

African American Experiential Report: *Grits*

Prompt: Shop for and cook grits, and document the experience, including talking to a person who has cooked grits before.

Guest Expert: [Jack Prater](#)

Sample student reports:

- [T Kratter](#)
- [E Green](#)
- [C Adkins](#)
- [C Jones](#)
- [J Hirsch](#)

Sample student reflection on how the experience of making grits connects to their own research question

“When I was talking with my Opa about the way he makes his grits with butter and honey, he was extremely passionate that I make it this way. He described how the butter softens the grits and the honey creates the perfect sweet taste. More importantly, he said that his mom knew how to make them perfectly, and that his friends would sometimes come over on Sundays to eat grits with him. He said only his mom could make grits with the perfect consistency and he tries to replicate her recipe because he has nostalgia for those Sunday mornings. This human interaction is passing down a recipe from one generation to another, and ultimately, he passed down the same recipe to me with pride. He said that he loved making this exact recipe with his mom for his family and friends as they talked about random topics of conversation in the kitchen. I now have this same pride in grits with honey and butter that my Opa has.

This pride in a dish, simply because it is passed down from your family is directly related to my research question about family delis. The need for delis to maintain the same food environment and same dishes may not necessarily be because these dishes are the best, but because it provides the restaurant workers with nostalgia the same way grits does with my Opa. This nostalgia for the meals in your childhood, and the human interaction and family pride that came with these meals is an aspect that I will focus on in my oral history as well as when finding

artifacts, as according to my Opa, this nostalgia is the result of the human interaction of passing down pride of meals.”

B Hutchens

“A moment that stood out to me from that conversation was my grandmother explaining how frequently they ate grits when they lived in the South because of how accessible and easy they were to make. At the time, my grandparents had two young sons, so grits was an easy-to-make meal that was easy for their busy family, especially for my grandmother who was alone much of the time when my grandfather was in the Navy. I noticed this similarity between my grandmother’s story about grits and our guest speaker, Mr. Prater’s, story about grits and how both of their families used them because of how simple and quick they were to make and hearty to eat. Grits added a small element of ease into their lives, which speaks to the power of simple foods and food in general in the daily lives of people.”

E Younger

“... I talk about oral immunotherapy in my research question. Right now, some of the nuts I eat come in powdered form that I mix into food. I mixed these nuts into grits for the first time, and the novel flavors seemed to lessen the negative emotions associated with eating my allergen. In a sense, the food itself was a form of caretaking.”

T Kratter