
Year 9 - Gun Crime

THE MIRROR

Friday 31st August, 2007

BRITAIN ON THE VERGE OF GUN CRIME CHAOS

Reported by James Sullivan

Britain is on the verge of gun crime chaos with record numbers of teenagers being killed and injured this year, that is according to one of Britain's top policemen.

In a speech to the Association of Chief Police Officers, Chief Constable John Daly told his colleagues that Britain is 'staring down the barrel of blood soaked chaos' unless radical action is taken against young people carrying, and then using, firearms in Britain's cities.

The Chief Constable's comments come in the aftermath of the murder of 11 year old Rhys Jones, who was gunned down in the Croxteth area of the city during August. Police have yet to press charges in the murder of the Liverpool youngster because of what the Chief Constable called a 'blanket of silence' that has prevented witnesses coming forward with vital evidence. Many potential witnesses have been frightened into silence because of the threat of reprisals from gun-toting gang members in the area.

However, the Chief Constable's remarks highlight once more the growing crisis of gun crime on Britain's streets. More alarmingly, recent statistics show that increasing numbers of people under 18 are using fire arms to commit crime.

Recent figures released by the Gun Control Network, a charity that campaigns for tighter gun control, show that in 2006 there were over 20,000 crimes involving firearms. That equates to nearly 55 every day. The most alarming statistic, however, is that one person a week was killed by a firearm. However, already in 2007, there have been 8 youngsters killed in England by perpetrators using firearms.

One reason that the Chief Constable cited for the increase in gun crime is the emergence of the 'Gang Culture' that has proved so deadly on the streets of Chicago and New York.

One gang member from Liverpool, who wanted to remain anonymous, said 'packing heat is crucial, not because I want to kill someone, but because they want to kill me.' This response explains the horrifying statistics that suggest an increasing number of children are carrying guns and knives. In another survey carried out by the charity KidScape, 19% of 14-18 year olds said they were happy to carry a weapon to protect themselves. Of those questioned, 11% said they would be prepared to use the weapon to 'settle differences' with other young people.

Director of KidScape, John Ferguson said 'we've got a major problem – it's like a secret war taking place in many of our cities played out by our young people.' In many cases, the children surveyed said their parents had little, if any, knowledge about the dangers they felt they were facing going about their daily business.

Chief Constable Daly also highlights this problem saying 'the lives that some of our young people are leading are totally unknown to their parents or other adults like teachers.'

One parent from the Croxteth area of Liverpool where Rhys Jones was murdered said 'it's not people hiding in alley ways that worry me; it's the kids openly brandishing guns and knives that I'm scared of.'

Checking your Understanding

- 1.** Highlight three words in the article that you do not understand.
- 2.** Now look up those words in the dictionary and write down their definitions in your exercise book.
- 3.** Highlight the key points of each paragraph in the article.
- 4.** In your own words, make a bullet point list of the key points of the article.
- 5.** From the article, give an example of a young person who has been a victim of gun crime.
- 6.** What phrase from the article describes why people have been so reluctant to give evidence to the police about the crime?
- 7.** In your own words explain why this is an effective way of describing the response of people in Liverpool.
- 8.** Why do you think that Chief Constable Daly describes Britain as 'staring down the barrel of blood-soaked chaos'?
- 9.** Copy out the quotation that explain why some children claim they need to carry weapons.
- 10.** Why do you think John Ferguson describes the situation as a 'secret war'?

11. Copy and complete the table below to show the results of the Gun Control Network survey.

Finding	Statistic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of gun crimes in 2006 • Number of gun crimes each day. • Number of people killed each week. • Number of youngsters killed in 2007 so far. 	

12. Copy and complete the statistical findings from the KidScape survey.

- _____% of 14-18 year olds said they were happy to carry a weapon to protect themselves.
- _____% said they would be prepared to use the weapon to 'settle differences' with other young people.

13. Explain how the writer of the article uses language to convey the seriousness of the 'gun crime' problem in Britain.

In your answer you should refer to:

- The writer's use of dramatic language;
- The writer's use of statistics;
- The writer's choice of eye-witness comments.

Hints:

- ◆ For each of the bullet points above, you should aim to write **one paragraph**;
- ◆ In each paragraph you should aim to give a **quotation** from the article;
- ◆ Each time you use a quotation you should explain **how** it is used by the writer to convey the '**seriousness**' of the gun crime problem.

