

**Washington's Closed:
The 2013 Government Shutdown**

Overview

One of the biggest news stories of 2013 was the federal government shutdown. In this lesson, students will learn about the causes and results of the shutdown through a variety of activities. Students begin by discussing the role of the federal government by reviewing federal budget and the services provided by the federal government via a PowerPoint discussion. A short reading provides some background information about past government shutdowns. Next, students participate in a "Shutdown Summit" role play where they assume the role of a Republican or Democratic politician and attempt to negotiate a deal to end the shutdown. Then, students will review a timeline and political cartoons explaining the shutdown and compare their shutdown solutions to the actual shutdown solution. Finally, students will read and discuss an article about the effects of the shutdown.

Grade

10 & 11

NC Essential Standards for Civics & Economics

- **CE.C&G.1.5:** Evaluate the fundamental principles of American politics in terms of the extent to which they have been used effectively to maintain constitutional democracy in the United States
- **CE.C&G.2.7:** Analyze contemporary issues and governmental responses at the local, state, and national levels in terms of how they promote the public interest and/or general welfare.
- **CE.C&G.20:** Analyze America's two-party system in terms of the political and economic views that led to its emergence and the role that political parties play in American politics.
- **CE.C&G.3.2:** Compare the lawmaking processes of federal, state, and local governments
- **CE.C&G.3.3:** Analyze laws and policies in terms of their intended purposes, who has authority to create them and how they are enforced
- **CE.C&G.3.6:** Explain ways laws have been influenced by political parties, constituents, interest groups, lobbyists, the media and public opinion
- **CE.C&G.5.5:** Analyze the developments and implementation of domestic and foreign policy by outlining opposing arguments on major issues and their efforts toward resolutions

Materials

- Computer w/ internet access and projector
- "Washington's Closed: The 2013 Government Shutdown" PowerPoint. Available in the Database of K-12 Resources:
 - <http://database.civics.unc.edu/>
- "The Government Shutdown What?!?!?" Scenario handout, attached (p. 12)
- "A Short History of Government Shutdowns" handout, attached (p. 13)
- "2013 Government Shutdown Notes" handout, attached (p. 14)
- "Comparing Republicans and Democrats" handout, attached (p. 15-16)
- Shutdown Summit Role handouts, attached (p. 17 – 24)
 - President Barack Obama (p. 17)

- Senator Ted Cruz (p. 18)
- Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (p. 19)
- Speaker John Boehner (p. 20)
- House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (p. 21)
- Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (p. 22)
- Representative Pete King (p. 23)
- All handouts Adapted by the NC Civic Education Consortium from [The Telegraph](#).
Additional quotes were found using Google.
- “2013 Shutdown: How Did We Get Here? Timeline” handout, attached (p. 24 – 25)
- “Analyzing Political Cartoons” handout, attached (p. 26)
- “US government gets back to business as parties feel effects of shutdown crisis” article, attached (p. 27 – 28)
- “US Rep. Mark Meadows’s (R-NC) letter to House Republican Leaders, John Boehner & Eric Cantor” handout, attached (optional) (p. 29)
- “Rep. Mark Meadows pushed for a shutdown. What did it bring his N.C. district? Frustration.” article, attached. (optional) (p. 30 – 31)

Essential Questions:

- What does the federal government do and how is it funded?
- How does the government shutdown?
- Why did the government shutdown in 2013?
- What were the results of the government shutdown?

Duration

- 1 - 2 block periods

Teacher Preparation

- To make transitioning to groups easier during the “Shutdown Summit” activity, teachers may wish to copy the roles on different color handouts in order to ensure that each group does not have multiples of the same role.

Student Preparation

- Provide students with the attached “The Government Shutdown What?!?!” scenario for homework the night before completing this lesson. The scenario can also be assigned as a warm up activity.

Procedure

Homework/Warm Up: The Government Shutdown What?!?! Scenario

1. As a warm up, review the homework assignment: the attached “The Government Shutdown What?!?!” scenario. Discuss the following questions:
 - How do you feel about the government shutdown?
 - What other areas/services might be affected by the government shutdown?
 - Why do you think the government is shut down?

Washington’s Closed PowerPoint Discussion

2. Explain to students that they are going to be participating in a short discussion that covers some basic terms and ideas regarding the federal government's finances. They will learn about (or review) the ways the federal government is funded and what it does with the funding. They will also learn about what federal departments and services are affected during a government shutdown. The questions listed below can be used to foster a class discussion about the federal government's budget and to help students gain a greater understanding of the material. This information will also be useful during the "Shutdown Summit" activity. Teachers can choose whether or not to share the additional information provided below with students.

