

**January  
2013**



# Opinions

**The  
Cornerstone**

**Thoughts and opinions expressed by the  
students in the Beginning Composition  
class at Cornerstone Tutorial Center.**

# And the winner is...

## M&Ms

---

### Seth Hernandez

Halloween is in the air, I can smell it!" Do you want those "trick-or-treaters" smiling at your door? If you want to hear a gasp of pleasant surprise when you give them their favorite M&M flavor, continue reading. However, if you wish to be a killjoy or "party pooper", read no further than this period.

The jaw-breaking mint M&M, quite the disappointment, had an unbreakable exoskeleton. Finally, after you sledgehammer the shell open, you find disappointingly dry chocolate. Its strong peppermint odor is enough to make a mint lover sick.

If you enjoy explosions of taste, the coconut M&M is right for you. Once you bite past the hard shell, you experience tropical perdition. Both my partner and I loathed this grotesque M&M. On the other hand, if you do enjoy vomiting, stay and eat them!

The pretzel M&M, twice the size of the original M&M, is absolutely delicious. Within its crunchy shell is a salty chocolate-coated pretzel. With nearly half the amount of sugar and fat, it is by far the healthiest of the samples.



Unlike its salty counterpart, the dwarfed peanut butter M&M comes in Halloween colors. This highly addictive chocolate's shell has the perfect balance of brittleness. Once past the crunchy exterior, you encounter all-embracing bliss. On that Halloween night, when the zombie recites the old rhyme, this moist chocolate and peanut butter will not only get you a smile, but also a whole-hearted thank-you.

---

**"The greatest deception men suffer is from their own opinions."**

**~ Leonardo da Vinci**

---

# “Bleh” Jelly Beans

---

## Natalie Birchett

Have you ever bought an assortment of Jelly beans at the store, and didn't want to go through ALL of them because you may eat the most disgusting jelly bean ever? Sadly, I have gone through all of them and had some of the worst jellybeans ever! So for your benefit I have compiled a list of the worst jellybeans that you would be wise to avoid.

Let's start with the worst fruit jellybeans shall we? I found that the watermelon was simply too sweet. Though it almost tasted like other watermelon candies, it didn't taste like a real watermelon. The one good thing that they did with this jellybean is that the outside was green and brown, so it actually looked like a watermelon. Now we go on to the next fruit flavor, Peach. It was too tangy for peach. And it didn't even taste like peach! Again the only upside was the coating. If I were to design a peach coating for a jellybean, I would have done it the same way.

Now we move to the grossest candy-flavored jellybeans. Cotton Candy, for starters, was simply tart and didn't have a distinct taste at all. And the taste didn't even relate to cotton candy. But when I saw the coating, I immediately knew it was cotton candy. Tutti-frutti tastes of bubble gum, of course, but just didn't really taste that good. If you do really like bubblegum, I'm sure you would like tutti-frutti. Black Licorice was one of the worst jellybeans I have ever had! The only good thing was it tastes like real black licorice, which I despise in the first place. (Plus it has an aftertaste that could kill a baby hedgehog.)

Now here are the three most random and gross jelly beans that I have ever tried. Toasted Marshmallow is very odd. It almost tastes like vanilla ice cream. Very different from Toasted marshmallow as you can imagine. But it leaves a slight taste of some weird vanilla-ish flavor. And now for Dr. Pepper: I'll say right now that I like Dr. Pepper as a soda. But there are some jellybeans that they simply should not make, and Dr. Pepper is one of them. The flavor seems to be the same



but it just tastes different than the soda. Plus you definitely don't want to get this jellybean mixed with the Chocolate Pudding jellybean, because they look exactly the same! Buttered Popcorn is perhaps the most repulsive jellybean ever! Don't get me wrong. I Love Popcorn, but this is just wrong. They have disgraced the holy (real) buttered popcorn. It tastes like moldy butter and with some bad vanilla. And for once the coating doesn't look like popcorn. Shouldn't it be a plain light yellow? But instead it's some molted yellow with white. Right as I was chewing this jellybean I almost threw it up. So AVOID this Jellybean at all costs!

