

High Caliber Writing

Version 1.6

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The Rules

Be respectful of your fellow students. Everyone has different background and experience. What's obvious to you might not be to someone else.

There will be modestly graphic descriptions of violence. If this is a problem, please speak up and we will adjust.

Ask questions as you have them. If you are wondering something, somebody else probably is too. The more this class is a discussion, the more we all get out of it.

There are no stupid questions.

If you can't see how something presented links back to writing, please speak up right away. This is our first time teaching this class.



Range Day!

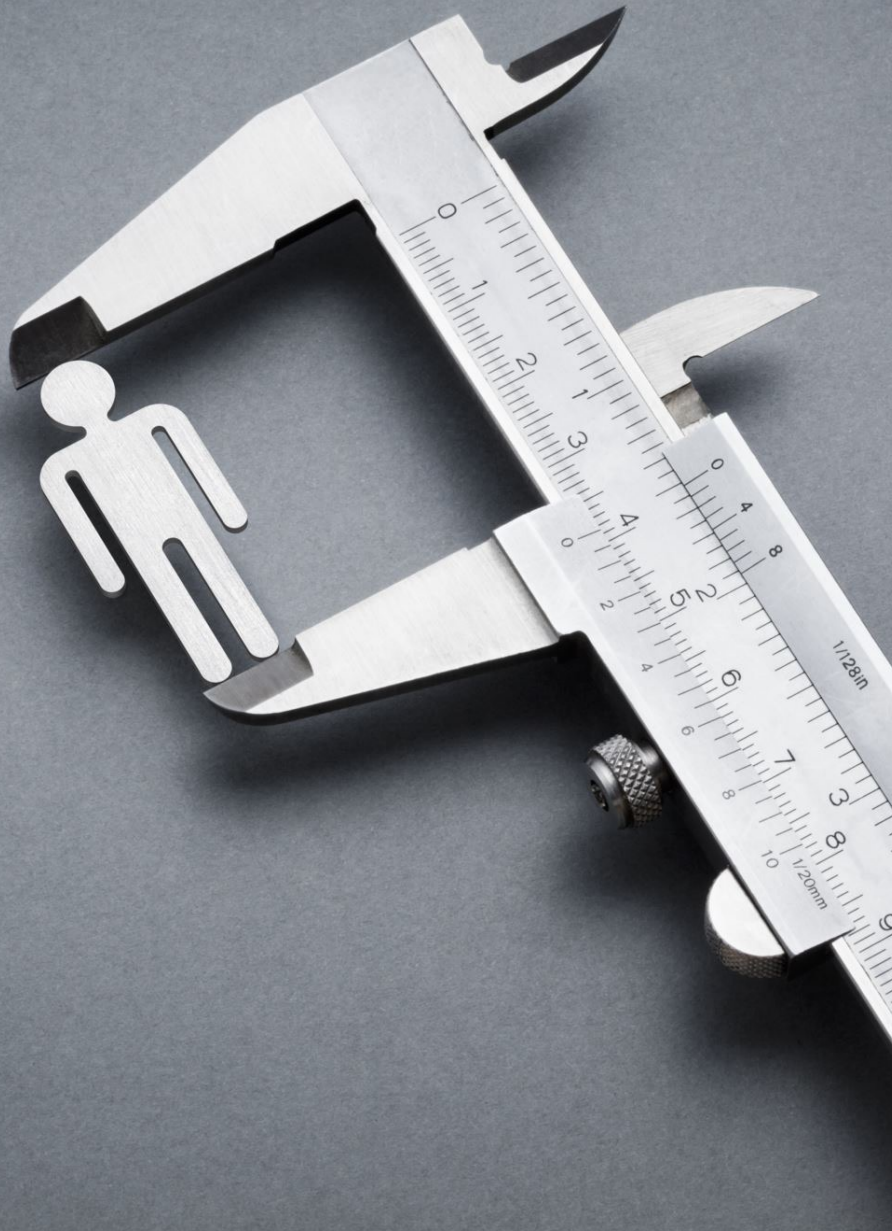
- 06 April 2025, north of Marysville CA.
- Designed for “not gun people.”
- Safety Focused
- 100% Hands-On
- Free if you’re here.
- Guests approved individually.

Format

Three one-hour sections, starting with individuals and working outward to groups and organizations.

Each block will have:

- ~25 minutes of instruction/discussion
- ~10 minutes of questions
- ~20 minutes of creative exercise/discussion
- A five-minute break (But you can always step out if you need to.)



Why Write Violence?

- Weapons and violence are great tools to enrich your characters, setting, and plot because organizations and cultures develop around them. However, weapons are not a goal unto themselves.
- People are their ‘truest self’ under stress.
- How people use hardware conveys information and creates tension in immersive, believable ways.
- Use the right amount of detail. This depends on preference, style, situation, and genre.