Planning your Answer

Paragraph 1: The Writer's use of dramatic language

The writer uses **dramatic language** in the article to show...

An example of the writer's use of **dramatic language** in the article is...

This is an effective example of **dramatic language** that conveys the seriousness of the gun crime problem because...

Connectives

In order to make your writing show that it is carefully structured, you need to link your paragraphs together using **connectives**. There are **two types of connective**.

1. **Connectives that show ideas are linked.**
2. **Connectives that show ideas are different.**

You need to choose the right connective to use to link your paragraphs, the table below shows the two different types of **connective**.

Connectives to show linked ideas	Connectives to show ideas are different
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Furthermore... ➔ In addition to... ➔ Firstly/Secondly/Thirdly... ➔ Another way... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ In contrast... ➔ Alternatively... ➔ On the other hand... ➔ A different way that...

Connective to join paragraphs 1 and 2: _____

Paragraph 2: The Writer's use of dramatic language

The writer uses **statistics** in the article to show...

An example of the writer's use of **statistics** in the article is...

' _____ '

This is an effective example of how the writer uses **statistics** to convey the seriousness of the gun crime problem because...

Connective to join paragraphs 2 and 3: _____

Paragraph 3: The Writer's Choice of Eye-witness Comments

The writer uses **eye-witness comments** in the article to show...

An example of the writer's use of **eye-witness comments** in the article is...

' _____ '

This is an effective example of how the writer uses **eye-witness comments** to convey the seriousness of the gun crime problem because...

- **Now that you have planned your answer, write it out in full, remembering to use:**
 - ↕ **Quotations**
 - ↕ **Connectives**

Writing to Inform**Task**

Produce an **information leaflet** about 'Gun Crime' to be distributed to **Year 9 students** at your school. You should aim to **inform** them about the following:

- What 'Gun Crime' is;
- The dangers facing teenagers from gangs;
- Why young people carry firearms;
- Key facts and figures about 'Gun Crime';
- Ways that young people might avoid becoming involved in gun crime.

The **audience** for this piece of work is: _____

The **purpose** of this piece of work is: _____

Before you begin to produce your own information leaflet, you should look at the model information sheet, and complete the tasks, on the following pages.

Key Features of an Information Sheet

The 'ARSENAL FOOTBALL CLUB' information sheet uses the features of language and layout that you will need to use when you produce your own information sheet about your hobby or interest. You will notice that it has been produced in an attractive and engaging way. Before you can produce your information sheet you need to understand the different features of the information sheet.

❖ The Language of an Information Sheet

1. Make a bullet point list of the different types of **information** that is included about Arsenal Football Club.
2. Write down some of the words that are used on the information sheet to make it seem engaging to the reader.
3. How does the writer of the information sheet show that they are knowledgeable about Arsenal Football Club?

❖ The Layout of an Information Sheet

Layout is the way that a piece of text is presented to the reader – it includes things like:

- Pictures;
- Type and size of fonts used;
- Diagrams, tables and charts;
- Bullet points to divide information.

4. Make a bullet point list of all the different features of layout that are used on the information sheet.
5. What do the pictures on the information sheet show and why has the writer included them on the sheet?
6. How does the writer use features of layout to break up and divide key facts on the information sheet?
7. How is the text arranged on the information sheet and why?
8. Why does the writer use a chart to give information about Arsenal footballers?
9. Are there any other features of layout that you think are important or effective?

Planning Your Information Sheet

Now that you have looked at the features of an information leaflet, you are ready to begin planning how you will produce your own information leaflet. You should use the research that you did on your hobby or interest to work out what to include on the sheet.

When you are planning your leaflet you should remember the following:

- ✓ Your information sheet needs to be interesting and engaging for the person who is going to read it;
- ✓ You should use language to make your text interesting;
- ✓ You should give facts and information on your sheet to help the reader understand your hobby or interest.
- ✓ You should think about the layout of your information sheet to make it attractive and interesting to look at.