I hope you have heeded my warning about these Jellybeans that I think are so disgusting. If you haven't heeded my warning, you are in for a displeasing journey in the evil jellybean world of “Bleh.”

---

**I have opinions of my own,  
strong opinions, but I don't  
always agree with them.”**

**~ George H. W. Bush**

---

# Candy Coma

---

## Catherane Helm

Got a sweet tooth? We're going to compare three candy bars: Hershey's Dark Chocolate, Snickers Dark, and Milky Way Dark. With Halloween just around the corner, buying candy is the most important part, other than buying your Disney Princess dress or Batman costume. We're going to help you decide which of these three competitors is the best choice for that crazy, spooky night.



The first competitor is Snickers Dark Bar. We found that snickers was too bulky and a ghastly combination. When we tested the nutrition facts, we found it losing our candy health check with 250 calories, total fat 12 grams and 24 grams of sugar. The appearance a dull purple and dreary covering with what I guess they think is appealing. In our eyes, this is not something you would want to give out on that Halloween night.



The second competitor is the Milky Way Midnight Dark bar. The taste was delectably sweet and mouthwatering. For the Milky Way, the calories are at 220, total fat at 8 grams and sugar at 29 grams. The packaging was marvelous! In the race for best packaging, it won our race by far, with spooky dark colors. This candy bar is perfect for that creepy night.



Last but certainly not least! We have the Special Dark mildly sweet Hershey's bar. Unfortunately our taste buds differed. While one thought it was amazing with a delicious, pleasant and divine yet simple taste, others thought it was flavorless, bitter, dull and just downright nasty. We decided it won our health race with just under 190 calories, fat at 12 grams and sugar at 24 grams. But it did come in second with the packaging race with a sharp and classic look.

So the choice is up to you, but in our eyes it was a tie between the Milky Way Midnight Bar and the classic Hershey's Bar. So on this chilling Halloween night, the candy overload is all in your hands.

---

**“Opinions alter, manners  
change, creeds rise and fall,  
but the moral laws are written  
on the table of eternity.”**

**~ Lord Acton**

---

# Sports

## Athletics Build Character

---

### Sam Branch



Athletes everywhere, whether they play football, soccer, or tennis, are known for their strong character. While there are many exceptions to this, most people who participate in a sport come out stronger, more charismatic people when their career ends. Whether one plays little league baseball or professional basketball, you can see a marked difference in the way athletes carry themselves.

First, athletes learn to fight through adversity. Heartbreaking losses, bad performances, and the constant hounding from coaches teach players of all ages to be tough mentally and

physically. Adversity is a given in any sport, nothing is easy. The way you react to difficult situations reflects on how you will react on adversity away from the field or court.

Next, athletes learn to be apart of something bigger than themselves. Even individual sports like Golf and Tennis teach you how to conduct yourself with professionalism and grace toward opponents. Team sports are vital in revealing how to work with others to reach success.

Finally, athletes learn to be leaders. At any given time, whether someone ahead of them goes down with an injury or they assume the reigns at the start of a new season, an athlete is called on to lead his or her team. Through struggles and success, the experience a person gains at the helm of a team helps them later on in life. It teaches them how to carry others, solve problems, and be dependable.

As you can see, being an athlete means more than just participating in a sport. It teaches lessons that you can't learn from a textbook, lessons that can be applied to everyday situations and become part of someone's character for the rest of their lives.

---

**“There are as many opinions as there are experts.”**

**~ Franklin D. Roosevelt**

---

**Martin Luther  
King, Jr.**

**“Our lives begin to end the day we  
become silent about things that matter.**

# Who's the Best Player in the NBA?

---

## Allonzo Trier

The biggest debate in the world of basketball has nothing to do with which team will win the NBA finals this year. It is all about individual success. Kobe or LeBron? What about Durant? Is Derrick Rose not the reigning league MVP? Are Wade and Nowitzki not Finals MVPs? The questions are endless, but the debate can be solved with an in-depth look inside the numbers.