- **Slide 2: The Federal Budget**

- Do any of you (or anyone you know) follow a budget? Do you think having a personal budget is important? Why or why not?
- *Additional Information: The Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 created the modern framework for the federal budget. It was an attempt to streamline the budget process and to bring more accountability to federal spending. The act created the Bureau of the Budget (renamed Office of Management and Budget) and the General Accounting Office (renamed Government Accountability Office) and required the President to submit a budget to Congress before the first Monday in February.*

- **Slide 3: Congress and the Budget**

- Why do you think the authors of the Constitution felt it was important for Congress to control the budget?
- What are some examples of mandatory spending?
- What are some examples of discretionary spending?

- **Slide 4: Spending**

- What is Social Security?
 - *A federal program that provides monthly payments to people who are retired or disabled.*
- What is Medicare?
 - *A federal program that provides health care for the elderly.*
- What is Medicaid?
 - *A federal, state, and local program that provides health care for people with low incomes or disabilities.*
- What is SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) or "Food Stamps"?
 - *A federal and state program that provides assistance for purchasing food to low income people living in the United States. As of 2012, approximately 15% of Americans receive SNAP benefits, due to ongoing effects from the 2008 financial crisis and subsequent recession. (Source: [Washington Post](#))*
- What else do you know about these programs?
- Do you think that the federal government should pay for these mandatory & discretionary programs and departments?
- How does the federal government pay for these programs and departments?
- How does a budget reflect the priorities of the people in charge of our government?

- **Slide 5: Appropriations Bills**

- What is the “normal bill to law process”?
 - *Bill originates in House, is introduced and then referred to committee. After committee, the bill is reported to the House floor and debated, before being voted on by the House. If it passes the House, it is then referred to the Senate where it follows a similar process to the House. If it is passed by the Senate, it is sent to the President for his signature or veto.*

- **Slide 6: Revenue**
 - ***Additional Information: Forms and Types of Taxes:***
 - ***Progressive Tax:*** *the tax increases as you make more money. The federal government uses a progressive tax code.*
 - ***Proportional Tax:*** *Everyone plays the same percentage of their income. For example: if the tax rate is 10% someone who makes \$1,000 a year will pay \$100 dollars in taxes, while someone who makes \$10,000 will pay \$1,000. Also known as a “flat tax”.*
 - ***Regressive Tax:*** *This is the opposite of a progressive tax – the percentage you pay goes down the more money you make. Examples include sales taxes and gas taxes because they take a larger portion of one’s total income the less you make.*
 - ***Payroll Tax:*** *a tax an employer withholds and/or pays on your behalf of their employees based on the wages or salary of the employee. Social Security & Medicare are funded through payroll taxes.*
 - ***Excise Tax:*** *a tax on the production or sale of specific goods. One example would be the federal and state excise taxes on cigarettes.*
 - ***Estate Tax:*** *a tax imposed on the transfer of the “taxable estate” (life insurance policy, property, bank accounts, etc.) of a deceased person to someone else via a will. The tax usually doesn’t apply if the estate is left to a spouse or a charity. Commonly referred to as a “death tax” by opponents.*

- **Slide 7: Expenditures**
 - What is the federal government’s largest expenditure?
 - *Medicaid & Medicare*
 - Why do you think the federal government spends so much on defense?
 - What is the second largest expenditure?
 - *Social Security*
 - Are you surprised by these numbers? Did you think the federal government spent more on other programs?

- **Slide 8: How Does the Government “Shutdown”?**
 - What do you think are “essential” and “non-essential” services?
 - Do you think you would work without being paid? Why or why not?
 - Do you think there will be another government shutdown in January 2014? Why or why not?
 - ***Additional Information:*** *Since 2010, the federal government has been funded by a series 8 of continuing resolutions. The most recent was signed into law on October 17, 2013 – ending the 2013 Government Shutdown. It funds the federal government until January 15, 2014.*

- **Slide 9: Essential Services**
 - Do you think that any of these services shouldn't be considered "essential"? Why or why not?
 - Are there any services that aren't listed that should be considered "essential"?

