

# DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHERS



### PREPARATION:

- Print out or distribute the Scenario and Role Profiles for each student.
- Divide the class into six groups, each representing one role:
  - Pro Gun Control: Student survivor, Parent, Democratic politician
  - Against Gun Control: Teacher, NRA Representative, Republican politician
- Set up the classroom to resemble a press conference:
  - A "panel" at the front for the speakers
  - "Journalists" (students not on the podium) in the audience to ask follow-up questions.

### STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS:

#### 1. Introduction to the Activity

- Read the scenario out loud to illustrate the situation.
- Explain the structure: Each speaker will introduce themselves and present their perspective. After all statements, the journalists can ask follow-up questions.
- Emphasize the importance of staying in character.

#### 2. Role Preparation

- Students prepare their statements based on their role profiles. Encourage them to take notes.

#### 3. Press Conference

- Each panelist gives a 1–2 minute statement on their position.
- After all statements, the "journalists" can ask questions. Encourage discussion and clarification.

#### 4. Debrief

- Discuss with the class:
  - How did you feel presenting your role?
  - Which arguments did you find most convincing? Why?
  - What did you learn about the gun control debate?

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

This activity helps students develop critical thinking and argumentation skills by exploring different perspectives on gun control. They learn to build empathy and understanding of complex social issues by adopting different viewpoints.



#### HOW TO BOOK THE PRESENTATION:

Wenn Sie sich für eine Präsentation oder einen Workshop interessieren, freuen wir uns über Ihre schriftliche Anmeldung. Nutzen Sie dazu ganz bequem unser **Online-Formular** oder schicken Sie uns eine **E-Mail an [school@daz.org](mailto:school@daz.org)**!

# SCENARIO

## THE SHELBY HIGH SCHOOL INCIDENT

Yesterday, there was a tragic school shooting at Shelby High School in Chicago, Illinois. A 16-year-old student entered the building with a semi-automatic handgun and opened fire in the school cafeteria, injuring several students and two teachers. Thankfully, no lives were lost this time, but the event has reignited the debate on gun control in the United States.

Gun control refers to laws that regulate the sale, ownership, and use of firearms. Supporters of stricter gun laws argue that tighter regulations can prevent such incidents. Opponents, however, believe that restrictions infringe on their rights under the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which states: “the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.”

A press conference has been called. Stakeholders from all sides of the debate will share their views. Journalists and members of the public are invited to ask questions about their positions and potential solutions.

**Your Task:** As a panelist, present your position clearly and defend it during the Q&A session.



# ROLE PROFILE

## STUDENT SURVIVOR: EMILY THOMPSON



### Personal Background:

Your name is Emily Thompson, and you are a 17-year-old junior at Shelby High School. Just a few days ago, you were in the school cafeteria when the shooting happened. You vividly remember hearing the loud gunshots, people screaming, and chaos all around you. One of your best friends, Sarah, was shot and is still in the hospital. You were lucky to escape physically unharmed, but you are deeply shaken and scared. You feel like your school, which should be a safe space, has turned into a place of fear and anxiety. You have always been an average student, enjoying sports and art, but now you struggle to concentrate. Your parents are supportive, but they are also overwhelmed, and you feel that adults need to do more to protect students like you.

### Opinion on Gun Control:

You strongly believe that stricter gun laws are necessary to prevent future school shootings. It should not be so easy for teenagers or adults to access dangerous weapons. You think guns should require extensive background checks, and assault weapons should be banned for private citizens. You have heard politicians talk about mental health, but you think that is just an excuse to avoid addressing the real problem: guns. Your message to adults is simple: “Do something. We don’t want your thoughts and prayers—we want action.”

### Key Points to Highlight:

- Stricter background checks can prevent dangerous individuals from getting guns.
- Assault weapons are not necessary for self-defense and belong in war zones, not schools.
- Students like you deserve to feel safe and secure in school—not afraid for their lives.

# ROLE PROFILE



## PARENT: MARK EVANS

### Personal Background:

Your name is Mark Evans, and you are the father of a 15-year-old student at Shelby High School. You work as a firefighter and have dedicated your life to protecting others. On the day of the shooting, you were called to the scene. Seeing terrified children and parents waiting for answers was the worst experience of your career. Your daughter, Lucy, is safe, but she lost two of her close friends. Since that day, she has been having nightmares and refuses to return to school. This tragedy has devastated your family, and you are angry that shootings like this keep happening while politicians do nothing.