### Kevin Durant & Derrick Rose

The first thing you have to figure out is: What does it mean to be the best player in the NBA? For me, to be the best player in the league, you must have proven success over a long period of time, up to date dominance, and stats to back you up. Kevin Durant and Derrick Rose are great players, but the best player in the NBA will always be a veteran. Everyone knew that Michael Jordan was great when he averaged 28 points per game in 1984, but he did not truly become the best in the game until 1991 when he won his first championship. Neither Durant nor Rose have led their team to a championship and they are yet to accomplish many of the things that other players in the league have been able to do seasoned.

### Dwyane Wade & Dirk Nowitzki

In my opinion, the Finals MVP is the most satisfying award that a basketball player can receive. It is a testament to the fact that you have proven yourself on the NBA's biggest stage. Dwyane Wade and Dirk Nowitzki have both done that and will be inducted into the Hall of Fame after they retire. Three years ago, I would have put Wade at the top of this list. Now, however, it is a totally different story. Neither of these players is able to dominate the league over the span of a 90-100 game regular and postseason the way they did earlier in their careers.

### Kobe Bryant & LeBron James

Kobe Bryant and LeBron James are undoubtedly the two best players in the game today in my opinion. Bryant has 5 championships, while James has 1 championship and 3 consecutive MVP's. Both players have their pros and cons, as Bryant does not dominate in every aspect of the game the way that James does, but LeBron is yet to prove to the world that he can win multiple NBA championships.

### The Best Player in the NBA

The deciding factor is this: Kobe's advancing age has allowed LeBron to become that most impactful player in the game year in and year out. According to ESPN's advanced stat calculator, LeBron James' Player Efficiency Rating (PER) has been the Highest in the NBA each of the past 5 years. In addition to that, his postseason numbers are rated higher than Kobe's for each of the past 3 years. People may not like LeBron for many reasons, but there is no way that you can dispute his amazing talent and consistent production.

So in my opinion LeBron James is the Best Overall Player in the game of basketball today.



# Life Issues

## Elections

---

### Devin Scrivner

Two men argued and tried to belittle one another in a debate a few days ago. These men both have a notion that if they were elected or reelected that they could change the political crisis we have had for years. These two men could politically and physically change our nations, life as we know it. It is our job as a united nation to make the right choice for our Nation and our families. These men are known as President Obama and Governor Romney.

The problem is which man would be a substantial leader for the United States of America. In each debate President Obama has given agreeable answers to all the problems that the United States of America had these past years. Governor Romney thinks he could fix these problems, but he hasn't given evidence that he would be the right person to be President. Most people didn't like President Obama's choices he made as our President for the past four years, so as an American, we have a hard decision to make.

We should pray for our nation and our decisions. It only takes one person to mess up our Nation, so we need to consider our decisions greatly. Help your children's future and others to come. You can make a difference in the lives of trillions of people. 30,000 kids



won't even live through tomorrow, while we take every thing we have for granted. This is why this presidential election is important. Over 900,000 kids suffer abuse. That's just in America, the land of the free the home of the brave. This is where 34% of the children in America have to face life without their biological parents, so basketball and rap stars become their role models. So it's your choice to make things right for your country. What will you do to help?

These are just a few major problems we have. The question is: Who is the right person to lead us and our nation through the struggles we are going through? This election, be wise and choose carefully. It's up to you to pick the best person for the job. May your election day be a good day for you and your nation.

---

**“Opinions cannot survive if one has no chance to fight for them.”**

**~ Thomas Mann**

---

# Gun Control

---

**Ethan Wright**



If we lose our right to bear arms, then what's next? Well first off, we have the right to bear arms, The Constitution of the United States second amendment says, "A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."

