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Auszug aus:

Guns and Gun Control in the USA

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Titel:	Guns and Gun Control in the USA
Reihe:	Facts, Fiction and Controversy about Gun Controls
Bestellnummer:	71517
Kurzvorstellung:	<p>Entgegen geläufiger Meinungen haben auch die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika Waffengesetze. Dennoch sind diese vor allem durch den zweiten Zusatzartikel zur Verfassung deutlich weniger streng als anderswo in der Welt. Diese aktuellen Arbeitsblätter geben Ihren SchülerInnen anhand allgemeiner Fakten zum Waffenbesitz und zur Kontroverse in den USA einen gezielten Einblick in diese Thematik.</p> <p>Die Schüler können den Inhalt selbständig erarbeiten und das individuelle Lerntempo jeweils anpassen. Dies gewährleistet die Binnendifferenzierung ohne gesonderte Aufgabenstellung.</p>
Inhaltsübersicht:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work sheet 1: Gun Control Laws – Fact or Fiction?• Work sheet 2: Gun Control Laws – A controversial Topic• Solutions

Gun Control Laws – Fact or Fiction?

For Germans, the gun control laws in the United States often seem quite unusual. In order to get to know more about the gun control laws in the United States, do the following tasks.

1. Read the following statements. Which ones do you think are true? Which ones are false? Discuss with your partner and mark your opinion on the left.
2. After discussing the statements with your partner, read the text on the next page (M1) and mark the correct box on the right. Were your guesses correct?

I think this statement is...		Gun Control Laws in the United States – Fact or Fiction?	This statement is...	
true	false		true	false
		In all states, it is illegal to carry a firearm onto university grounds.		
		Stand-your-ground laws permit people to use force, deadly force if necessary, to defend themselves and their property, even if standing down would not result in loss or injury.		
		Individual gun owners are required to report lost or stolen firearms to the authorities.		
		In California, background checks are not required for private sales of firearms.		
		In Colorado, teachers are allowed to be armed with a firearm at school and during classes.		
		In Tennessee, employees are allowed to bring their gun to work if they leave it in the trunk of their car.		
		In 36 states in the USA, you do not need a permit to purchase a firearm.		

Gun Control Laws – A controversial Topic

1. Read the following opinions about gun control laws in the USA.

M1: The NRA – A strong lobby

The National Rifle Association (NRA) belongs to the oldest stakeholders of the USA. It was founded shortly after the American Civil War. At first it aimed to help the general population in handling and using arms in an appropriate and safe manner, preferably by practice. The reason for this procedure was the fact that a lot of American soldiers lost their lives during the Civil War due to a misuse of their weapons.

Later they focused on another goal: the so-called defense of the fundamental right to possess and bear arms without restrictions. The NRA sees itself as the representation of interests for owners of weapons. By all means, it fights against stricter gun laws.

Therefore, it does not only encourage its membership but also helps in legal disputes. The association is supported by several different parts of the population. Until 2003 the famous and

M3: Comments by Republican political activist Alan Keyes (Jan 15, 2013, loyaltoliberty.com)

“The Second Amendment’s logic arises from the connection between the people’s right to keep and bear arms and the security of their freedom. It aims to make sure that Americans do not easily forget a hard truth: Moves to secure a government monopoly on the legal possession and use of arms war against what is, in practice, the *sine qua non* of the people’s right of self-government. Unlawful bills [...] that aim to disarm the people, on whatever pretexts, are the open declaration of this war against republican self-government. As such, they signify the onset of what will inevitably become a war against the property, persons and lives of the people.”

M2: 2nd Amendment to the US Constitution (ratified 1791)

“A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.”

M4: Speech by President Obama on Common-Sense Gun Safety Reform (Jan 05, 2016, obamawhitehouse.archives.gov)

“[We have been working] to write a common-sense compromise bill that would have required virtually everyone who buys a gun to get a background check. That was it. Pretty common-sense stuff. Ninety percent of Americans supported that idea. Ninety percent of Democrats in the Senate voted for that idea. But it failed because 90 percent of Republicans in the Senate voted against that idea.”

M5: Remarks by 6-year old Sandy Hook shooting victim’s mother Francine Wheeler (April 13, 2013, obamawhitehouse.archives.gov)

“[...] In the four months since we lost our loved ones, thousands of other Americans have died at the end of a gun. Thousands of other families across the United States are also drowning in our grief. Please help us do something before our tragedy becomes your tragedy. [...] We have to convince the Senate to come together and pass commonsense gun responsibility reforms that will make our communities safer and prevent more tragedies like the one we never thought would happen to us.”

M6: Bush-Kerry Presidential Debate (Oct 13, 2004, debates.org)

BUSH: “I did think we ought to extend the assault weapons ban [...]. I believe law-abiding citizens ought to be able to own a gun. I believe in background checks at gun shows or anywhere to make sure that guns don't get in the hands of people that shouldn't have them.”

KERRY: “I believe it was a failure of presidential leadership not to reauthorize the assault weapons ban. [...] And most of the law enforcement agencies in America wanted that assault weapons ban. They don't want to go into a drug bust and be facing an AK-47. [...] Because of the president's decision today, law enforcement officers will walk into a place that will be more dangerous. Terrorists can now come into America and go to a gun show and, without even a background check, buy an assault weapon today.”

GUN CONTROL LAWS – A CONTROVERSIAL TOPIC

1. Read the following opinions about gun control laws in the USA.
2. Fill in the arguments made in materials M1 – M6 into the chart below.
3. Then, add your own arguments to the chart.

Arguments <u>for</u> stricter gun control laws	Arguments <u>against</u> stricter gun control laws
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Common sense: - Background checks make sure that guns don't fall into the wrong hands (legally) - Widespread support for commonsense laws - Prevent tragedies like Sandy Hook - Ban assault weapons → save lives of law enforcement officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Owning guns is a right secured by the 2nd Amendment - Liberty of the people - Self-government and responsibility - Provide security against the government as well as private persons

4. Using the information you have learned concerning gun control in the USA (e.g. concerning state laws, statistics, mass shooting incidents, aspects of personal life and society, differing opinions), discuss the following question:

Should the United States pass stricter gun control laws?

★ **Bonus Task:** Discuss the following question: Should Germany pass stricter gun control laws?

Many different solutions are possible here. Good discussions should include:

- An introduction to the topic
- Arguments and examples for both perspectives
- At least one reference to the material / information gained in this work sheet (e.g. concerning state laws, statistics, mass shooting incidents, aspects of personal life and society, differing opinions)
- The student's own opinion
- A conclusion



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