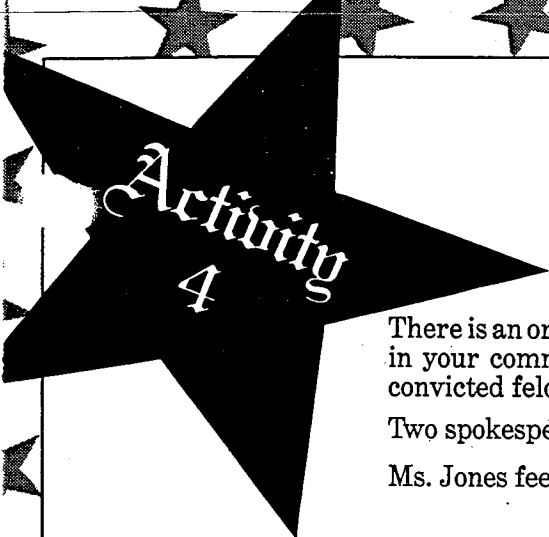


# STUDENT HANDOUT 2

## GUN CONTROL: NECESSARY OR UNCONSTITUTIONAL?

Read each quote carefully and check the number that comes closest to your degree of agreement.

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Mildly agree 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5
1. You are not going to stop the criminal by taking these firearms away from law-abiding citizens.					
2. There is no natural right to have a gun.					
3. A gun ban is unconstitutional—plain and simple.					
4. If guns make us feel safer, then we must certainly be the safest nation on earth. But there are 211 million of them [guns] out there. And instead, we are a country practically at war with itself.					
5. The real cause of crime is the moral breakdown of society.					
6. Military-style assault weapons have no other purpose than to kill and to kill quickly.					
7. Criminals fear armed citizens more than they do the police, because they know the police can't be everywhere all the time.					
8. Guns in the home are dangerous. They are a ticking time bomb.					
9. Consistently, the Supreme Court has ruled that there is no individual right to bear arms. The Court has chosen not to revisit that question because they believe it is an answered question, and it has been answered properly and correctly.					
10. The courts can be wrong. It's very dangerous for people to say "let's essentially ignore a portion of the Bill of Rights because it doesn't serve today's purpose." What constitutional right will survive the passions of the day?					
11. The crumbling of one [constitutional] right will affect all the rest.					
12. [By owning a gun] I am not taking justice into my own hands. What I'm doing is protecting my life, and that goes beyond any Second Amendment.					



# The Great Debate

There is an ordinance before the city council to require a license to purchase a handgun in your community. Those who may not obtain a license include: anyone under 21, convicted felons, those with a history of drug/alcohol abuse.

Two spokespersons have taken the floor to debate the issue.

Ms. Jones feels: that the Second Amendment guarantees the right of every citizen to own guns, and that it would be unconstitutional to infringe citizens' rights by making it more difficult to purchase handguns.

Mr. Smith feels: that the Second Amendment referred only to the rights of the militia, and that it does not prevent the town from restricting the possession of handguns.

Using these opinions, decide which of the arguments listed below would be used by Ms. Jones and which would be used by Mr. Smith. Then mark each argument appropriately.

	Ms. Jones	Mr. Smith
a. Criminals won't be affected by licensing laws because they don't buy their handguns legally.	_____	_____
b. Over 9,000 people are murdered with handguns in the United States every year.	_____	_____
c. A handgun control law would probably not be any more effective than laws against drinking or using drugs.	_____	_____
d. Since the police can't always protect people from criminals, people need handguns to protect themselves and their homes.	_____	_____
e. Licenses to purchase handguns will give local police the opportunity to conduct criminal record checks of purchasers.	_____	_____
f. People will use other weapons if they can't get a handgun.	_____	_____
g. Too many tragic deaths result from children finding a parent's handgun and accidentally shooting themselves or someone else.	_____	_____
h. Statistics show that people are more likely to be shot by their own handgun than by someone breaking into their home or attacking them.	_____	_____

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Now take a vote. Should your community pass a law requiring permits to purchase handguns?

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