- **Slide 10: Non-Essential Services**
 - **Please note: This is not a complete list of all "non-essential services".**
 - **Additional Information:**
 - ***CDC: Center for Disease Control:*** *The CDC's main goal is to protect public health and safety through the control and prevention of disease, injury, and disability. The CDC focuses national attention on developing and applying disease control and prevention. It especially focuses its attention on infectious disease, food borne pathogens, environmental health, occupational safety and health, health promotion, injury prevention and educational activities designed to improve the health of United States citizens. (source: [Wikipedia](#))*
 - ***NIH: National Institute of Health:*** *The NIH both conducts its own scientific research through its Intramural Research Program and provides major biomedical research funding to non-NIH research facilities through its Extramural Research Program. (source: [Wikipedia](#))*
 - ***FDA: Food & Drug Administration:*** *The FDA is responsible for protecting and promoting public health through the regulation and supervision of food safety, tobacco products, dietary supplements, prescription and over-the-counter pharmaceutical drugs (medications), vaccines, biopharmaceuticals, blood transfusions, medical devices, electromagnetic radiation emitting devices (ERED), and veterinary products. (source: [Wikipedia](#))*
 - ***EPA: Environmental Protection Agency:*** *The agency conducts environmental assessment, research, and education. It has the responsibility of maintaining and enforcing national standards under a variety of environmental laws, in consultation with state, tribal, and local governments.(source: [Wikipedia](#))*
 - ***NPS: National Park Service:*** *the agency that manages all national parks, many national monuments, and other conservation and historical properties with various title designations.(source: [Wikipedia](#))*
 - ***WIC: Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, & Children:*** *A program for healthcare and nutrition of low-income pregnant women, breastfeeding women, and infants and children under the age of five. (source: [Wikipedia](#))*
 - ***ICE: Immigration & Customs Enforcement:*** *responsible for identifying, investigating, and dismantling vulnerabilities regarding the nation's border, economic, transportation, and infrastructure security. (source: [Wikipedia](#))*

- What are some problems that could arise if all of these agencies are shutdown?
 - Some examples may include: food borne disease outbreaks, health research delayed, parks/museums closed, people failing to receive government benefits they depend on, etc.

- What issue or issues do you think caused the 2013 Shutdown?

- Do you think the federal government has ever shut down before?

Remind students that each fiscal year the budget allows both parties to advance their ideas by supporting or denying funding to their preferred policies. Usually, both sides negotiate to get most of what their party wants. For example, Democrats can agree to cuts to the EPA in exchange for Republicans agreeing to raise income taxes.

Past Government Shutdowns Reading

3. Share the years of past government shutdowns on slide 11 and pose the following questions to students:
 - Are you surprised by the number of shutdowns?
 - What do you think caused these past shutdowns?
 - Do you think past shutdowns have lasted long as the 2013 Shutdown (16 days)?
 - How do you think Americans reacted to past Shutdowns? Positively? Negatively? With indifference?
4. Distribute the attached, “A Short History of Government Shutdowns” reading, and read it aloud as a class. Once students have finished reading, discuss the questions on slide 12:
 - Why were the government shutdowns before 1980, “not taken seriously at all?”
 - *Previously, the government kept operating without funding. In 1980, Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti issued a legal opinion stating that the government cannot keep operating until Congress authorizes funding. He later amended it to exempt “essential” government workers from being furloughed.*
 - After Civiletti’s opinions, why was the 1995 shutdown different than previous shutdowns?
 - *It lasted longer than any shutdown post-1980 and the shutdown itself was used as a negotiating tool rather than a result of failing to pass a budget due to disagreements between parties and branches of government.*
 - Since the President has the power to declare which employees are essential and non-essential, why do you think the President doesn’t declare all the functions of the federal government essential to keep the government operating?
 - How might we avoid government shutdowns in the future?

Events Leading to the 2013 Shutdown

5. Before discussing the 2013 Shutdown, explain to students that around the same time of the 2013 Shutdown, the government was close to breaching the debt ceiling. Some of the material they will be encountering will mention the debt ceiling or debt limit, so it is important that they have a basic understanding of its importance. Slides 13 & 14 provide a very basic overview of the debt ceiling and its role in the 2013 Shutdown.

Teacher Note: Additional information about the debt ceiling can be found on the US Treasury’s website: <http://www.treasury.gov/initiatives/pages/debtlimit.aspx>

6. It is also important that students have an understanding of the ACA or “Obamacare” – which was central to the 2013 Shutdown. Provide students with the attached “2013 Shutdown Notes” handout. Tell students to fill out “Part I” while watching a short 7 minute video about the ACA.