Why A Gun? (Why A Duck?)

As a plot device, a gun creates immediate stakes and tension.

Think "Chekhov's gun" - once introduced, it demands resolution. The presence signals potential violence and raises the stakes of every interaction. Even an unloaded or fake gun can drive the plot through characters' reactions and assumptions.

- Guns create time pressure through threat of violence
- They can be both weapon and evidence
- Their technical aspects (ballistics, registration) provide investigative threads
- They level power dynamics between characters of different physical capabilities
- They force characters to make quick, revealing decisions under pressure
- The gun also connects to deeper themes common in thrillers/mysteries:
 - Control vs chaos; Trust vs paranoia; Justice vs revenge
 - Power vs vulnerability; Civilization vs violence
- Guns are familiar to audiences, portable enough to appear anywhere in the story, and their effects are immediate and dramatic

Guns & Character Development

Guns describe the character + characters describe the guns they choose (Or the choice of a different weapon).
Availability must fit character access.

In the end, good books with guns are not are not stories about guns, but introduce guns as characters with major roles to play. What matters is not the gun, but its active, forceful, and compelling role in exposing the "human heart in conflict with itself" which as William Faulkner said is the only theme worth writing about.

- A gun can describe power dynamics and represent moral choices.
- Characters who carry guns make conscious decisions about using lethal force. How comfortable (or not) are they with that choice? Has the character gone full Kierkegaard on that (or nothing at all?)
- The relationship with a weapon must reveal ethics, training, desperation, or psychological state. A character's decision to pick up or put down a gun can mark crucial development points.

Guns & The Author's Duty

- Authors must realistically and believably describe:
- Availability
- Suitability
- Acquisition
- Training
- Proficiency (or not)
- Development of a level of determination (or lack) that allows the reader to accept the ability (or failure) of a character to use the gun.

Of course, a character's weakness or failure in any (or all) of those creates tension and reader expectations.



Mechanics

- Rifles, pistols, shotguns, submachineguns, and crew-served weapons
- How sights work
- Trigger pull
- Recoil
- Effects on target



Ballistics

- Rifled vs. Unrifled and the history of metallurgy
- Black Powder vs. Cordite/Smokeless Powder
- Bullets and Shells
- Terminal Ballistics
- Body Armor



Biology

- Humans aren't built for gunfights
- Adrenaline
- Fine motor control
- Tunnel vision
- Bunching up
- Shock
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder



Common Errors*

- Screwy description in *omniscient narration*
- Lack of recoil
- Impossible accuracy
- No regard for weight
- No blow-through
- No maintenance
- “Flagging”

*(Unless you want to write them on purpose because they're cool.)

Common
phrase, but it's
actually semi-
automatic!

Someone besides Snow also took notice of the old man with the wine bottle. The observer was a muscular young man just under six feet tall. His well-defined muscles were exposed by the tank-top tee-shirt and the pair of cutoff Levi's he wore. His feet sported new running shoes and he was trying to master a skateboard. The red rucksack on his back was new. The young man was having trouble with the skateboard, fell frequently, and cursed profusely. Inside the new pack was a well-used 9mm Mauser automatic pistol with its sausage shaped silencer attached. Resting beside it was a leather box housing an assortment of surgical instruments.

A Chicano busboy finished the task of clearing off the table's soiled dishes and flatware, spread two paper place mats in front of Tracy and her escort, and replenished the settings. Tracy ordered a Margarita; her companion ordered a

Dewar's on the rocks.

They sat in silence. Tracy hid the menu, which she scanned without interest. She caught a glimpse of Beckett's head, framed between the bodies of two diners sitting next to the boardwalk.

She could see Beckett and next to him, a derelict. She also saw a skateboarder whose appearance bothered her for some reason she couldn't touch upon. She put it down to nerves and sipped the Margarita.

It all seemed so peaceful, the sailboats sliding smoothly across the water; the freaks and gawkers; the sunbathers and diners; all come to have a good time. Violence and mayhem and conspiracies were unlikely intruders to this world.

How wrong she was would be apparent in moments.

Clip! Magazine!

7:41PM

SLATEWIPER

“No wounds,” cried a smaller man, also in a track suit. “Remember the autopsy.” Lara stepped through the door. The big man turned as if he sensed rather than heard Lara enter.

It took four bullets before the big man who looked like a sumo stopped moving. But the small man was quick; he drew his side arm and brought it to bear on Lara. Sugawara scrambled to his feet and, with his hands still bound in front of him, grabbed a dagger from the floor and shoved it into the small man’s back. The round from his side arm went wildly through the roof as the tip of the dagger tugged its way through the fabric of the track suit and emerged red and wet just below the small man’s breastbone. Bleeding extravagantly, the man dropped his weapon, staggered backward, then collapsed.

