



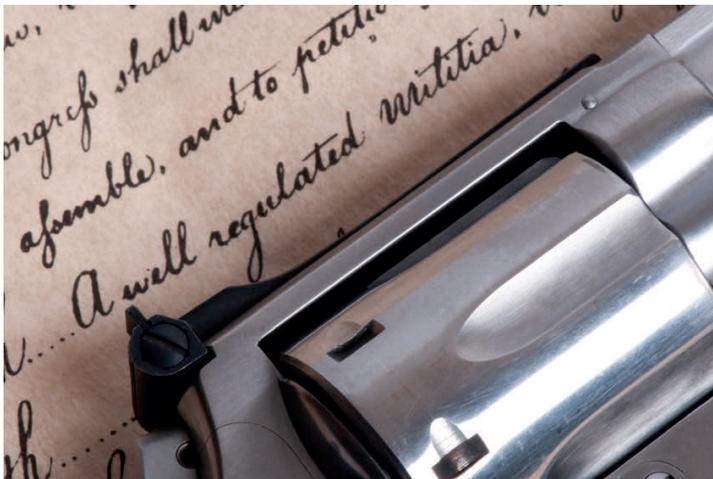
Should the U.S. have stricter gun regulations?

GETTING ORIENTED

The weekly passage covers some issues related to gun ownership. Here is some information that might be helpful to students less familiar with the topic.

Second Amendment

The Second Amendment to the United States Constitution is part of the Bill of Rights. This amendment protects the right of people to “keep and bear arms.” This means that everyone in the United States has the right to own a gun except under particular circumstances. This amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution in 1791 at the same time as the other amendments in the Bill of Rights. For many years, this amendment was interpreted in a variety of ways. Originally, people did not have guns unless they were in the military or if they needed them for hunting. Different states made their own laws regarding the use of guns. Since some Americans feel strongly that owning a gun should be against the law, the Supreme Court reviewed the Second Amendment in 2008. At that time, the Supreme Court upheld the notion or idea that individuals have the right to own guns for use according to the law.



Gun Laws

There are also gun laws in each state in the United States. These laws regulate or control the sale and possession of both guns and ammunition, such as bullets. It is important to know these different laws if you are traveling with a gun in your possession. Some states recognize permits from other states, but some do not. State and local police departments are only obligated or made to follow state and local laws; they do not have to enforce the federal gun laws. Some states require individuals to register their guns, but others do not. Most states require permits to carry a concealed, or hidden, weapon. There is also a United States law from 1996 that bans the access to firearms by people convicted of crimes of domestic violence.

The Gun Control Act and The Great Society

The Gun Control Act (GCA) of 1968 is a federal law that was signed by President Lyndon Johnson. It was part of an overall program to promote or help develop a “Great Society”. The goals of the Great Society reforms were to eliminate or get rid of poverty and racial injustice. The Gun Control Act regulates both firearms owners and people in the industry. It was inspired by the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Malcolm X but was not passed before the further assassinations of Robert F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King. The law tries to get guns out of the hands of people who might use them unwisely. The Gun Control Act regulates sales of guns across states and keeps drug users, people convicted of serious crimes, and people found mentally incompetent from buying guns.



Should the U.S. have stricter gun regulations?

EVIDENCE AND PERSPECTIVES

	<i>Some may have this view:</i>	<i>But others may think:</i>
Gun owners	Gun owners may want people to be able to own some types of guns for hunting or for protection. However, they may still think other types of guns are too dangerous and should be restricted. Some gun owners, though, are willing to go through more careful checks and would support tighter regulations to make sure that dangerous people do not get guns.	Some gun owners feel that owning guns is their right as American citizens, as well as an important part of their culture. They are proud to be gun owners. They do not want the law changed in any way and worry that, if regulations are made tighter, the government would eventually take away all guns. These people may also fear they will not be able to protect themselves.
General public	Many people feel that guns should be more restricted because of the number of murders and other crimes committed with guns. They may feel that the constitutional amendment should be revised or changed since it was never meant to allow people to use guns the way they are most commonly being used. They know that other countries have stricter gun laws, and they know that statistically there are many fewer murders in those countries.	Many people believe that it is a core American right to own guns and that the government should not interfere. They may feel that it is more important to focus on catching criminals than on restricting guns. They may feel that it would be too difficult to keep guns from criminals, even if there were stricter regulations on guns.
Police	Guns are involved in many of the violent crimes that police officers deal with. When a police officer is killed while trying to stop a crime, it is usually by gunfire. Some police officers want to change how easy it is to get guns so that they will have less risk of being shot while doing their job.	Some police officers think that, if people have guns, that could stop some crimes. If criminals think that a person might have a gun, they might not want to rob or attack them. This could mean that police officers see fewer crimes being committed.

Additional Information

- Between 36-49% of U.S. households own a gun.
- Gun owners say they own guns for protection against crime (60%), hunting (36%), and recreation or target shooting (21%).
- There is significant evidence that regulations aimed to prevent children from accessing guns reduce the number of suicides and accidental deaths.
- Most murders in the United States are committed with firearms, especially handguns.

Gun Control Facts

<http://www.justfacts.com/guncontrol.asp>

Studies of Gun Policy Effects

<https://www.rand.org/research/gun-policy/essays/what-science-tells-us-about-the-effects-of-gun-policies.html>

Gun Violence in the U.S.

www.nij.gov/topics/crime/gun-violence



Should the U.S. have stricter gun regulations?

ANNOTATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Features of Academic Text: *Varying Word Choice*

Academic writing requires that students learn to vary their choice of words and phrases that need to be repeated. When explaining different perspectives - a common writing task in school - effective writers will use some of the highlighted words and phrases for "they think."

- Some people believe....
- They argue that...
- Those who favor gun control note that...
- The dominant reasons people give...
- Opponents of gun control state that...

Ask students to think of other ways that a writer could introduce a perspective. For example:

- They contend that...
- It's their argument that...
- They remind us that...

In December 2012, Adam Lanza shot his mother with her own gun, stole her other guns, and proceeded to Sandy Hook Elementary School. He shot through the locked doors with a semi-automatic rifle and **subsequently** fired 154 bullets in under five minutes, killing 26 people.

The guns Lanza's mother owned were purchased legally. **Some people believe** we should have gun control laws in our country that make it harder to obtain certain kinds of guns. However, opponents of gun control note that the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees citizens the right to "bear arms," or carry weapons. **They argue that** the founding fathers wanted people to be able to use guns to defend themselves.

Those who favor gun control note that when the Second Amendment was passed, the typical gun was a revolver pistol (Figure A). It held six bullets. In comparison, Lanza's gun, which looked like Figure B, could shoot dozens of bullets. Gun control supporters argue that if high-capacity guns were illegal, **schemes** like Lanza's would have resulted in many fewer deaths. **The dominant reasons people give** for owning guns are personal safety, hunting, and sports activities. Semi-automatic guns are not meant for hunting or simple self-defense.

Most developed countries have stricter gun control laws than the U.S. They require safety courses, universal background checks, gun registrations, and waiting periods to buy a gun after requesting one. In contrast, these regulations are not in place in many U.S. states. The rate of gun-related deaths in the U.S. is about 5 times higher than in

Canada, 12 times higher than in Australia, 41 times higher than in the United Kingdom, and 177 times higher than in Japan. According to a report **commissioned** by the FBI, 67.8% of U.S. homicides involved guns.

Opponents of gun control state that "guns don't kill people, people kill people." Gun control will only keep guns out of the hands of law-abiding citizens. Even if guns like Lanza's were illegal in the U.S., criminals could illegally **import** them. Without guns, innocent people would be defenseless against these criminals. After the Sandy Hook shooting, the president of the National Rifle Association stated, "The only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun." He proposed arming teachers to combat school violence.

Figure A



Figure B



Do guns help ensure our safety, or do they create more danger? Should there be limits on gun ownership? What kind of gun would you need to protect yourself? Would you need a gun at all?



Should the U.S. have stricter gun regulations?

GENERATING WORDS

Roots

Can you figure out the meaning of the root **seque**?

- Have you ever eaten too much and subsequently felt sick?
- Have you ever had to follow a **sequence** of steps in order to do something, like a dance routine?
- Have you ever had a **consequence** for doing something that you weren't supposed to do?

 What do all of these words have in common? Turn and talk to a partner and try to figure out the meaning of the root **seque**.

If you report out to the class, try one of these sentence frames!

We think **seque** means _____ because _____.

Based on what we know about all of these words, we determined that the root **seque** must mean _____.

How about the root **miss**?

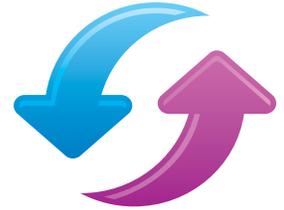
- When was the last time your English teacher **commissioned** a paper from the class?
- What are some weapons that fire **missiles** at their targets?
- How do you know when you are **dismissed** from class?
- Have you ever watched a spy movie where the spy was sent on a **mission**?

 What do these words have in common? Turn to another partner and try to figure out what the root **miss** means.

If you get the chance to share with the whole class, try one of these sentence frames!

We determined that **miss** may mean _____ because _____.

Though we are not sure, it appears that **miss** might mean _____. We think this because _____.



Should the U.S. have stricter gun regulations?

DEVELOPING DISCUSSIONS

Connecting Cause and Effect

When you work with cause and effect statements, it helps to think of the cause as the **WHY** and the effect as the **WHAT**.

For example:

→ **CAUSE:** Since the U.S. Constitution says people have the right to own a gun,

→ **EFFECT:** lots of people in the U.S. own guns compared to other countries.

Now use this chart to write more cause and effect statements. You are asked to write the effect. Try to use academic language that is logical. Avoid simply writing your personal opinion.

Cause	Effect
Since people want to protect themselves,	_____ .
Since the gun industry in the United States is large and gives many people jobs,	_____ .
Because guns are dangerous,	_____ .
Since people are allowed to carry a gun in some places in the United States,	_____ .
Since guns are sometimes left unlocked in homes with children,	_____ .
<i>Try to create two more:</i>	
_____ ,	_____ .
_____ ,	_____ .

Cause and effect statements work equally well when you put the effect first in the sentence.

For example:

→ Lots of people in the U.S. own guns because the the U.S. Constitution says people have the right to own a gun.

 With a partner, rephrase the cause and effect statements in the chart above so the effect comes first in each sentence. Practice saying both versions out loud.