The link is included on slide 15, but you can access the video directly from the Kaiser Family Foundation website:

- <http://kff.org/health-reform/video/youtoons-obamacare-video/>
- Link includes instructions on how to download the video and/or play it directly through a web browser.

7. After watching the video, move to slide 16, which contains a public opinion poll about the ACA from Gallup. Ask students to consider the poll before discussing the following questions from the “2013 Shutdown Notes Handout”:

- What are the four main ways people are covered by the ACA?
 - *Employer, Government, Individual, None*
- What are some advantages of the ACA?
 - *Answers will vary, but may include: Free preventative care, caps on out of pocket costs, tax breaks for small companies offering insurance, insurers are prohibited from inflating prices, Medicaid expansion, Federal Government covers almost all of the costs if states expand Medicaid, health insurance marketplace (state & federal), tax credits for affordability, people can't be denied insurance based on pre-existing conditions, gender neutral pricing, lower costs for the elderly, young people can stay on their parents' insurance until 26, young people can buy catastrophic plans until they're 30*
- What are some disadvantages?
 - *Answers will vary, but may include: higher costs for some younger people, the individual mandate, higher taxes*
- What is the “individual mandate”?
 - *An individual must buy insurance (if not provided by government or employer). If they don't, they have to pay a fine.*
- Where does the ACA's funding come from?
 - *Taxes on the medical health industry, tanning salons, wealthy individuals, hospitals and insurance companies.*
- Do most Americans approve or disapprove of the ACA? Why do you think most Americans feel this way?
- Do you approve or disapprove of the ACA after watching the video? Why?

2013 Shutdown

7. Explain to students that they will now be taking a more in-depth look at the 2013 Shutdown by participating in a mock meeting between political leaders and by exploring various mediums – political cartoons, time lines, etc. Review the events leading to the 2013 Shutdown on slides 17–22. These slides are only intended as a very brief overview of some of the major events that led to the shutdown. Not all events – for example, the “fiscal cliff” – are covered. Discuss the following questions:

- Slide 17:
 - Why do you think that despite the ACA's relative unpopularity, it passed both houses and was signed into law?
 - Why do you think no Republicans voted in favor of the ACA?
- Slide 18:

- The president negotiated to raise the debt ceiling in 2011, how might this impact the 2013 Shutdown?
- If you were President Obama, what would you have done?
- Slide 19:
 - Why do you think the “Super Committee” was created when we already have a normal budget process in the House and Senate?
 - Why do you think the “Super Committee” failed?
- Slide 20:
 - How do you think the 2012 election contributes to the 2013 Shutdown?
 - Does President Obama’s reelection tell you anything about the popularity of the ACA? If so, what?
- Slide 21:
 - Even if Republican attempts to defund the ACA were successful in the House and Senate, why would they ultimately fail?
 - Do you think Republicans should just forget about defunding the ACA? Why or why not?

Optional Activity: Project or distribute the attached letter from North Carolina Rep. Mark Meadows (on p. 29) urging Speaker John Boehner to shut down the government unless the ACA is defunded. Discuss the following questions:

- Do you consider the ACA “broadly unpopular”? Why or why not?
- What are some of the Republican complaints about the ACA?
- What tactics are Republican House Members urging Speaker Boehner to use in order to stop the ACA? Do you agree with this tactic? Why or why not?
- How many times have House Republicans in the House tried to defund Obamacare?
- Why do you think these efforts have been unsuccessful?
- Do you think that President Obama would sign a law to defund the ACA? Why or why not?

Shutdown Summit

8. Place students into groups of 7. (If you have an uneven amount of students, groups can be less than seven by eliminating Peter King’s role). Tell students that they will participate in an activity in which they will be assigned a role as a politician and assuming that role, they have to create an individual plan to end the shutdown and raise the debt ceiling. Then, they’ll pitch that plan to a committee of Republicans and Democrats at the Shutdown Summit. The activity will end with the committee agreeing to a deal to avoid default and end the shutdown. The activity can also end by defaulting on the debt and keeping the government closed with one of the five following scenarios: President Obama vetoes the agreement, Speaker Boehner refuses to bring the agreement to the House floor for a vote, Senator Harry Reid refuses to bring the agreement to the Senate floor, Senator Ted Cruz filibusters the agreement in the Senate so it cannot be brought to a vote, the committee runs out of time before reaching an agreement.

