, like all the opinions listed here, I have my reasons for not making the break. Call me crazy, but I believe some bogus-sounding remark of my own fabrication that the chocolate-to-crunch ratio of a Kit Kat is better prior to its breakage.

As for why Kit Kats are overrated, I have my grandma to blame for causing me to think as such. She used to bring me a Kit Kat almost every day –a kind gesture on her part, but eventually I got sick of them. Four years later, I still haven't recovered.

**11. Steak is Overrated Too**

Bear with me, please. Hopefully you can make an exception seeing as my father is allergic to all poultry (including chicken, turkey, and any other bird), as well as fish. So basically all we eat at my house is beef and pork. For some, that may sound like Heaven, but personally I am a huge fan of chicken. Steak is good, but I don't get the big deal about it. Maybe I've just grown sick of it. I still enjoy it, but honestly, I'd much rather eat something else most of the time –something like chicken, perhaps.

**12. Thanksgiving Food is the Most Bland Food on the Planet**

I seriously thought that people around the nation shared this opinion, but as it turns out, opinions are slightly more split than I had expected. With a perfect tie between “it has some flavor but it’s nothing special” and “it’s good and flavorful,” Pine-Richland students have concluded that Thanksgiving food is mediocre and not all it’s sometimes hyped up as.

“I love me a good turkey indubitably” -Sophomore Matthew Gilardi

From my own humble point of view, the turkey is typically dry unless you get lucky or slather it in gravy, and for the most part, everything else is just plain vegetables slapped on a plate. What’s so special about it? I get that it can evoke comfort, and honestly I don’t hate the meal as much as I may let on, but you’re nuts if you think the food served during Thanksgiving is the best, most flavorful food you’ve tasted in your life.

**13. Salads Become Finger Food if They Don't have Dressing (or Anything Goopy, for that Matter)**

Using my hands to eat a salad follows the same thought process as using a fork and knife to cut my sandwich, only in reverse. See, for whatever reason, I cannot eat a salad like an evolved human being. It’s a struggle. But, there is a light that shines its way through the darkness – salads without dressing. I won’t lie to you, sometimes I’ll eat lettuce straight out of the bag. It’s so much easier that way. Forks just were not made for salads, I’m sorry. I promise it’s not as horrendous to witness as you may imagine.

Welp, since I’ve officially set myself up to be hated by absolutely everyone for one reason or another, I guess I ought to say my final, solemn parting words now:

1. I greatly appreciate you listening to my point of view regarding these tendentious food-related topics. My biggest hope is that by writing this, I have made at least one of you feel a little less weird or a little more understood in this world. Thank you for your time.

Overall, do you think the food served during Thanksgiving time is bland?

52 responses

