Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Pefanis Criminology

**Gun Control Overview**

**History-**The term gun control as it is used in the United States refers to any action taken by the federal government or by state or local governments to regulate, through legislation, the sale, purchase, safety, and use of handguns and other types of firearms by individual citizens.

The political and social debate over the question of how much gun control is appropriate has been an extremely polarized one for several decades. In recent years, the 1999 Columbine High School massacre, the 2007 shootings at Virginia Tech and other subsequent school shootings have pushed the gun control debate further into the public eye. Among the special interest groups that lobby the government on either side of the issue, the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence and the National Rifle Association are the most renowned groups that hold influence over many groups and organization.

**Your Essay Task**

1. Why is the US such a violent nation? (Ideas should be a combination of claims from the film and your personal opinion-use ideas from handouts)
2. What is your position on gun control- are you for or against restrictions on guns?

-What do you believe the interpretation of the Second Amendment to be?

- Will gun control reduce or increase crime/safety in the US?

- What type of restrictions do you agree or disagree with? (Who should be allowed to have them, types of guns, amount of bullets, where can they possess these weapons, how do they lose these rights)

-What is your position on background checks? What type of checks should be allowed?

**Important Concepts and Definitions Related to Gun Ownership Rights**

Feel free to focus your essay’s argument/position by using the following terms below.

**Assault Weapons:** As defined by federal legislation, this term refers to semi-automatic weapons (guns that fire a round of bullets with each pull of the trigger). As defined by gun rights advocates, only fully automatic weapons (guns that continue to shoot until the trigger is released) should be considered assault weapons.

**Background Checks:** Investigations into the background of potential gun buyers, intended to prevent the purchase of firearms by potentially dangerous criminals. Depending on legislation, these can be "instant" or may require a waiting period.

**Concealment:** Carrying a loaded weapon that is not visible.

**Straw Purchases or gun shows:** Sales of guns by individuals who are not licensed firearms dealers; such transactions are sometimes exempt from gun control regulations such as required background checks (this is known as the "gun show loophole").

**Special Interest Groups:** Non-governmental organizations that advocate for or against changes in public policy; also known as lobbying groups.

**Second Amendment**

**Right to bear arms-** what does this term mean to you?

**Well-Regulated Militia:** A disputed term used in the Second Amendment: gun control advocates interpret it to mean a disciplined, organized army under government control; gun rights advocates interpret it to mean any person trained in the use of firearms.

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| CATEGORY  | **4 - Above Standards**  | **3 - Meets Standards**  | **2 - Approaching Standards**  | **1 - Below Standards**  | **Score**  |
| **Focus or Thesis Statement**  | The thesis statement names the topic of the essay and outlines the main points to be discussed.  | The thesis statement names the topic of the essay.  | The thesis statement outlines some or all of the main points to be discussed but does not name the topic.  | The thesis statement does not name the topic AND does not preview what will be discussed.  |    |
| **Support for Position**  | Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement. The writer anticipates the reader\'s concerns, biases or arguments and has provided at least 1 counter-argument.  | Includes 2 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement. Evidence is clear and profound. | Includes 2 pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement. Evidence is weak and may be inconsequential. | Includes 1 or fewer pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences).  |    |
| **Evidence and Examples**  | All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author\'s position.  | Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author\'s position.  | At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the author\'s position.  | Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.  |    |
| **Accuracy**  | All supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.  | Almost all supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.  | Most supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.  | Most supportive facts and statistics were inaccurately reported.  |    |
| **Sequencing**  | Arguments and support are provided in a logical order that makes it easy and interesting to follow the author\'s train of thought.  | Arguments and support are provided in a fairly logical order that makes it reasonably easy to follow the author\'s train of thought.  | A few of the support details or arguments are not in an expected or logical order, distracting the reader and making the essay seem a little confusing.  | Many of the support details or arguments are not in an expected or logical order, distracting the reader and making the essay seem very confusing.  |    |
| **Closing paragraph**  | The conclusion is strong and leaves the reader solidly understanding the writer\'s position. Effective restatement of the position statement begins the closing paragraph.  | The conclusion is recognizable. The author\'s position is restated within the first two sentences of the closing paragraph.  | The author\'s position is restated within the closing paragraph, but not near the beginning.  | There is no conclusion - the paper just ends.  |    |