### Opinion on Gun Control:

You support stronger gun control laws to protect children and families. You believe guns are too easily accessible, especially to teenagers and unstable individuals. As a parent, your greatest fear is losing your child, and this shooting has made that fear a terrifying reality for many families. You think the United States needs to follow the example of other countries, where stricter laws have reduced gun violence.

### Key Points to Highlight:

- Guns are too accessible, especially for young people or those with mental health problems.
- Stronger background checks and waiting periods could prevent tragedies like Shelby High.
- “No parent should have to bury their child because of gun violence.”

# ROLE PROFILE



## DEMOCRATIC POLITICIAN: SENATOR ANNE HARRIS

### Personal Background:

Your name is Senator Anne Harris, and you are a Democratic Senator from the state of Illinois. You have been in politics for over 15 years, focusing on issues such as education, healthcare, and public safety. Over the years, you have met countless families who have lost loved ones to gun violence. You have spoken at schools, hospitals, and community events where parents and teachers beg for action. You yourself are a mother of two teenagers, and you often worry about their safety.

### Opinion on Gun Control:

You believe that gun violence is a public health crisis, and the government must take action to protect its citizens. While you respect the Second Amendment, you argue that it does not mean people should have unrestricted access to dangerous weapons. You advocate for common-sense solutions, such as universal background checks, red flag laws, and a ban on assault weapons. You emphasize that most Americans support these measures.

### Key Points to Highlight:

- Stricter background checks and red-flag laws will save lives without infringing on responsible gun owners.
- Assault weapons are designed for the battlefield, not for civilian use.
- The majority of Americans want safer gun laws—it's time for Congress to listen.

# ROLE PROFILE

## TEACHER: MRS. AALIYAH PARKER



### Personal Background:

Your name is Aaliyah Parker, and you are a history teacher at Shelby High School. You have been teaching for 20 years and are passionate about helping students learn and grow. During the recent shooting, you did everything you could to keep your students safe, but you felt completely powerless. You now feel that schools need better security measures, and teachers should have the option to defend their students if necessary. You grew up in a rural area where guns were a part of everyday life, and you believe that the problem isn't guns but the people using them.

### Opinion on Gun Control:

You oppose stricter gun control laws because you believe they are ineffective. Criminals will always find ways to obtain weapons, and law-abiding citizens should not lose their right to protect themselves. Instead of new laws, you think schools need better security, such as armed guards or trained teachers.

### Key Points to Highlight:

- Guns don't kill people—people kill people. Focus on identifying dangerous individuals early.
- Allowing trained teachers to carry firearms would make schools safer.
- Stricter laws will punish responsible gun owners without stopping criminals.

# ROLE PROFILE



## NRA REPRESENTATIVE: DAVID COLE

### Personal Background:

Your name is David Cole, and you are a spokesperson for the National Rifle Association (NRA). You grew up in Texas, where hunting and shooting were part of your upbringing. You are a strong believer in the Second Amendment, which you view as a core part of American freedom. The NRA works to protect gun rights for responsible citizens and argues that guns are essential for self-defense. You see gun control laws as an attack on personal liberty.

### Opinion on Gun Control:

You strongly oppose any new gun control measures. You believe that focusing on mental health, enforcing existing laws, and educating people about gun safety is the solution. Stricter gun laws will only hurt law-abiding citizens, while criminals will continue to find ways to obtain guns illegally.

### Key Points to Highlight:

- The Second Amendment guarantees the right to bear arms.
- Stricter laws won't stop criminals but will disarm responsible citizens.
- Focus on enforcing existing laws and improving mental health support.

# ROLE PROFILE



## REPUBLICAN POLITICIAN: CONGRESSMAN ROBERT DANIELS

### Personal Background:

Your name is Robert Daniels, and you are a Republican Congressman from Texas. You grew up in a military family and learned the importance of responsibility and safety when handling guns. You view the right to own firearms as a fundamental part of American freedom and identity. While you acknowledge that the Shelby shooting is a tragedy, you believe the problem lies with individuals, not with guns.

### Opinion on Gun Control:

You oppose stricter gun control laws because you see them as ineffective and unconstitutional. You argue that the focus should be on improving security in schools and addressing mental health issues. Guns are not the enemy—they are tools that, when used responsibly, can protect individuals and families.

### Key Points to Highlight:

- The Second Amendment protects personal freedom.
- Schools need better security measures, like armed guards or metal detectors.
- Address mental health issues and early warning signs instead of punishing gun owners.