At this meeting, committee members will be charged with discussing what they think the best option for ending the shutdown will be. Distribute the roles and the “Comparing Republicans

and Democrats” handouts. Give students a few moments to read them. Then, review the instructions below:

- You will receive a role which explains their views on the shutdown, government spending, the ACA, etc. as well as a list of policy positions about various issues for Republicans and Democrats. You will have 15 minutes to create a plan to end the shutdown, which you will present at the summit. Once you receive your role, do not share it with anyone else in your group until you meet with the rest of the committee. After your planning time, President Obama will call your summit to order and decide who which side should speak first. Afterwards, others may question you or challenge your idea, so be prepared to defend the plan you are presenting and convince the others to adopt some or all of your demands. Open debate may occur, but anyone being disrespectful (yelling, interrupting, etc.) will be reprimanded by the President. Once everyone has presented, President Obama he will end the advisory portion of the meeting and begin the negotiation portion of the meeting. Once an agreement is reached, President Obama, Senator Cruz, Senator Reid, and Speaker Boehner will declare how they will proceed. If they all agree with the plan, the government reopens and the debt ceiling is raised. If one of the three leaders dissents to the plan, the government will remain shut down and the debt ceiling will be breached. If the group fails to agree to a plan within the allotted time, the US will default on its debt and the government will remain shut down.
- Those of you playing **President Obama** will be responsible for facilitating this meeting according to the instructions provided in the role given to you. You will call the meeting to order once the teacher says that planning time is up. Ask each member to introduce themselves and to briefly explain their role in government before discussing the plans. You should feel free to ask questions throughout the process. Allow committee members to ask questions of one another, support one another, and/or challenge one another, but you can cut off debate and move on to different issues if you feel it’s necessary. Once you have heard from all committee members and the debate has fizzled out or time runs out, you can thank the members for their time and end the meeting. You must decide whether or not you will sign or veto the final plan. Be prepared to explain your choice.

9. Allow students to ask questions then tell them to start preparing for the summit. Remind students to refer back to their notes, handouts, smartphones/internet (if allowed in class), or any other classroom resources to find any statements that may back up their politicians’ opinions. Also remind students that others in their groups will have opposing views and that they should be prepared to address the opposition.

Teacher Note: In order to save paper, provide each group with two copies of the “Comparing Republicans and Democrats” handout and instruct the groups to share.

10. Once students are prepared, instruct all students playing President Obama to call their meetings to order. As groups meet, circulate around the classroom only interrupting if a group is off task or need assistance with the process. The completion time for the group meetings will vary based on the students participating, but it is recommended to allow for at least 30 minutes. Teachers should monitor which stage of the process each group is in. Remind students how much time is

left or project an online stopwatch (see link below) to let students know how much time they have remaining.

- Projectable Online Stopwatch: <http://www.online-stopwatch.com/>

11. After the allotted time, call the summit to a close and have the class give themselves a hand. Then, ask each President Obama to share what happened in their groups. If a plan was agreed to, briefly share the plan. If the plan was blocked, allow the student(s) who blocked it to explain their reasoning. Allow other members of the group to express their opinion regarding the option that was chosen. Further discuss:
 - Were any of you arguing for an option that you do not believe in? Explain.
 - For those of you playing President Obama, Speaker Boehner, Senator Reid, or Senator Cruz was it hard to make a decision? Why or why not?
 - Was this meeting difficult? Explain. How do political leaders handle situations when there are many different opinions?
 - What can leaders do if their opponents do not want to compromise?
 - How do you think the real 2013 Shutdown ended?

2013 Shutdown Timeline

12. Inform students that they're going to review a timeline of the 2013 Shutdown. Provide each group with one or two copies of the attached "How Did We Get Here? Shutdown Timeline" handout. Allow students 5 – 10 minutes to review the handouts in their groups and then discuss the following questions as a class:
 - Why do you think that the House continued with the strategy of including language to defund the ACA ("Obamacare") even though it was already known that the Senate would block it and/or the President would veto it?
 - Why do you think the Senate rejected the House proposals to pass piecemeal funding to operate certain federal programs and entities?
 - What do you think about Rep. Marlin Stutzman's quote?: "We're not going to be disrespected. We have to get something out of this. And I don't even know what it is."
 - Why do you think the House eventually agreed to pass a bill that reopened the federal government and raised the debt ceiling?
 - What was the result of the final bill?
 - Funded government until January 15, raised the debt ceiling until February 7, included stricter income verification rules for citizens accessing the health insurance marketplace
 - Do you think this deal will prevent future shutdowns? Why or why not?
 - Who do you think Americans blamed for the 2013 Shutdown?
 - According to numerous opinion polls, many Americans place most of the blame on the Republicans. But, the numbers blaming the president are not far behind. For example, the results of a CNN poll indicated that 46% blame Republicans, while 36% blame the president and 13% blame both parties. (Source: [NPR](#))

