

EDITORIALS



An editorial is an article based on the news which attempts to interpret the news and which expresses the writer's or editor's opinions.

Editorial writers build on an argument and try to persuade readers to think the same way they do. Editorials are meant to influence public opinion, promote critical thinking, and sometimes cause people to take action on an issue. In essence, an editorial is an opinionated news story.

Look at the following articles. Identify **which is the editorial** and **which is the news story**. How can you tell?

However, I am convinced that as America reflects on this national tragedy she is reaching down into her National Soul and will recognize what matters most, the dignity, beauty and wonder of every single human life at every age and stage. That is why the Churches of Newtown were filled with mourners and vigils were held throughout the town. We know.

NEWTOWN, Conn.--A shooting rampage in this small Connecticut town on Friday morning left 28 people dead, including 20 children killed inside their elementary school, authorities said.

The dead included the suspected gunman, whom law enforcement sources identified as Adam Lanza, 20. Police said that Lanza first apparently killed his mother, Nancy Lanza, at the home they shared in Newtown. Then he drove in her car to Sandy Hook Elementary, the school at which Nancy Lanza taught kindergarten.

A year later, what has changed?

December 14, 2013

There were two primary reactions to the Newtown shootings of a year ago.

The first was universal sorrow for the 20 first-graders killed in a blaze of gunfire, the six adults who died defending them and the families that were emotionally wounded in a way that will never quite heal.

The second reaction was a mad rush to buy guns. In Wake County, for instance, the first month after the Dec. 14 massacre saw handgun permit requests soar to 7,320, compared with 2,587 the previous January.

As a nation, we come to this first anniversary of Newtown with renewed sorrow and deepening resignation. Nothing, not 20 murdered first-graders, not an outraged president, not a majority of the U.S Senate, can shake the dominance of a minority obsessed with having wide and easy access to guns.

People expected that tougher gun laws would be inevitable after such a tragedy. But that fear underestimated the strength of the gun lobby. Despite polls showing an overwhelming majority of voters supported a U.S. Senate bill to expand background checks for gun purchases, a minority of senators managed to block the legislation. In many states, easier gun laws have been adopted instead. Congress has failed in tightening gun control.

The reality about guns is that the Constitution – whether intentionally or not – does confer a right to bear arms. And most Americans favour the right to own a gun over a ban on gun ownership.

Yet the killing needs to stop.

There is no doubt that the carnage goes on. In the year since Newtown, USA Today reports that nine mass killings have occurred involving five or more victims, all but one involving firearms exclusively. Every year, gun violence kills more than 31,000 people and wounds more than 78,000. The statistics are clear – more and more people are needlessly killed by guns.

People may argue that background checks will not stop the killing. Yet, the sad reality is that people with guns kill people, and more must be done to separate the most disturbed individuals from the deadliest weapons. A background check may not stop every psychopath but it will certainly prevent some from obtaining a weapon.

The gun lobby also needs to step back. It is fine to talk about personal freedoms but individual rights must not come before community safety. We cannot continue to risk children's lives because of the Second Amendment.

Really, the solution lies not in one side's victory over the other, but in carefully working on aspects of guns and gun ownership on which most Americans agree. That generally would involve deeper background checks for gun purchases, tougher penalties for people who fail to secure their guns, controls on types and volume of ammunition and greater efforts to promote awareness of gun hazards.

What policies or laws, if any, would have stopped Adam Lanza from shooting his way into Sandy Hook Elementary School we do not know. But those who died there are a reminder to us of the dangers of uncontrolled gun ownership. If we continue to allow the unrestricted purchase of arms, we must expect that only further bloodshed will follow.

Adapted from <http://www.newsobserver.com/2013/12/14/3460091/a-year-after-newtown-renew-efforts.html#storylink=cpy>

USE OF SYNONYMS – *The author uses different words to refer to the same idea – this helps to make your writing more interesting and less repetitive. Find the words that the author uses for:*

kill/killing

sadness

guns

shooting

STRUCTURE OF THE EDITORIAL

a. An editorial is always about something in the news. The editor must tell us which news item has prompted him/her to write. So in the editorial there must be a summary of the news item.

- Look at the editorial on the previous page. Identify the **summary**.

b. An editorial expresses an opinion; it has a strong position.

- Look at the editorial again. The author has created **a strong position**.
- What is his opinion?

c. The author constructs his position through the use of 'coloured' or emotional language e.g. "the most *disturbed* individuals from the *deadliest* weapons

Find five examples of emotive language in the text:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

d. The editor also has things that he /she wants to say about the news story. So the editor may also give us:

- WARNING – (*find an example from the text*)

- ADVICE, IDEAS, OPINIONS - (*find an example from the text*)

- CONSEQUENCES - (*find an example from the text*)

The Structure of an Editorial

CATCHY HEADLINE!

INTRODUCTION

- State the problem
- Statement of fact OR a strongly controversial statement

SUMMARY OF THE NEWS STORY

- Who? What? Where? When? Why?
- Make sure that the news story/issue is summarised for the reader.
- Facts and details (what happened? Where did it happen? When?)

THESIS – What do you believe? What is your position? (you can use “I”!)

CONCESSION – recognise that the other side of the argument may be valid (“It is said that but I believe that”)

BODY – **three** reasons which support your thesis

- What are the reasons for believing in your thesis?
- Give examples or evidence

CONCLUSION

- Advice/Recommendations
- Warning
- Consequences
- Restate thesis