

More Guns, Less Crime?

Worksheet A

1. In which of the following situations would you expect somebody to use a gun?

- To defend oneself against an intruder in the house.
- In self-defence against an attacker on the street.
- To protect a child from a kidnapper.
- To hunt animals
- To show that he/she is not afraid of the law
- For sport

2. Read the text and prepare a summary to read to your partner.

Does allowing people to carry guns lead to more gun-related crimes and accidents? University of Chicago law professor John Lott has come to a firm conclusion: more guns mean less crime. Lott has studied the FBI's crime figures for 18 years and has found that most popular assumptions about gun control are wrong. Here are five arguments he uses to support his theory:

1. Laws that allow people to carry guns are very cost-effective methods for reducing crime.
2. A victim who resists with a gun is less likely to be injured by a criminal than a passive victim.
3. Road accidents, fire and drowning result in more child deaths than gun-related incidents.
4. When law-abiding citizens are allowed to carry firearms, it results in the reduction of violent crime in high crime urban areas and neighborhoods with large minority populations.
5. Laws permitting guns cause a significant decrease in murders, robberies and rapes.

3. Summarise your part of the text to your partner who will be taking notes.

4. Listen to your partner's part of the text and take notes.

5. Decide what idea you are going to support and fill in the chart.

Guns allowed		Guns banned	
For policemen	For others	For policemen	For others

Share your ideas with the class.

6. Agree or disagree with the following statements.

- Guns and too much violence on TV have direct influence on gun-related crimes.
- Rap music lyrics spread the idea that it is "cool" to carry guns.
- Computer games stimulate aggression and encourage people to use real guns.
- Air guns, toy guns and any replicas should be banned completely.

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Worksheet B.

1. In which of the following situations would you expect somebody to use a gun?

- To defend oneself against an intruder in the house.
- In self-defence against an attacker on the street.
- To protect a child from a kidnapper.
- To hunt animals
- To show that he/she is not afraid of the law
- For sport

2. Read the text and prepare a summary to read to your partner.

Contradicting Lott's opinion, Dale Gulbrantson, executive director of Illinois Police Association states: "Lott destroys the politically correct argument that arming law abiding citizens will have a harmful effect on their society".

The following examples speak for themselves.

In 1996, Dunblane, Scotland, UK, a madman killed a whole class of primary school children and their teacher.

In 1999, two teenagers in Colorado, USA killed 12 of their fellow students before taking their own lives. In 2002 in Germany, an expelled schoolboy killed several of his former teachers and classmates. On New Year's Eve, 2002, in the UK, two teenage girls were killed in a suspected gang shooting after they stepped outside for a breath of air during a party.

Although there are tough laws controlling guns in Great Britain, the number of crimes where guns are carried has increased (from 4,900 in 1997-98 to 7,400 in 2001). The current average sentence for carrying an illegal gun is 18 months. There are plans to include a five-year minimum sentence for the illegal possession of a firearm in the current criminal justice bill. It has also been suggested that air guns or any replicas that can be converted into a lethal weapon should be banned, as 75% of the weapons Scotland seizes on the streets are adapted air guns.

On the other hand, the sentence could add between 5,000 and 10,000 to the present prison population of 72,000 in Britain.

3. Summarise your part of the text to your partner who will be taking notes.

4. Listen to your partner's part of the text and take notes.

5. Decide what idea you are going to support and fill in the chart.

Guns allowed		Guns banned	
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Teacher's notes.

Procedure:

1. Start with the following statement:

In Britain it is illegal to have a gun without a license; even most police officers don't carry guns.

2. Ask the questions:

Are guns legal in your country? Are they easy to get? What is the maximum sentence for carrying an illegal gun?

3. Ask Ss to comment, after group discussion:

4. Give every member of the pair text A or B and ask Ss to read the text and prepare a summary for their partner. While listening to the summary, student B takes notes and vice versa.

5. After looking through their notes Ss choose the opinion they are going to support then ask Ss to put their ideas into the corresponding column of the table and then Ss share ideas comparing results.

6. Discuss the statements with the class or in pairs or groups.

Follow-up writing activity.

Ask the students to write a letter to either Professor John Lott or Dale Gulbrantson, executive director of Illinois Police Association, giving your opinion and presenting your arguments.

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(Complete text for teacher)

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- Road accidents, fire and drowning result in more child deaths than gun-related incidents.
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What is the way out?