“Lara!” Sugawara cried with a smile. An angry red swelling decorated the side of his head.

“Yep,” Lara replied. “Last time I checked, anyway.” She pulled out the almost empty .45-caliber clip from the Colt and inserted a fresh one before tucking it back in her thigh pocket. Then she went to Sugawara and stripped the tape off his hands and wrists. Underneath was an elastic bandage.

“Things didn’t go as well as they might,” Sugawara said as he rubbed his wrists. “Kurata laughed off the Korean heritage thing. No leverage there. Gave me the choice of seppuku or dragon fodder.” He looked about the room until his gaze stopped on a long dagger lying on the tatami near one corner. He walked toward it.

TMI + Missed Opportunity

7:34PM

THE FIX (AMOS DECKER BOOK 3)

pistol riding in a belt holster on his waistband. Fully loaded with its standard thirteen-round mag, it weighed thirty-six ounces. His size fourteen shoes hit the pavement with noisy splats. His hair was, to put it kindly, disheveled. Decker worked at the FBI on a joint task force. He was on his way to a meeting at the Hoover Building.

He was not looking forward to it. He sensed that a change was coming, and Decker did not like change. He'd experienced enough of it in the last two years to last him a lifetime. He had just settled into a new routine with the FBI and he wanted to keep it that way. Yet apparently that was out of his control.

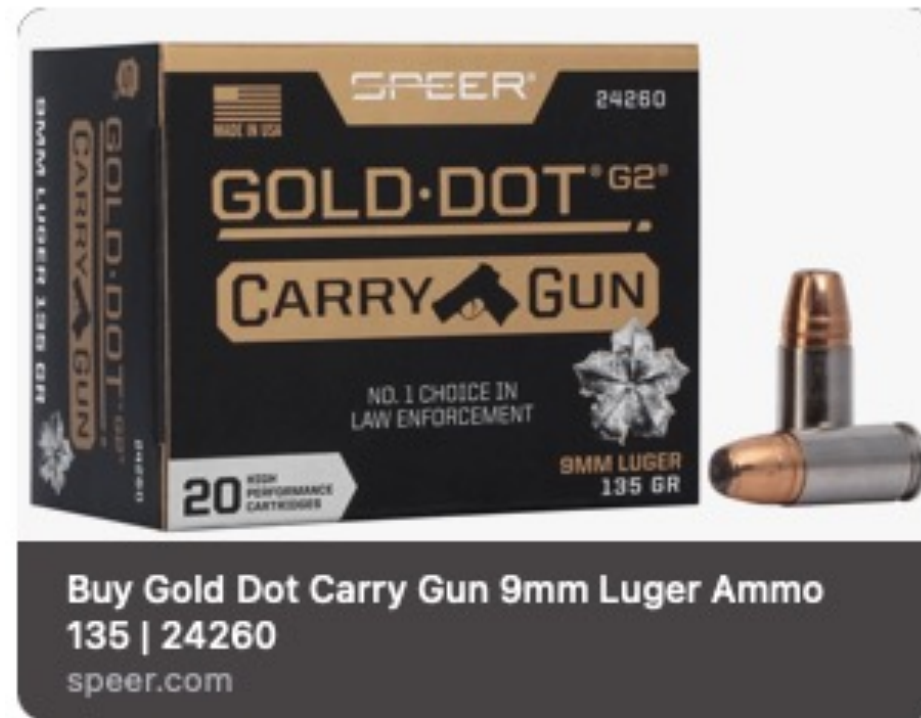
He stepped around a barricade that had been set up on the sidewalk and that stretched partway into the street. A manhole cover surrounded by an orange web barrier had been opened and workers were congregated around

the area. One man in a hard hat emerged at the opening of the manhole and was passed a tool by another man. Most of the other workers stood around, some drinking coffee and others chatting.

Nice work if you can get it, thought Decker.

He saw Dabney up ahead but didn't focus on him. Decker didn't see Berkshire because he wasn't looking that far up the street. He passed by the garage entrance and nodded at the uniformed FBI security officer in a small windowed guard shack situated on the sidewalk. The ramrod-straight man nodded back, his eyes covered by sunglasses as his gaze dutifully swept the street. His right hand was perched on top of his holstered service weapon. It was a nine mil chambered with Speer Gold Dot G2 rounds that the FBI used because of their penetration capability. "One shot, one down" could have been

Nice story bit --
This is why “One
shot, One Kill:
Special, epoxy-
filled space to
control fragments.