2013 Shutdown Political Cartoons

13. Next, tell students that they will be analyzing some political cartoons about the shutdown. Project or distribute the attached "Analyzing Political Cartoons Questions". Instruct students to answer the questions for each cartoon in their groups. Select one student from each group to record the group's responses.

Teacher Note: Slides 23-28 contain various political cartoons about the 2013 Shutdown. Depending on class time, teachers may elect to show all of the cartoons or select two to compare. Teachers may also use different political cartoons than the ones provided in the PowerPoint.

14. After students have had a chance to view and discuss the cartoons, review the “Analyzing Political Cartoons Questions” as a class.
- List the objects, people, and symbols you see in the cartoon.
 - Identify the cartoon caption.
 - Record any additional words or phrases used by the cartoonist.
 - List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon.
 - Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.
 - What events, if any, from the 2013 Shutdown Timeline are being depicted in this cartoon?
 - What message is the artist conveying?
 - Who would agree/disagree with the cartoon’s message? Why?
 - What cartoon did you agree with personally? Why?

Results of the Shutdown

15. Assign the attached, “US government gets back to business as parties feel effects of shutdown crisis” article from *The Guardian* and instruct students to use the remaining class time to read the article and write a short response on their opinion of the shutdown. Use the following questions as guidelines:
- In what ways were the 1994 Shutdown and 2013 Shutdown similar? Different?
 - Who do you think was responsible for the shutdown? Why?
 - Why do you think Republicans are opposed to the ACA?
 - Why do you think Democrats support the ACA?
 - If you were President Obama, what would you do?

If class time expires, assign the reading and reflection for homework. Review the student reflections as a warm up the next day.

Teacher Note: As an optional assignment, teachers can ask students to read the attached “Rep. Mark Meadows pushed for a shutdown. What did it bring his N.C. district? Frustration” and write a short reflection.

Additional Resources

- *Washington Post’s*, “Wonkblog: Shutdown FAQ”:
 - <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/09/30/absolutely-everything-you-need-to-know-about-how-the-government-shutdown-will-work/>
- *USA Today*, “66 questions and answers about the government shutdown”:
 - <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2013/09/29/questions-and-answers-about-the-shutdown/2888419/>

Name _____

The Government Shutdown What?!?

Every year, all of the 10th grade Civics classes at your school take a field trip to Washington D.C. to learn about this country's history and government. All of your friends and siblings who have taken the trip consider it to be the highlight of the school year (and not just because they got to miss two days of school). They say that all of monuments, museums, and other attractions are really fun and interesting. Some of the favorite attractions in years past have been the Lincoln Memorial, the Smithsonian Museum, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, the National World War II Memorial, the White House, and the US Capitol. They also said that meeting with their Representative or Senator was really cool because they got to ask him or her questions about issues that were important to them and how they planned on using federal resources to address those problems. One year, a class even got to meet the President during a White House tour! Many of them said that the trip brings history alive and that they leave Washington D.C. with a better appreciation for the history and government of the United States.

This year, it's your turn to take the trip and you're REALLY excited! A few of your friends want to see the WWII Memorial because they had grandparents that fought in the war and participated in the war effort. You can't wait to visit the Lincoln Memorial because Lincoln is your favorite president. You're also looking forward to meeting with your Representative or Senator because you're interested in pursuing a career in national politics in the future.

On the morning of the trip, you get to school only to be told that the trip has been canceled because the Federal Government is shutdown. All of the places you were scheduled to visit are closed until the shutdown is resolved. Unfortunately, the trip isn't going to be rescheduled because no one knows when the shutdown will end.

To make matters worse, one of your friend's parents just lost their job and began receiving Work First or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits. According to WRAL, "[TANF] The short-term assistance program is designed to help families stay off welfare by supplying limited cash benefits, child care, food stamps and Medicaid for up to three months". Unfortunately, due to the shutdown, the federal government can no longer supply the states with funds for the TANF program. While other states have elected to continue the program using state funds, while anticipating reimbursement from the federal government after the shutdown, North Carolina has decided to suspend the TANF program. This means that your friend's family might have to go without assistance next month if the shutdown continues.

