

## **INITIAL WRITING SKILL LEVEL UPON ENROLLMENT: AS OF 7/4/20**

Both passages provide information regarding the gold standard. The first passage thinks the U.S. should go back to the gold standard, while the second passage argues that long term of the gold standard has a cost. While both sides make an acceptable case, the first passage makes a stronger argument.

## **WRITING SKILL LEVEL: AS OF 9/20/20**

### **Should More Gun Control Laws Be Enacted?**

Why not make it harder for individuals to buy guns? Gun control laws are a highly debated issue in America. There has been an increase in the number of gun violence cases in the United States. In this ongoing debate, it is apparent that the proponents' argument is much stronger than the opponents' argument because they prove that guns are the leading cause of deaths in children; they increase the number of mass shootings in the United States and contribute to accidents, suicides and homicides.

Firstly, the proponents' argument is stronger than the opponents' argument because they prove guns are the leading cause of deaths in children. For instance, the proponents state that "A study in the New England Journal of Medicine found that firearms were the second leading cause of death for children, responsible for 15% of child deaths..." (2) This suggests that having stricter gun laws could reduce the amount of child fatalities that are occurring at an alarming rate, due to gun violence in the United States.

Secondly, the proponents have a stronger argument for gun control laws than the opponents because they prove how high capacity magazines have increased the number of mass shootings in the United States. For example, the proponents claim that "When high-capacity magazines were used in mass shootings, the death rate rose 63% and the injury rate rose 156%." (3) This proves that assault weapons such as high capacity machine guns contribute to the high death tolls resulting from serious, violent crimes.

On the contrary, opponents believe that people are less likely to die by guns in comparison to other common causes of death. They state that "according to the CDC's Leading Causes of Death Reports," between 1999 and 2013, Americans were 21.5 times more likely to die of heart disease (9,691,733 deaths)" (8) and other health ailments as oppose to dying from firearms (whether by accident, homicide, or suicide). However, proponents have a stronger argument because they claim that "There were 572,537 total gun deaths between 1999 and 2016: 336,579 suicides (58.8% of total gun deaths) (2); and "In 2007, the United States had 12,632 gun homicides (4.19 deaths per 100,000 people) and 17,352 gun suicides (5.76 deaths per 100,000 people)." (13) This proves that weapon possessions increase gun violence; therefore, implementing stricter gun laws will reduce gun-related deaths.

In summary, the proponents' argument that gun control should be enacted is better supported than the opponents' argument. The proponents prove that firearm-related injuries are the leading cause of death in children, along with the rise in mass shootings. In addition, having access to guns contributes to accidents, suicides, and homicides. Since guns cause so much violence, measures to regulate them are necessary.