<https://www.speer.com/ammunition/gold-dot/gold-dot-carry-gun/19-24260.html>

Another Missed Opportunity -
“Glock” is usually 9mm ... but this is .45 so clue in the reader

6:58 PM

THE FIX (AMOS DECKER BOOK 3)

cealed both his belly and the Glock 41 Gen4 pistol riding in a belt holster on his waistband. Fully loaded with its standard thirteen-round mag, it weighed thirty-six ounces. His size fourteen shoes hit the pavement with noisy splats. His hair was, to put it kindly, disheveled. Decker worked at the FBI on a joint task force. He was on his way to a meeting at the Hoover Building.

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< Result 1 of 2 >



Magnum Power!!!!!!!

7:46 PM

DAUGHTER OF GOD

if she shot the cook. Engels was hired to protect the cardinal at all costs.

So Engels returned the Magnum's aim toward the man, centered the sights so the slug would hit him in the small of the back. Rolf had seen the power of the .44 Magnum. He had once fired one at the rear of a fleeing car. The slug had passed through the trunk, through the person in the backseat, through the driver, through the dashboard, and into the engine compartment, with enough force to stall the engine. At the very least, this man's spinal cord would be shattered, his heart pulverized, and the entire front of his chest ripped away with the insides exposed. He squeezed the trigger.

Just then, Seth bent over to gather the box and its contents, and the .44 Magnum's slug passed through the space his chest had occupied just instants before.

"Get down, Zoe!" Seth yelled when he heard the Magnum's cannonlike report. He dropped to his knees next to Braun as a second shot boomed through the kitchen. Somewhere behind him Seth heard a hiss, and moments later smelled natural gas.

"Turn off the stove, Heinrich!" Rolf cursed at himself. His second shot had smashed into the pastry ovens and had undoubtedly shattered a gas valve or pipe. Rolf looked over and saw that Heinrich was still huddled on the floor next to the woman. The former mountain trooper hurdled the counter and turned off the gas under the stew pot, almost ripping the cowl- ing from the stove and throwing the hot stew on the floor.

Zoe saw the huge man vault over the counter and as she crouched on the floor, pointed her



Result 36 of 42



Pistol + Context

7:38 PM

DAUGHTER OF GOD

He crawled frantically now, oblivious to the sharp edges of the culvert joints.

The bright circle of daylight ahead of him grew larger and brighter until finally his head emerged and then the rest of his body.

Gasping for breath, he rolled away from the pipe and lay there a few seconds.

“Don’t move, Mr. Ridgeway.”

Seth froze. Time stopped.

“Turn over slowly and get up.”

Seth rolled over slowly onto his back and then began to rise to his feet. In front of him was a man with a toothbrush mustache and a trilby hat. He held the ugly, stubby H&K MP5A machine pistol favored by the British SAS and the German commandos who had freed the Israeli hostages in Munich. It was a fast and deadly weapon at close range. The man saw him eyeing the H&K.

“Don’t try anything foolish,” the man said. “It will shorten your life considerably.”

“Go ahead.” Seth heard the voice at the other end of the culvert dimly as if through an old-fashioned megaphone. An instant later a gunshot, followed by three more.

The man in the trilby jumped and looked at the mouth of the culvert. It was all the diversion Ridgeway needed. He leaped on the man, slammed an elbow into his face, and raised his knee into the man’s crotch. Seth felt the man’s testicles flatten out under the impact. The man’s trilby flew through the air as he doubled up in pain.

Seth grabbed the machine pistol from the man’s weakened grasp and started to run. The man began to scream.

“Over here! He’s over here.”



Result 5 of 22



Pistol Vs. Rifle

7:35 PM

DAUGHTER OF GOD

He had nearly gained the shoulder of the road when he saw the man step out of the woods on the other side. Seth saw him raise a rifle to his shoulder. Reflexively, Seth fell to his face and reached for his Magnum. An instant later he saw a slug gouge pebbles and stone fragments from the road just in front of his face. Oblivious to the gunman behind him, Seth leaped to his feet and brought the Magnum to bear.

The man with the rifle saw him and tried to get off a shot. But a rifle, though more accurate from longer distances than a **pistol**, is an awkward weapon. Seth sighted on the man's chest and squeezed the trigger. An instant later he watched with satisfaction as the slug hammered into the man's midsection, lifting him off his feet and twisting him around in the air. The last image Seth kept in his mind before he dropped on all fours was the sight of the red

gaping hole in the man's back, trailing pieces of his entrails.

Seth tucked the Magnum back in his coat pocket and rolled toward a culvert. It was his only way to escape. To cross the road would give his killers a clear, sure shot at him.

Behind him, Seth heard the crashing sounds of men running through the woods. He took a quick, doubtful look at the culvert. His shoulders were broad and the culvert was narrow. If he got stuck or took too long in transiting it, he would be a sucker's target.

But it was his only chance.

