

MGI Narrative Research

Guiding Question: Who are Ben and Jerry?

Article Title: “Passing the Scoop; Ben & Jerry”

Author(s): Claudia Dreifus

Publication: *The New York Times*

Central Idea: In an interview with Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield, the author finds out about their past, their future, and the inside scoop about Ben and Jerry’s ice cream.

Information:

- Jerry is quiet, thoughtful. Ben is louder.
- Jerry is married with a 7-year-old (now 31). Ben is divorced with a 4-year-old (now 27).
- Ben = autocratic, hard to please, not communicative, intimidating, conceptual, independent, not up for routine.
- Jerry = practical, risk taker, routine oriented.
- Ben + Jerry are both Jewish.
- “The fact we were both fat, unathletic and outside the social mainstream. The first time I saw Ben, the gym teacher was yelling at him. [...] Ben likes arguing with authority figures. It was a revelation to me that anybody would do that.”
- Ben has a bad sense of smell. No sense of smell = no sense of taste.

Guiding Question: When and where did Ben and Jerry meet?

Article Title: “How We Met: Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield”

Author(s): Rosanna Greenstreet

Publication: *The Independent*

Central Idea: In an interview with Ben and Jerry, the two men tell about how they became friends, their motivations for their business, and where they are now.

Information:

- “I met Jerry running around the track in seventh grade gym class. We were the two slowest, fattest kids in the class. I liked him because he was funny and smart, and you could count on him.”
- Jerry lived with Ben in NY after college—they were the bad kids of their group.
- Started Ben and Jerry’s with \$6,000.
- They are still best friends—they go out together, hang out together.
- Ben had the idea to package up and sell their ice cream to restaurants and grocery stores.
- “Ben and I met when we were 13 years old. We were the slowest, fattest kids in gym class. Everybody else was running around the track, way in front of us. The coach was yelling at us and Ben was yelling back; I thought that was extremely entertaining.”

Guiding Question: Why did they decide to open an ice cream business?

Article Title: “Ben & Jerry’s is Turning 40. Here’s How They Captured a Trend That Changed American Ice Cream”

Author(s): Merrill Fabry

Publication: *Time*

Central Idea: Over the past 40 years, Ben and Jerry’s Ice Cream has shown the highs and lows of ice cream trends—and they keep on going.

Information:

- They originally wanted to open a bagel shop, but it cost too much.
- “When the machinery costs for bagels were too high, they instead invested in a \$5 course in ice cream making at Penn State (famously attended by ice cream makers of all sizes).”
- There was a huge market for super premium ice cream—Haagen-Dazs was already a huge competitor.
- They renovated a gas station in Vermont
- They made a bunch of different things originally-soups, crepes, etc.
- Their goal was down home wholesomeness.
- They expanded to deliveries in 1979 and spread across the U.S.