

## Moments and memories

When you think of the last four years, what comes to mind? If I asked you to encapsulate your high school experience in one sentence, could you do it? What about one paragraph? One page? How many words does it take to define one of the most formative times of our lives. Well, I've got 785 left and I'm in that conflicting position of having too much yet, at the same time, nothing at all to say. We are leaving our friends, our homes, and our families — some of us for the first time. Whether you are rejoicing for this breath of fresh air or dreading the departure, the change is inevitable.

Alone, I will never surmount this challenge. I could share the tired cliches or some personal anecdotes, but I've got a better idea. I've asked a few of my friends to share whatever they want. Without any restrictions, the responses ranged from serious musings to half joking asides. Just be sure to take all of these with a grain of salt.

A few people threw out some quick tidbits of advice. From Renee Liu '19, "You only live once until you live again." I'm honestly not sure what that means but it sounds fun. Griffin Clevenger's '19 was a bit easier to understand, when he said "just remember, don't always prioritize your grades over a good time."

I got similar comments from a lot of people. It can be easy to get caught up in the little things but, as long as you don't completely put school on the backburner, the experiences, relationships, and memories from high school outweigh everything else.

"Good times matter," Meredith Wenzler '19 said. "You'll forget about missing assignments and failed tests, but good times with good people, you won't forget... well, unless it was a really good time, then you might forget."

Rose Williamson '19 gave me rather odd and very specific advice to share: "drink lots of water." I never thought of sharing something like that in here, but I wholeheartedly agree.

Another short statement I find ringing true is that "senior year actually sucks butt... don't believe anything you hear," thank you Sarah Bellovich '19.

Now, that may be a bit of an exaggeration, but there is a lot of hype surrounding senior year being fun filled and completely relaxing. I would describe it as a lot more bittersweet, and, most of the time, it's still high school. Speaking of high school, David Langenburg '19 had a nice bit of prose to share.

"The average student: looks at the clock, glances out the window, fixates on the exit, or stares at the person in front of them," Langenburg said. "For a moment, you might think the average student is fairly distracted in the classroom, but it's really not the classrooms fault; school is just boring."

Thankfully, there was some positivity surrounding the last four years. Westin Bate '19 was bold enough to share some thoughts that actually paint school in a very kind light.

"High school for me was a time to really learn and form relationships with teachers and friends," Bate said. "It taught me how to learn for the sake of learning and to really love the material I was studying."

Alice Williamson '19 wanted to say that "the friends I met at South are wonderful and great and I'm lucky to have them all." She especially wanted to give a shoutout to Zach Heimbuch '19, the renowned homecoming king, and Meredith Wenzler '19, who tried her best.

Alice's sentiment reflects my feelings about the last four years. There have been countless wonderful times and maybe as many that downright sucked. We have grown, changed, and, hopefully, matured. We have made mistakes but experienced great successes; however, it is not these failures or fulfilling moments, nor the moments of triumph or defeat, that I will remember most. Instead it is the people who have created a lasting impression - the friends that I have made.

I'll break up all this pondering and advice with a little story from cross country that Adam Sloan '19 gave me.

"One time we went into the woods at a cross country meet and found a dying tree," Sloan said. "We did the only reasonable thing and cut it down with deer bones. It almost fell on someone's leg."

This is a little bit concerning so join the cross country team at your own risk.

In all seriousness, if you'll allow me to wax cliché about high school, the end of senior year leaves me with a sense of ambiguity. There are so many people I have become close with whose influence I'll never forget and whose friendship I'll always cherish. At the same time, I don't know half of you half as well as I should like, and I like less than half of you half as well as you deserve (kudos if you get the reference).

Now it's time to move away, grow apart, and drift into each others' memories. It's sad; there is no doubt about that. I'll miss the familiar faces, the inside jokes, and the place I've called home for the past couple years. Even more so, it is exciting - a time to build our identities, prepare for the rest of our lives, and have a damn good time.

I'll leave you with a quote from my friend George Burke '19: "eight high schools and South sucked the least; shoutout to the lunch gang."