Seth took a quick roll in the muck at the mouth of the culvert with an eye to being as slippery as possible, then plunged in. Inside, the pipe seemed to act as an amplifier; his quick desperate breaths came to his ears like frantic screams. It also snared and amplified the sounds



Result 4 of 22



Hollow- Points... Except Not

8:09 PM

JACK REACHER: ONE SHOT: A NOVEL

“Were we right to keep this away from the FBI?”

“It wasn’t terrorism. It was a lone nut. We’ve seen them before.”

“I want to be able to sound confident about bringing this one in.”

“I know,” Emerson said.

“So how confident can I sound?”

“So far we’ve got good stuff, but not great stuff.”

The Chief nodded and said nothing.

At nine o’clock exactly, Emerson took a call from the pathologist. His staff had X-rayed all five heads. Massive tissue damage, entry and exit wounds, no lodged bullets.

“Hollow points,” the pathologist said. “All of them through and through.”

Emerson turned and looked at the ornamental pool. *Six bullets in there*, he thought. Five

through-and-throughs, and one miss. The pool was finally empty by nine-fifteen. The fire department hoses started sucking air. All that was left was a quarter-inch of scummy grit, and a lot of trash. Emerson had the lights reangled and sent twelve recruits from the Academy over the walls, six from one end and six from the other.

The crime-scene techs in the parking garage extension logged forty-eight footprints going and forty-four coming back. The perp had been confident but wary on the way in, and striding longer on the way out. In a hurry. The footprints were size eleven. They found fibers on the last pillar before the northeast corner. Mercerized cotton, at a guess, from a pale-colored raincoat, at shoulder-blade height, like the guy had pressed his back against the raw concrete and then slid around it for a look out into the plaza.

Location 308 of 637

46%

From a technical/forensics perspective...Unlikely



Hollow-point ammunition is specifically designed to expand upon impact and transfer its energy into the target rather than passing through. With a head shot, the bullet would typically expand significantly upon hitting bone, making a through-and-through unlikely. The hollow-point would generally expend most of its energy and fragment within the cranial cavity.



This reduced likelihood of exit wounds is one reason hollow-points are commonly used by law enforcement - they reduce the risk of the bullet passing through and hitting unintended targets.



This also affects evidence collection in your story, as investigators would likely find bullet fragments rather than an intact round.

Common Errors - 1

- “Thumbing back the hammer” on automatic pistols before every shot, Old school ... 1911 Colt Auto and similar semiautos from the 1950s and before.
- No such thing as a “silencer.” Neither whisper-quiet “suppressors” with a soft “pfft” sound. In reality often around 130 decibels
- “Double action” is often misunderstood. Some authors describe it as meaning the gun fires two rounds with one trigger pull, when it actually refers to a trigger mechanism that both cocks and releases the hammer with a single pull.
- Massive guns like .44 Magnums being fired one-handed, or have smaller characters handling very powerful firearms without any difficulty managing the recoil.

Common Errors - 2

1. Magazine vs. Clip: A magazine is a spring-loaded device that feeds ammunition into the firing chamber. A clip is a simpler device that holds ammunition together to aid in loading. For example, an M1 Garand uses an en-bloc clip, while a 1911 pistol uses a magazine. When an author uses "clip" for a modern pistol, it's typically incorrect.
2. Revolver Mechanics: Revolvers use a cylinder that rotates to align each chamber with the barrel. They cannot accept magazines or clips. They can use speedloaders (which hold rounds in the same pattern as the cylinder) or moon clips (flat pieces of metal that hold rounds together in the correct pattern), but these are different from magazines.
3. Different firearms have different safety systems:
 - Glocks use multiple internal safeties but no external manual safety
 - 1911-style pistols typically have an external manual safety and grip safety
 - Most modern revolvers rely on heavy double-action trigger pulls as their primary safety

Common Errors - 3

- Characters firing more rounds than their weapon can hold without reloading.
- Standard capacities: Glock 17 (17+1), 1911 (7+1 or 8+1), Six-shot revolvers
- Look for a greatly extended list at www.lewisperdue.com
- Using "bullets" when referring to complete cartridges (actual bullet, casing, propellant, primer)
- Mixing up caliber designations (.45 ACP called .45 Long Colt)
- Using incorrect terminology for parts (hammer instead of striker, etc.)

Not All Handguns Are Pistols!

A handgun is the broader category that includes both pistols and revolvers. The main technical distinctions are:

- Pistols have a magazine that holds ammunition and a chamber that is integral to the barrel. When fired, the slide moves back to eject the spent casing and load a new round. Common examples include the Glock 17 and Colt 1911.
- Revolvers have a rotating cylinder that holds ammunition in separate chambers. When fired, the cylinder rotates to align the next round with the barrel. Classic examples include the Smith & Wesson Model 686 and Colt Python.
- So, while all pistols are handguns, not all handguns are pistols. Using these terms interchangeably is a common mistake in casual conversation and media, but the distinction matters for technical accuracy and proper firearm handling.

