**Subject area/course**: English/Language Arts; English Composition

**Grade level/band**: 11-12

**Task source**: Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC)

**Understanding and Resolving School Violence**

**STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS**

1. **Task context**:

Deadly school violence in the United States has grown to unprecedented levels in the 21st century, with the 2012 shootings in a Connecticut elementary school and the 2013 shooting in a Colorado high school being recent examples among many. This assignment, a researched argument, asks you to read selected resources to begin your research on the topic. Then, use that research to construct a claim-driven argument about school violence.

You should begin by reading the required secondary sources about school violence. From there, you will identify a problem associated with school violence and conduct additional research related to the problem you’ve identified. Remember, that this is a research paper and you are trying to offer a solution to the problem.

In your researched argument, you will make a claim about school violence, and then use your research as evidence to back up your claim. Your audience will be high school administrators and high school teachers, a professional audience deeply concerned about school violence. The purpose of your paper is to offer a possible solution that could be implemented by teachers and administrators in order to diminish the likelihood of a school shooting in their school. In order to do so, identify and analyze a root cause for the rise in school shootings and then propose a solution that addresses the root cause.

You will follow a process approach to this assignment, so you will bring your rough draft of this paper to class for peer review, sharing your draft with your colleagues. You will then revise your rough draft based on peer feedback, and then submit the revised version to your teacher.

1. **Final product**:

After researching school violence in the United States, write a 3- to 4-page research paper that identifies a problem and proposes a solution to school violence, using evidence to support that argument.

Your paper should:

* Be organized around a main, arguable claim.
* Use a tone and diction appropriate for a professional audience of high school administrators and teachers.
* Support your discussion with evidence from your research.
* Demonstrate that you have strengthened your writing through multiple revisions, taking into account feedback from your peers.
* Employ standards of English grammar and usage.
* Cite your sources in MLA style or another format that your teacher chooses, both in-text and in the Works Cited page.

**Additional Information**

1. **Knowledge and skills you will need to demonstrate on this task:**

* Research skills: Location, evaluation and analysis of primary and secondary sources; citation using a recognized editorial format (MLA, APA, etc.)
* Argumentative writing: Establish a claim, select evidence, organize presentation of information
* Collaboration: Work with others in peer review
* Process-based writing: Use feedback, revise writing

1. **Materials needed:**

Required Readings

* J. Scott Staples’ “Violence in Schools: Rage Against a Broken World.” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 567, School Violence (Jan., 2000), pp. 30-41.
* James Garbarino’s “The Epidemic of Youth Violence,” chapter 1 in his 1999 book *Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them.* Available at:

<http://cecp.air.org/interact/authoronline/99nov/chapter_1.htm>

Recommended Readings

* Tim Wise’s “Race, Class, Violence, and Denial: Mass Murder and the Pathologies of Privilege.” Available on Wise’s website at:

<http://www.timwise.org/2012/12/race-class-violence-and-denial-mass-murder-and-the-pathologies-of-privilege/>

* Gloria Steinem’s “Supremacy Crimes.” *Peacework Magazine,* June 2001. Available online at: <http://www.cusd80.com/cms/lib6/AZ01001175/Centricity/Domain/2120/Supremacy%20Crimes%20Gloria%20Steinem.pdf>

1. **Time requirements:**

You will have approximately three weeks to complete this task. In the first two weeks you will read the assigned documents, both in class and outside of class and participate in class discussions. You will also have time to conduct independent research once you have identified your topic. In Week 3, you will write your researched argument outside class, and then bring your rough draft to class for peer review. You will then revise your rough draft based on peer feedback, and then submit it to your instructor.

1. **Scoring:**

Your work will be scored using the College and Career Ready (CCR) Task Bank rubric. You should make sure you are familiar with the language that describes the expectations for proficient performance.