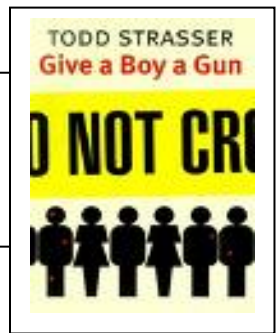




10th Grade
Give a Boy a Gun by Todd Strasser



Author Bio:

Todd Strasser writes his books largely out of his own experience or remembered feeling, and always with his readers in mind. He tries to observe young people whenever he can, and when he can't, he will eavesdrop on their conversations in places where they hang out. One of his favorite things to do is visit schools, where he talks about what it's like to be a writer. "Then, after I speak," he says, "I listen to the audience. I can learn as much from them as they can from me. Strasser grew up in a suburb of New York City, and says he was an "underachiever" in school. "I was a poor writer, a terrible speller, and wasn't given any encouragement at all until I got to college." Todd Strasser is not just an "author" but a writer in the fullest sense. He contributes articles to such periodicals as the *New Yorker*, *Esquire*, *The New York Times*, and *The Village Voice*. He writes for television, too, and has adapted novels from movies (such as *Free Willy*) and TV films (such as *The Wave*) into well-crafted novels that children can enjoy as a reading experience. "It's fun to write novelizations like *Home Alone* and *Free Willy*. I also find that these books help me establish a rapport with young people. It seems to make them eager to read my other books." Todd Strasser believes that "most kids today want books with characters they can identify with. They want to be entertained, not preached to. I try to make my books funny, but not frivolous." Young people, he believes, face the same predicaments regardless of their generation. "The kind of music changes, or what they wear may change, but dealing with being popular, friends of the opposite sex, or questions of morality and decency . . . those things don't really change."

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Novel Synopsis:

BANG!

Gunshots echo through the gym. Two heavily armed students, Gary and Brendan, hold their classmates hostage at a high school dance. Their targets: the football players and teachers who have tormented them. Their weapons: semiautomatic rifles stolen from a neighbor. Their motive: revenge. In *Give a Boy a Gun*, the interweaving voices of students, teachers, friends, and the gunmen themselves re-create the harrowing crisis at Middletown High and the reasons behind Gary and Brendan's rampage. Mirroring the voices on each page are facts about guns and school violence that offer a blistering counterpoint to a tragedy that rings dreadfully true to life. A stunning work of fiction taken straight from today's headlines, *Give a Boy a Gun* is a stirring wake-up call to stop the violence and explore the role of guns in the lives of teenagers.