Maintenance and Handling Errors

- Never cleaning guns after water exposure. Especially saltwater.
- No mention of lubrication or maintenance
- Handling hot suppressors immediately after firing
- Storing loaded firearms without consideration of springs
- Military/Law Enforcement Specific:
 - Wrong ammunition types for service weapons
 - Incorrect manual of arms for specific platforms
 - Misidentifying standard issue weapons
 - Wrong capacity for military magazines

Resources

1. **Wikipedia**
2. **Smith & Wesson, Gun Smarts:** <https://www.smith-wesson.com/gunsmarts>
3. **The Writer's Forensics Blog** by Dr. D.P. Lyle - writersforensicsblog.wordpress.com - Managed by Dr. D.P. Lyle, this blog delves into the technicalities of firearms and knives, offering insights that can enhance the realism of crime scenes and action sequences in your writing.
4. **ThrillWriting** by Fiona Quinn - thrillwriting.blogspot.com - This site, operated by Fiona Quinn, covers a wide range of topics including weapons, the legal system, and first responders. It's a comprehensive resource for getting the details right when writing about crime and action.
5. **Firearms Tutorial** on Writing World - webpath.med.utah.edu/TUTORIAL/GUNS/GUNINTRO.html - Available on the Writing World website, this tutorial provides a foundational understanding of different types of firearms, ammunition, and the injuries they can cause, which is crucial for creating accurate and believable scenarios involving guns.
6. **The Writer's Guide to Weapons** on the Crime Fiction Book blog - crimefictionbook.com - This guide offers practical advice on how to integrate firearms into your narratives correctly, helping to avoid common mistakes that could detract from a story's credibility.
7. **American Conceal and Carry** - americanconcealandcarry.com - This site lists the most reliable firearms for mystery writers, offering descriptions that can help you choose the right weapon for your protagonist or antagonist, based on the traits and symbolism you want to convey. These resources offer not only specific details about various firearms but also general advice on crafting realistic and engaging crime and action scenes. They can help ensure that your depiction of firearms enhances the authenticity and tension in your stories.

