**Wednesday, 9 January 2019**

**Today is**

* International Choreographer’s Day
* National Word Nerd Day
* National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

**On This Day in History:**

1431: The trial of Joan of Arc began.

1861: A cadet at the Citadel in South Carolina fired two cannon shots at a ship attempting to bring supplies to soldiers at Fort Sumter in Charleston. While war was not yet declared, this marked the first time a soldier from a secessionist state fired on representatives of the Union army.

**Agenda:**

1. Today we are going to look at how our personal experiences and biases, as well as common experiences we face as a community or country, shape our view of reality.
2. (Quick write) What are some “turning points” in American history – those significant events that sparked strong opinions and emotions in the population and ultimately led to widespread change in perception or policy? Now pick one of the events you noted and try to explain the following: What was “reality” before each event, and what was “reality” after? In other words, what changed, and how did that change lead to a “new normal” behavior, attitude, tradition, view, etc. for the American people?
3. Discuss a few student responses.
4. Now, let’s look at a current event. Consider what you already know about the ongoing government shutdown. You may want to quickly jot down a few thoughts if you already have a good idea about what it is and why it is happening. Additionally (or otherwise, for those who do not know or understand why our government is shut down and what that means), read one or more of the following articles. Jot down some notes as you go, as you will need them for our subsequent activity and discussion. You are also free to do some additional research. If you do so, please be sure to document your source by, at a minimum, noting the article title and news outlet.

* [US Government Shutdown: How Did We Get Here?](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-39698546)
* [What is a Government Shutdown?](https://www.thebalance.com/government-shutdown-3305683)
* [Government Shutdown: Trump Appeals to US TV Audience Over Wall](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-46792676)
* [Georgia Lawmakers React to Trump Border Wall Speech](https://www.ajc.com/news/state--regional-govt--politics/georgia-lawmakers-react-trump-border-wall-speech/pSWO2gpA69gyNi0v8Arl2J/)

1. Answer the following questions on your own paper. We will later discuss as a class.

* Why is the US government shut down?
* Based on your understanding of our political system, how can the US government shut down? What are some positives and negatives that can come of a shutdown of this type?
* What does each side believe in this particular shutdown?
* Which side do you support? Why?
* What does your answer to the previous question reveal about what is important to you?
* Critical Analysis: How have your own biases (or even prejudices, in some cases) influenced your responses? Consider briefly what might have influenced others to feel differently than you. What does his/her opinion reveal about what is important to him/her? Knowing that your opinion in this matter is a result of your own experiences and beliefs, and understanding that other people may have vastly different experiences, do you believe that you can listen to the other viewpoints with an open mind and without emotion?
* PROVE IT: Discussion

Do you believe this government shutdown and the ideas that led to it may be yet another turning point for the American people? Why or why not?