

Ben & Jerry's Homemade

Ben & Jerry's Chocolate Fudge Brownie
Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough sitting in the freezer
Warm light in my kitchen, three bowls at the table
My brother, my dad, and me eating chunks
0 years, 5 years, 10 years, together eating ice cream

Ben and Jerry, college dropouts, selling ice cream
Ben & Jerry's Homemade, Chunky Monkey ice cream
from gas station to every supermarket in America, the Americone Dream
Care in every scoop and pint, workers, communities, Brewed to Matter
Saving the world one pint at a time, Change is Brewing

Ben & Jerry's Foundation, Salted Caramel Brownie
Giving back, 7% every year, Chocolate Therapy
Showing everybody how to do it
Survive in capitalism, Fossil Fuel
Give back to everyone, Brewed to Matter

Making mistakes like everyone else, Rainforest Crunch
Owned by Unilever, against best wishes, Economic Crunch
Businesses, learn from Ben & Jerry's Homemade
Not just a black square on social media, The Tonight Dough
Taking action, one pint at a time, tangible action ice cream.

Three pillars of business, Caramel Cheesecake Brownie
Good product, tasty ice cream, Cherry Garcia
Making money, gaining profit, Urban Jumble
Giving back, one by one, donating and caring, Phish Food
Look at Ben & Jerry's doing work, copy it, make it better.

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The purpose of this poem is to connect my own memories about Ben & Jerry's, Ben & Jerry's' story, business model, what they're doing right, and urge other companies to copy it. It was really important to me to include a personal touch because I have so many Ben & Jerry's related memories with my dad and my brother, and that's what inspired me to research Ben & Jerry's. I'm a strong believer in what Ben & Jerry's is doing with social activism, and I want it to become the normal business model.

I chose a free verse poem because it gave me the most freedom. Ice cream is a very childish food, and a free verse poem allowed me to best express the association between creative freedom, not taking yourself too seriously, and childhood. I would consider everytime I name drop a flavor an allusion. When I sat down to write this poem, I knew I really wanted to include Ben & Jerry's' flavor names. A lot of them are very creative and they express Ben & Jerry's' morals. I tried to choose the flavor names with a lot of purpose. The line "Making mistakes like everyone else, Rainforest Crunch" is a reference to the fact that with the flavor Rainforest Crunch, Ben & Jerry's failed to successfully integrate their social justice initiative. Some are not as obvious such as "Three pillars of business, Caramel Cheesecake Brownie." I chose to use Caramel Cheesecake Brownie because I wanted a flavor with three words in it to represent the three pillars of business. I also attempted to play rhyming and repetition. In the second and fourth stanza, the last word of the first two lines are the same. In the third paragraph, I almost ended the second line in "brownie" but none of the flavors made sense with the line so I tried my best at a rhyme with "therapy." The reason I didn't focus on repetition in the first and last stanzas is

because it felt like a way to open and close the poem. It made those stanzas stand out. I also felt as if the middle three stanzas were more about Ben & Jerry's story than the first and last stanzas so it was a way of differentiating the stories I was telling.

I haven't written poetry in a long time, and I've never written a poem that was based on research: only angst-y, sad poems about my own feelings. It was interesting to figure out how to tell a nonfiction story through poetry. It made me think harder about the purpose and intent behind the flavor names. Poetry is very calculated, and I think Ben and Jerry's' flavor names are the same. It was interesting to learn more about all the flavors, especially the flavor graveyard, which I didn't know existed. While this poem may not be my best work of art, it stretched me as a writer, thinker, researcher, and ice-cream-eater in ways I didn't even know was possible