1. Use the boxes below to organise how you will produce your information sheet.

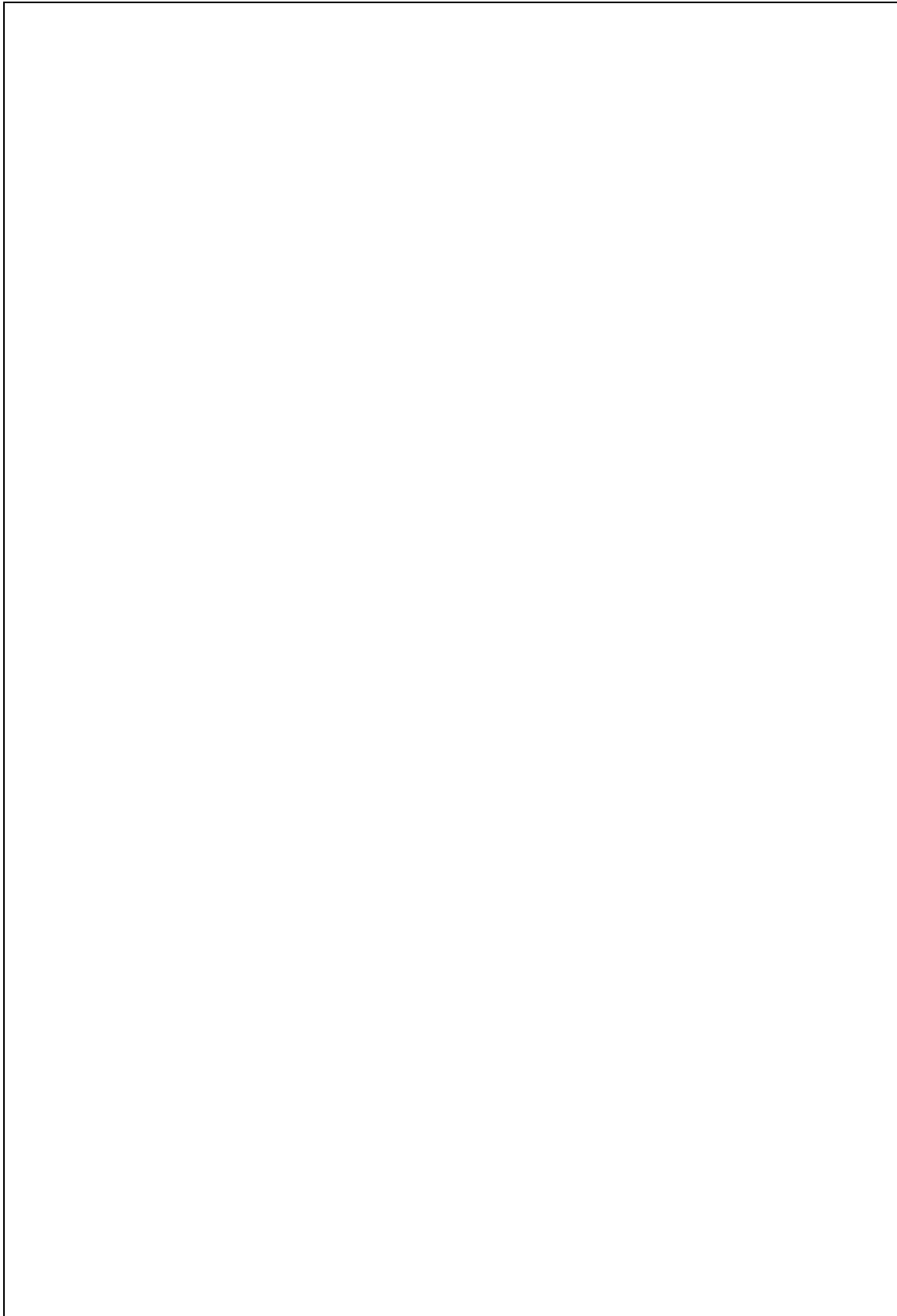
What information do I need to include?

-
-
-
-
-
-

What features of layout will I use to make my information sheet effective?

-
-
-
-
-

2. Use the template below to plan how your information sheet will be produced – add boxes on the page and write in some notes to show what you will include or what the images on the information sheet will be.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to plan their information sheet. The box is currently blank, providing space for drawing boxes and writing notes.

