Left-aligned header with your name, your instructor's name, the course name and number, + the date

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John Smith

Instructor Bloom

ENG 101 – Section Number

29 October 2022

1-inch margins all around

Title is centered directly above first paragraph and is not italicized, underlined, or in quotations.

Silencing the Suppressor Myth

Hook: This opening uses a vivid description to draw the reader in.

A shadowy figure prowls along rooftops, slinking as quietly as a cat on the hunt. They aim their pistol, fitted with a suppressor, and fire a round at an unseen target. The sound their weapon makes is no louder than a bee in flight. This depiction of the firearm suppressor has been used countless times in film, television, and other media. Despite how pervasive this image has become, the portrayal lacks any foundation in the science and actual usage of suppressors. The ultimate victims in this misrepresentation are the hearing of firearm users and bystanders who suffer from inadequate noise protection. Film and media's portrayal of firearm suppressors has created a persistent myth that prevents effective hearing protection for firearm owners and the general public from being readily accessible.

The thesis appears at the end of the introduction. Notice how it clearly states the paper's main argument and previews what will be discussed.

A story told a thousand times begins to be accepted as truth, regardless of its accuracy. This is the dilemma facing the suppressor today. While many point to the "Gangster Era" Hollywood films of the 1920s and 1930s as the source of suppressor stigma, a more significant factor shaped current policy. William T. Hornaday, director of the Bronx Zoo, published an influential book in 1913 arguing that overhunting threatened American wildlife, and suppressors exacerbated the problem. However, Hornaday's true concern was not the hunting itself but the identity of the hunters. As legal scholar David Kopel notes, "According to Hornaday, one

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For in-text citations, MLA format uses author-page format: (Author Page). Notice how the citations flow naturally with the sentence structure and how the author introduced the source with credentials earlier in this paragraph ("As legal scholar David Kopel notes..."). Direct quotes are placed in quotation marks.

problem was that modern guns were too accurate. In Wyoming, hunters were using silencers so one shot didn't frighten away other game" (2). Hornaday's solution targeted economic and racial minorities, advocating for prohibitive taxation. He "favored an Alabama proposal for an annual tax of at least $5 a year on every firearm, to prevent poor people from owning inexpensive guns" (Kopel 3). This discriminatory approach became foundational to the National Firearms Act of 1934. While the NFA was publicly justified as targeting dangerous criminals, it primarily affected law-abiding citizens who lacked the financial means to pay the substantial federal taxes. The legislation's actual impact reveals its flawed premise:

> Those men had the money to still afford these weapons; it was just those without the financial means that were kept on the outside. Economic and racial tensions drove this agenda to some degree, along with the outlandish and ethnic stereotypes used in the gangster films of the early twentieth century. (Kopel 6)

A "block quote" format is used for quotes of 4+ lines: Indent 0.5" from left margin - No quotation marks - Double-spaced - Citation after final punctuation - Introduce with your own words above quote. Follow with analysis that connects to your argument

This historical context demonstrates how policy decisions based on prejudice rather than scientific evidence continue to influence contemporary access to hearing protection technology.

Paraphrased quotes are not in quotations but are cited in parentheses.

Scientific evidence reveals that suppressors function as hearing protection devices rather than the "silencing" tools portrayed in popular media. Firearms produce sound levels ranging from 140 to 170 decibels, equivalent to standing on an aircraft carrier deck or near a jet engine during takeoff (Purdue 3). These levels cause immediate and permanent hearing damage without proper protection. When fitted with a suppressor, firearm noise drops by approximately 30 decibels, reducing the sound to 110-130 decibels—still equivalent to a rock concert or thunderclap (Meinke et al. 5). This reduction, while significant for hearing preservation, hardly creates the silent weapons depicted in Hollywood. Furthermore, crime statistics contradict fears

about suppressor misuse. Between 1995 and 2005, only 153 federal prosecutions involved suppressors, with the majority involving possession by prohibited persons rather than criminal use. In only 2% of cases was the firearm actually discharged during a crime (Kopel 6). These data suggest that suppressors pose minimal public safety risks while offering substantial benefits for hearing conservation.

The hearing protection benefits of suppressors extend beyond individual users to entire communities. Recreational shooters and hunters suffer disproportionately high rates of noise-induced hearing loss despite using traditional ear protection. Research published in *Seminars in Hearing* demonstrates that combining suppressors with subsonic ammunition produces "peak SPLs [sound pressure levels] for the subsonic ammunition ranged from 100 to 132 dB SPL in the suppressed conditions. The levels were 127 to 149 dB SPL for the unsuppressed conditions" (Meinke et al. 16). This represents a significant improvement in hearing safety for millions of Americans who engage in shooting sports. Additionally, communities near shooting ranges and hunting areas experience reduced noise pollution when suppressors are used, similar to how automotive mufflers reduce traffic noise in residential areas. The current regulatory framework, which treats suppressors as dangerous weapons rather than safety equipment, denies these benefits to those who would use them responsibly.

Evidence Integration: Notice how statistics are introduced, cited properly, and then followed by the author's analysis of what the data means. The author explains the significance rather than letting numbers speak for themselves.

The perpetuation of suppressor myths through popular media has created a policy framework that prioritizes unfounded fears over public health benefits. While Hollywood continues to portray suppressors as tools of silent assassination, scientific evidence demonstrates their value as hearing protection devices. The historical record reveals that current regulations originated from discriminatory motivations rather than legitimate public safety concerns. Given

the minimal criminal use of suppressors and their proven benefits for hearing conservation, rational policy would treat these devices as safety equipment rather than prohibited weapons. The true cost of maintaining the current system is not measured in dollars but in the preventable hearing damage suffered by firearm users and nearby communities who lack access to this proven protective technology.

The conclusion restates the thesis in new words, summarizes key points, and ends with a memorable final thought that reinforces the main argument. Notice how it synthesizes rather than just repeats information.

WORKS CITED FORMAT
- New page
- Works Cited title centered.
-Alphabetical by author's last name.
- Hanging indent (first line flush left, subsequent lines indented 0.5")
- Double-spaced throughout and follows MLA guidelines

Works Cited

Kopel, David. "The Hearing Protection Act and 'Silencers.'" *The Washington Post*, 19 June 2017, www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokh-conspiracy/wp/2017/06/19/the-hearing-protection-act-and-silencers/.

Meinke, Deanna K, et al. "Prevention of Noise-Induced Hearing Loss from Recreational Firearms." *Seminars in Hearing*, vol. 38, no. 4, Nov. 2017, pp. 6-16, *National Center for Biotechnology Information*, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5634813/.

Purdue University. "Noise Sources and Their Effects." *Purdue University Department of Chemistry*, Feb. 2020, www.chem.purdue.edu/chemsafety/Training/PPETrain/dblevels.htm.