After reading the above scenario, answer the following questions:

- How do you feel about the government shutdown?

- What other areas/services might be affected by the government shutdown?

- Why do you think the government is shut down?

A Short History Of Government Shutdowns

Drawn-out fights over spending bills are nothing new for Congress. But that's where the fights used to stay: in Congress. The rest of the country didn't have to pay much attention to countdown clocks and all this drama.

"In the '60s and '70s down until 1980, it was not taken that seriously at all," says Charles Tiefer, a former legal adviser to the House of Representatives, who now teaches at the University of Baltimore Law School. In the old days, he says, when lawmakers reached a budget stalemate, the federal workforce just went about its business.

"It was thought that Congress would soon get around to passing the spending bill and there was no point in raising a ruckus while waiting," he says.

That easygoing attitude changed during the last year of President Jimmy Carter's administration. That's when Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti issued a legal opinion saying government work cannot go on until Congress agrees to pay for it.

"They used an obscure statute to say that if any work continued in an agency where there wasn't money, the employees were behaving like illegal volunteers," says Tiefer. "So they not only could shut off the lights and leave, they were obliged to shut off the lights and leave."

Civiletti later issued a second opinion with a less strict interpretation — allowing essential government services to continue in the absence of a spending bill. But even with that exception, the stakes of a legislative standoff had been raised — which could be why lawmakers suddenly got serious about making deals.

In the years leading up to Civiletti's opinion, budget standoffs lasting a week or more were commonplace. But after the opinion, no standoff lasted more than three days until the epic government shutdowns of 1995.

"It was a calculated gamble on the part of the speaker, Newt Gingrich," says Steve Bell, who was a Republican congressional aide. The new Republican majority in Congress decided to push their spending fight with President Clinton to the limit, even if it meant shutting down the government.

"And at first, about half of us thought it was a bad idea and half of us thought it was a good idea," says Bell. "But in the perfect example of groupthink, we talked ourselves into believing that, oh, the president will get blamed and we will be able to get our way."

Bell, who's now with the Bipartisan Policy Center in Washington, says the Gingrich gamble didn't pay off, except for President Clinton.

"The president wasn't blamed," says Bell. And "the amount of money we saved over that government shutdown literally is almost a rounding error. So we went through all of this for almost no savings, net-net, and we successfully re-elected someone that we thought we were supposed to defeat."

As the 1995 shutdowns dragged on, more and more federal employees were called back to work as the definition of what's "essential" gradually expanded. J. David Cox, a Veterans Administration nurse at the time who now heads the American Federation of Government Employees, says that damaged morale, because while federal workers eventually received back pay, they didn't get paychecks during the shutdown itself.

A handicap for lawmakers is that the White House makes the call of which employees are deemed essential and should keep showing up for work. So even though Obamacare has been the main bone of contention in this year's fight, President Obama insists the new health insurance exchanges will open on schedule Tuesday, even if much of the rest of the government shuts down.

Source: NPR. <http://www.npr.org/2013/09/30/227292952/a-short-history-of-government-shutdowns>

Part I – What is the ACA?

Directions: Answer the following questions while watching the video about the ACA or “Obamacare”.

1. What are the four main ways people are covered by the ACA?
2. What are some advantages of the ACA?
3. What are some disadvantages?
4. What is the “individual mandate”?
5. Where does the ACA’s funding come from?
6. Do most Americans approve or disapprove of the ACA? Why do you think most Americans feel this way?
7. Do you approve or disapprove of the ACA after watching the video? Why?

Part II – Shutdown Timeline

Directions: Review the 2013 Shutdown timeline and discuss the following questions as a group.

- Why do you think that the House continued with the strategy of including language to defund the ACA (“Obamacare”) even though it was already known that the Senate would block it and/or the President would veto it?
- Why do you think the Senate rejected the House proposals to pass piecemeal funding to operate certain federal programs and entities?
- What do you think about Rep. Marlin Stutzman’s quote?: “We’re not going to be disrespected. We have to get something out of this. And I don’t even know what it is.”
- Why do you think the House eventually agreed to pass a bill that reopened the federal government and raised the debt ceiling?
- What did the final bill change?
- Do you think this deal will prevent future shutdowns? Why or why not?
- Who do you think Americans blamed for the 2013 Shutdown? Republicans, Democrats, both?