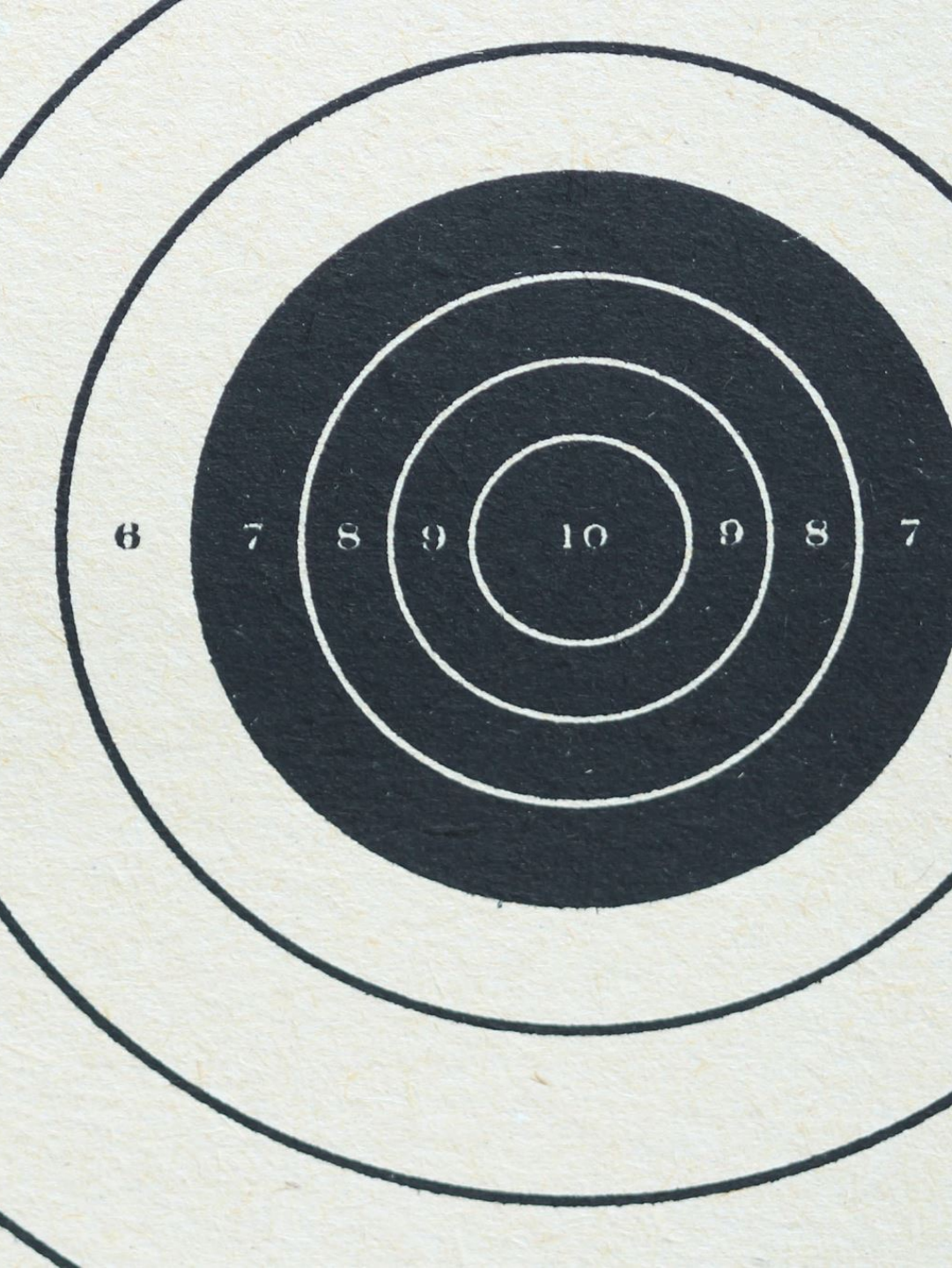


Exercise One: Build-A-Shooter

1. Imagine a violence-related role you want a character to fill, be it protagonist or expendable goon.
2. Use the following questions and five minutes to build the character into a three-dimensional person who can engage your reader's emotions.
3. If you are comfortable doing so, briefly describe the character to the class and explain why you made the choices you did.

Exercise Questions

1. Why a gun? (Or a sword? Or a duck?) What does the character want to accomplish? Is a gun the best way for your character to accomplish the goal?
2. What does the gun mean to the character? Gun as terror. Gun as overcoming obstacle. Gun as motive. Gun as motivating others. Gun as ultimate downfall/victory?
3. Does the gun define the character or does the character define the gun?
4. Does your character know how to use a gun? What's their background? Do we see them train? Is your character a private citizen or a member of an organization where lethal force is authorized?
5. What is it about the character, the goal, and the circumstances make the gun inevitable? Is soul-searching involved, or cold logic? Is the logic rational or detached from reality?
6. If your character doesn't have a gun, how do they acquire it? How do they do that without leaving tracks that lead to their capture, or is that not an issue?
7. Does having a gun spark the character's imagination for how it can be used? Is the acquisition an accident? Does having one suggest its use to solve a personal problem? Does the gun represent a way to accomplish a benefit (righting a wrong) for a community as a whole?



Firearm Handling

- Muzzle Discipline
- Trigger Discipline
- Clearing, and when a weapon is loaded/locked and loaded.
- Target, Backstop, and Beyond
- Unfamiliar weapons



Firearm Training

- Ease of training with guns vs. bows or throwing knives
- Stress acclimation
- Hearing loss
- Individual movement, cover, and concealment
- Skill Rust



Violence Culture

- Terminology and gatekeeping among “gun people”
- Hurting people as a transgressive act
- Black Humor
- “Stone cold killers:” What they are and are not
- Snipers: What they are, and are not

Military Sniper

Typical Psychological Characteristics

- Exceptional emotional control and ability to maintain composure under extreme pressure
- Higher than average scores on introversion scales - comfortable with solitude and self-reliance
- Strong attention to detail and methodical thinking patterns
- High cognitive control - ability to focus for extended periods
- Above average emotional stability and stress resilience

Key Motivations

- Strong sense of duty and mission-focused mindset
- Protection of fellow service members
- Technical mastery and professional excellence
- Belief in the strategic importance of their role
- Service to country/unit rather than personal glory

Common Emotional Impacts

- Heightened situational awareness that often persists in civilian life
- Post-mission processing of lethal action decisions
- Complex emotional relationship with the intimate nature of their work
- Potential isolation due to the unique nature of their experiences
- Maintaining emotional distance while still acknowledging the gravity of their actions

Coping Strategies

- Rigorous compartmentalization between mission and personal life
- Strong emphasis on training and preparation to build confidence
- Unit cohesion and peer support from other snipers
- Focus on the protective aspect of their role
- Structured decompression routines post-deployment
- Regular physical training and stress management techniques
- Clear mission-focused decision-making frameworks
- **The full text behind this summary can be found at:**
<https://lewisperdue.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/SniperCharacteristics.docx>

Criminal Sniper

Key Differentiators from Military

- Typically acts alone rather than as part of unit
- Often lacks formal marksmanship training
- Usually motivated by personal rather than mission objectives
- Generally shows higher scores on narcissistic traits

