

Colorado shooting renews father's anti-gun mission

Level 1 • Elementary

1 Key words

Complete the sentences using these key words from the text. The paragraph numbers are given to help you.

sneakers
massacre

lethal
magazine

lobby
stricter

bullets
armour

heartbreaking
motivation

1. _____ are shoes for playing sports. In British English they are called *trainers*. (para 1)
2. A _____ is the killing of a lot of people. (para 1)
3. If laws become _____, they control people's behaviour more. (para 1)
4. A _____ is a group that represents a particular area of business or society and tries to influence politicians. (para 2)
5. _____ are small pieces of metal that you shoot from a gun. (para 3)
6. _____ is special clothing that you wear to protect your body from bullets. (para 3)
7. If something is _____, it is very dangerous and can kill you. (para 4)
8. A _____ is the part of a gun where you put the bullets. (para 4)
9. If something is _____, it makes you feel very sad or upset. (para 5)
10. If something (or someone) is a strong _____, it makes you really want to do something. (para 8)

2 Find the information

Find the following information as quickly as possible.

1. How old was Daniel Mauser when he died?
2. When was the Columbine school massacre?
3. How many people died in the cinema shootings in Aurora?
4. How many people were injured?
5. How many guns did James Holmes have?
6. How many people died in the Columbine school massacre?

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Colorado shooting renews anti-gun mission for Columbine victim's father

Paul Harris in Littleton, Colorado
22 July, 2012

- 1 Tom Mauser's shoes look like ordinary sneakers. But they are not. They are the shoes his 15-year-old son Daniel was wearing when he died in the 1999 Columbine school massacre. But Mauser was not thinking about the shoes. He was just very angry as he explained why neither President Barack Obama nor Republican Mitt Romney had asked for stricter gun controls after the massacre in Aurora, Colorado.
- 2 "They are afraid of the gun lobby," he said, at the Columbine memorial in the Denver suburb of Littleton, very close to Aurora. "They are very afraid of the gun lobby, and not afraid of me. Well, I am going to make them afraid of me too."
- 3 James Holmes was arrested for killing 12 people and injuring 58 people during a midnight showing of the latest Batman film. Mauser believes that Holmes is a clear example of the problem with America's gun laws. Holmes had a scary collection of four guns, 6,000 bullets and bulletproof armour but he did not break any laws.
- 4 Everything he bought was legal, either via the internet or in person at a gun store. Even buying a lethal 100-bullet magazine for his semi-automatic rifle was legal. That is something that almost makes Mauser cry. "A hundred bullet drum? Really? Why is that legal, and how does that make us a stronger nation?" he asked.
- 5 These questions are very important to Mauser. His son, Daniel, died in the Columbine school killings, in which 12 students, one teacher and the two shooters were killed. Since that heartbreaking experience, Mauser has become a strong supporter of stricter gun laws.
- 6 He helped introduce a law in Colorado that made it harder to buy weapons at gun shows. He has supported the few politicians who support gun control and he is a board member of Colorado Ceasefire, a gun control group. But Mauser knows that since 1999 – despite awful events like Columbine – gun control supporters are losing the argument.
- 7 Gun controls have been getting looser across America since 1999. "It has not got better; it has got worse. In America we prefer to punish killers, not to stop them before they kill. But when you lose someone you love, punishment does not mean anything," he said. But after the Aurora killings there has still been little discussion about stricter gun laws. Obama discussed the tragedy during his radio programme but he did not use the word *gun* in his speech. Romney simply said he thought the killer should be punished quickly. Only New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg asked for a national debate on the issue. But, so far, no-one has listened to him.
- 8 Even after long years of struggle, Mauser is still shocked at the silence that follows each new disaster. "If America can't question all the weapons that Holmes had, then the gun control movement will never succeed," he said. But he will not stop trying because the memory of his son is a strong motivation.
- 9 Many parents cannot imagine what it feels like to wear the same shoes that a loved son died in. But for Mauser they are a form of motivation when he speaks about gun control and a way of showing respect to Daniel. "It is very hard. But I have to do it. Parents should not have to walk in the shoes of a murdered child," he said.

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3 Comprehension check

Match the beginnings and endings to make sentences about the text.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Since the Columbine school massacre in 1999, ... | a. ... a 100-bullet magazine for a semi-automatic rifle is legal. |
| 2. James Holmes bought his guns and bullets ... | b. ... as a way of showing respect to him. |
| 3. Barack Obama did not use the word <i>gun</i> ... | c. ... gun controls have got looser across America. |
| 4. Tom Mauser believes that ... | d. ... legally. |
| 5. Tom Mauser wears his dead son's shoes ... | e. ... when he spoke about the shootings in Aurora. |
| 6. Tom Mauser cannot understand why ... | f. ... politicians are afraid of the gun lobby. |

4 Chunks

Rearrange the words to make phrases from the text.

- controls stricter gun
- the film Batman latest
- arrested 12 for people killing
- internet the via
- of years after struggle long
- on a debate issue the national

5 Two-word expressions

Find five words in the text that follow the word *gun*.



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6 Word-building

Complete the table with words from the text.

verb	noun
control	
collect	
support	(person)
punish	
shoot	(person)
move	

7 Discussion

Should people be allowed to buy and own guns? Why? Why not?

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KEY

1 Key words

1. sneakers
2. massacre
3. stricter
4. lobby
5. bullets
6. armour
7. lethal
8. magazine
9. heartbreaking
10. motivation

2 Find the information

1. 15
2. in 1999
3. 12
4. 58
5. four
6. 15

3 Comprehension check

1. c
2. d
3. e
4. f
5. b
6. a

4 Chunks

1. stricter gun controls
2. the latest Batman film
3. arrested for killing 12 people
4. via the internet
5. after long years of struggle
6. a national debate on the issue

5 Two-word expressions

laws, control(s), lobby, shows, store

6 Word-building

1. control
2. collection
3. supporter
4. punishment
5. shooter
6. movement