Gun control is only hurting the good people. I am against gun control because of many reasons. One: if someone broke into your house, how would you defend yourself if you were not allowed to own a gun?

Secondly: serious criminals don't care how they get a gun, nothing will stop them. You can't take away other people's guns and expect all of the problems with guns to go away. Yeah, it "sounds good" if we get rid of all the guns. Then there will be no more shootings, but this is not a perfect world.

Three: if the government takes our right to bear arms, then where will they

stop? In the attack at that movie theater in Colorado many people were killed. With what gun control we have, the man responsible still got his hands on a gun. According to numerous news web sites, the night after the attack some of the survivors went to get a concealed carry license so that if that ever happened to them again they can defend themselves. I personally feel safer knowing that there is a gun in our household so that if someone broke in, my family and I are not helpless.

Ask yourself; do you feel safer knowing there's a gun around? Maybe you do maybe you don't. A lot of people say that guns only kill people and that's why they are bad, well guns also protect people.

I hope you learned something from what I have told you and if you ever have to vote for a gun control law in your town I hope you think about what I just said.

Guns don't kill people; people kill people.

---

**Popular opinions, on subjects not palpable to sense, are often true, but seldom or never the whole truth."**

**~ John Stuart Mill**

---

# Why You Should Use Life Jackets

---

## Angel Hoffman

A few years ago, I witnessed a devastating drowning in an Oklahoma lake. A young boy (12–15 years old) was swimming across the lake with his younger brother. Neither of them had a floatation device of any sort. My brothers and I were sitting in the shallow water waiting for our parents to set up camp since we had just arrived. I remember seeing the two boys swimming across as fast as they could, as though they were racing. One minute they were both having lots of fun and the next minute the youngest boy was by himself calling for his brother who was nowhere to be seen.

The boy, unfortunately, didn't make it back up in time. That experience will always remind everybody who was there that witnessed it, to wear their life jackets and be safe. Yes, life jackets and other life preservers are sometimes uncomfortable to wear, but it is even more uncomfortable when you are sinking, while water is filling your head instead of oxygen and you can't come back up. What would you do if you started drowning and nobody was around to save you? It is, of course, your choice whether you should risk drowning or swim safely. But, just imagine how scared you would be while you were drowning, helplessly; and imagine how your family would feel if you were to drown.

Many people think they are so good at swimming that they don't need to wear life jackets; and yes, they may be very good, but they still have a possibility of drowning. In October of 2010, an Olympic swimmer drowned while competing in a 6-mile swimming event near the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates. Fran Crippen was an amazing swimmer, but sometimes swimmers get tired and can't catch their breath. He probably never expected to drown, especially since he had trained long and hard and had won many medals. You will never know when it could be you drowning, so you should go ahead and wear life jackets, just to be safe.

Also, if you are a person who likes to do risky dares and tricks, such as jumping off a cliff into the water, you can still wear a life jacket and still have the same amount of fun! Many people tend to get over excited and that can sometimes cause drownings, but while wearing a life jacket you



won't have to worry about going under for more than one second.

There have been many drownings all over the world because people don't take their necessary precautions. Initially you might think you are able to swim over long periods of time and lengths, but you eventually might find out that you weren't strong enough after all and there might not be anybody around to help you. Who will save you if you are in the middle of a large body of water and nobody is anywhere around you? The other people you were with or the others in or around the water might not be able to notice you were helplessly going under and you can't scream for help since you have no breath left. What would you do as the water was horrifyingly sucking you under? As the oxygen in your lungs starts to run out and the water pressure is squeezing you while you are being tossed around like a football, you will wish you had worn a life jacket. Hopefully, you will never be in that situation, so just to be safe, you should wear a life jacket and encourage your family and friends to wear them for their safety

---

**“Men who borrow their opinions can never repay their debts.”**

**~ Edward F. Halifax**

---