Common Characteristics

- High level of premeditation and planning
- Detail-oriented but may lack professional discipline
- Often has prior firearms experience/fascination
- History of fantasy/planning around long-range shooting
- May have attempted or considered military/law enforcement career

Motivational Patterns

- Contract killers: Financial motivation, professional detachment
- Terrorists: Ideological motivation, maximum impact
- Personal vengeance: Emotional motivation, specific target

Developmental Patterns

- High incidence of childhood emotional neglect rather than physical abuse
- Often experienced inconsistent parenting - particularly shifting between excessive control and complete abandonment
- Frequently report feeling "invisible" or "overlooked" in childhood
- May have excelled in solitary activities but struggled with peer relationships
- Common pattern of early fascination with power and control mechanisms
- Often experienced significant loss or betrayal in adolescence

Psychological Dysfunctions

- High incidence of schizoid personality traits (emotional detachment, preference for solitude)
- Frequently display obsessive-compulsive tendencies in planning
- May exhibit dissociative traits during acts
- Often show signs of arrested emotional development
- Complex PTSD patterns from prolonged childhood emotional trauma
- Difficulty with intimate relationships but can maintain superficial social functioning
- **The full text behind this summary can be found at: a <https://lewisperdue.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/SniperCharacteristics.docx>**

Mass Shooters vs. Criminal Snipers

Planning and Control

- Mass shooters often act on emotional impulse or crisis points
- Typically have a shorter planning phase than snipers
- Less concerned with escape/survival
- Often expect and plan for their own death
- More chaotic execution, less precision
- Seek immediate gratification/impact

Emotional State During Acts

- Mass shooters frequently in heightened emotional state
- Often acting during personal crisis/breakdown
- Seek close engagement with victims
- Want to see/experience immediate impact
- May verbally engage with victims
- Often driven by rage/despair rather than cold calculation

Psychological Profile

- Higher rates of active mental illness
- More likely to have recent trauma/crisis
- Often socially isolated but desperately want recognition
- More likely to broadcast intentions beforehand
- Stronger need for infamy/attention
- Less ability to maintain normal social functioning
- More likely to have recent substance abuse issues
- **The full text behind this summary can be found at: a <https://lewisperdue.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/SniperCharacteristics.docx>**

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide. It features two overlapping circles: a larger white one on top and a smaller orange one on the bottom. To the left of the circles are two white wavy lines. A blue pencil is positioned diagonally across the white circle. Below the orange circle is a grid of small white dots.

Exercise Two: A Fight!

1. Take your character from exercise one and put them in an imaginary fight against an opponent they would be likely to encounter.
2. Use the following questions to determine how they would react.
3. If you find they don't handle it well, that's a great result!

Exercise Questions

1. Going into the fight, how stress acclimated is your character?
2. What is your character's knowledge of tactics? Are those tactics appropriate for their current environment?
3. Is your character morally capable of using the gun? If not, how do they need to change to be able to use it? What internal or external event is needed to spark that change?
4. Will they agonize over moral qualms when it's time to pull the trigger or are they... let's call it task oriented?
5. How do they react to return fire?
6. How do they react to a close call, or being injured?
7. How do they react to an innocent in the crossfire?
8. How do they react once the danger is over?

People Remain People

- The behavior of humans engaged in organized violence seems to be constant across history.
- Teamwork is founded on trust. Trust takes time to establish.
- Tactics are determined by environment and equipment.
- The limitations of mercenaries



Tactics

- Fix and maneuver in the open
- Breach and clear in urban environments
- Fire planning and control
- Enfilade and defilade
- Artillery and explosives



Support Functions

- Logistics and supply
- Medical evacuation
- Scouts and reconnaissance



Learning with Nerf

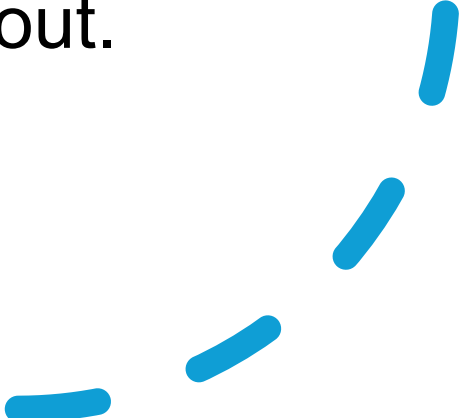
Team up with your fellow students and use the provided Nerf guns to practice these things (or do them wrong on purpose.)

- Muzzle discipline
- Trigger discipline
- Tactical movement
- Suppressing fire
- Breaching a door



Remember:

In the end, good books with guns are not are not stories about guns, but introduce guns as characters with major roles to play. What matters is not the gun, but its active, forceful, and compelling role in exposing the "human heart in conflict with itself" which as William Faulkner said is the only theme worth writing about.



Questions?