Callum's Story – Life in Liverpool's Birkenhead Crew

I first got involved with the Birkenhead Crew when I was thirteen. My dad died when I was five, not that I ever really knew who he was anyway and I'd been living with my mum in between time in care. Basically, when things got too much for mum and she hit the drink, the people from Social Services would come and take me back again. This went on for five or six years, I began to feel like I was just being passed about from one place to the next without anyone ever really caring.

Mum got knifed the day after my thirteenth birthday. She'd gone to the shops on the estate to buy more booze, it was late, about eleven o' clock. The police picked up the kid who did it a couple of hours later. He was in a gang. That was it for me. I decided I was going to take control for once. I'd heard about this local gang called the Birkenhead Crew who took care of things on the Estate. They were like the police, except they were armed and people actually were scared of them.

My mind was made up when I got a text message two days after my mum had died. It was a video. The video showed my mum lying in the street bleeding to death. I could see in her eyes that she was scared, lying alone waiting to die. The kid who'd killed her had videoed what happened on his phone and texted it to other people in the gang to show them how hard he was. I was angry, I could feel the rage burning inside my veins, never before had I wanted to just attack someone; it didn't matter who or where or when, just someone.

Within a matter of a few days, I'd found the place where the Birkenhead Crew congregated on the Estate and had told them what happened. Nobody seemed that bothered. But then I thought about why I wanted to join their gang; if everybody wanted to join for the same reasons I did, then they'd probably heard it all before.

They told me that just because someone had killed my mother, it didn't mean I was right for them. I had to prove myself. Suddenly, that need to hurt someone, to attack them, to make them feel the pain I'd felt was about to be put to the test.

Checking your Understanding

1. Make a bullet point list of the things in the first paragraph that suggest why Callum might have become a gang member.
2. What do you think Callum means when he says that he is going to 'take control for once' following the death of his mother?
3. In paragraph three, Callum describes how he is sent the video of his mother dying via text message, what does this tell you about how mobile phones can be misused?
4. Find one extract where Callum describes his feelings from paragraphs three, four or five and explain why you think it is effective.
5. What does Callum's description of how the gang reacted to his situation in paragraphs four and five tell you about the kind of world that the gang members live in.

Give quotations to support your answer.

Writing to Describe**Task**

Callum ends his account by saying that his need to 'hurt someone' was about to be 'put to the test'.

You need to write a descriptive account of how Callum is 'put to the test' by the gang.

Your account should include:

- The key events that follow;
- Careful descriptions of people and places;
- Description of Callum's emotions.

Use the boxes below to help you plan your response

Key Events of my Account

-
-
-
-
-
-

Where do the events take place & how will I describe them?

-
-
-
-
-
-

Callum's Emotions
•
•
•
•
•

Complete the table below to show how you will use each of the descriptive devices to make your writing more effective.

Descriptive Device	To describe...	What I will write...
Simile		
Metaphor		
Personification		
Onomatopoeia		
Powerful Adjectives		
Other Descriptive Devices		

Now plan what you will write in each paragraph

Paragraph 1:

Paragraph 2:

Paragraph 3:

Paragraph 4:

Paragraph 5:

Writing to Persuade

Task

You need to write a letter to your head teacher persuading him to take action to prevent students becoming involved in gangs and gun crime.

Your letter should:

- **Outline the problem of gangs and gun crime;**
- **Suggest ways that he can help prevent his students becoming involved in gangs and gun crime;**
- **Use persuasive devices to convince the reader.**

Use the boxes below to help plan your letter to your head teacher

Paragraph 1: Explain why you are writing your letter...

-
-
-
-
-

Connective: _____

Paragraph 2: First way children can be prevented from joining gangs.

Suggestion:

-

How this will prevent children from joining gangs

-
-

Connective: _____

Paragraph 3: Second way children can be prevented from joining gangs.

Suggestion:

-

How this will prevent children from joining gangs

-
-

Connective: _____

Paragraph 4: Third way children can be prevented from joining gangs.

Suggestion:

-

How this will prevent children from joining gangs

-
-

Connective: _____

Paragraph 5: Conclusion – *sum up your letter*

-
-
-
-
-

Signing off your letter...

Complete the table below to show how you will use persuasive devices in your letter

Persuasive Device	What I will write...
Emotive Adjectives	
Lists of three	
Direct Address	
Facts & Statistics	
Anecdotal Evidence	
Counter-argument	