- **SAME-SEX MARRIAGE**

- **Democrats:**

- Support "marriage equality" and efforts to secure equal legal treatment for same-sex couples.
- Support full repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act, a 1996 measure defining marriage as a union between one man and one woman.

- **Republicans:**

- Support the Defense of Marriage Act.
- Back the rights of states and federal governments not to recognize same-sex relationships licensed in other jurisdictions.

- **ABORTION**

- **Democrats:**

- Support Roe versus Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion.

- **Republicans:**

- Support a "human life amendment" to the Constitution.
- Oppose use of public revenue to promote or perform abortion or fund organizations that do so.

- **HEALTHCARE**

- **Democrats:**

- Oppose any efforts to privatize or set up a voucher program for Medicare, the U.S. healthcare program for the elderly.
- Seek to expand health benefits and reduce fraud.

- **Republicans:**

- Vow to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, the health reform legislation dubbed "Obamacare" by critics.
- Seek to modernize Medicare and say the program, in its current form, is unsustainable.

- **IMMIGRATION**

- **Democrats:**

- Want comprehensive immigration reform that would bring undocumented immigrants "out of the shadows," requiring them to "get right with the law, learn English and pay taxes" to be considered for citizenship.

- **Republicans:**

- Oppose any form of "amnesty" for those who "by intentionally violating the law" when entering the United States "disadvantage those who have obeyed it."

- **ECONOMY**

- **Democrats:**

- Seek to extend tax cuts put in place under Republican President George W. Bush for Americans earning less than \$250,000 a year.
- Support the expiration of tax cuts imposed at the same time for those earning more than \$250,000.
- Support strengthening of the social safety net (Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, SNAP benefits, etc.) through more federal spending

- **Republicans:**

- Seek to extend the Bush-era tax cuts for all Americans, pending reform of the federal tax code.

- Want to rein in government spending and reduce regulations.
 - Oppose expansion of the social safety net (Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, SNAP benefits, etc.) through more federal spending
- **SMALL BUSINESSES**
 - **Democrats:**
 - Call U.S. small businesses the "engine of job growth in America."
 - Support tax cuts for small businesses enacted by President Barack Obama.
 - **Republicans:**
 - Call small businesses the "backbone of the U.S. economy."
 - Seek to reform the tax code to allow businesses to "generate enough capital to grow and create jobs."
- **ENERGY**
 - **Democrats:**
 - Seek to reduce U.S. reliance on foreign oil by developing domestic wind, solar, geothermal, nuclear and hydropower, biofuels, oil, clean coal and natural gas, as well as by increasing energy efficiency in buildings, industries and homes, and promoting "advanced" vehicles and fuel economy standards.
 - Want to protect "sensitive" public lands, including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, from exploration.
 - **Republicans:**
 - Support opening the coastal plain of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for exploration.
 - Seek allowances for more oil and natural gas exploration on federally owned and controlled land.

Adapted and edited by the NC Civic Education Consortium from the following source:

<http://www.voanews.com/content/comparing-the-democratic-and-republican-party-platforms/1501610.html>

Shutdown Summit

President Barack Obama (D)

Your Role: First, read the background information and quotes below, and review the “Comparing Democratic and Republican Party Policy Positions” handout to help you create your own plan to end the shutdown and raise the debt ceiling. You can also use any other notes or resources provided by your teacher to create a plan.

As the president, you’re tasked with running the summit. Open the summit by reminding everyone of the purpose of the summit. Instruct each member to briefly introduce themselves and then choose someone in the group to open the negotiations. You are allowed to take part in all negotiations and offer your own suggestions for ending the shutdown. If you feel that someone is taking too much time talking, you may ask them to hurry up or cut them off to let someone else speak. Once everyone has presented, you will end the advisory portion of the meeting and begin the negotiation portion of the meeting. Once an agreement is reached, President Obama, Ted Cruz, and Speaker Boehner will declare how they will proceed. If your group manages to create a deal to end the shutdown, you can veto it if it contains provisions you don’t support. Remember to take your veto power seriously because failing to reach an agreement can have catastrophic consequences for the US.

It is also important that you keep track of the time remaining because if your group is unable to reach a deal by the end of the meeting, the US will default on its debt and the government will remain shut down. You can delegate the role of timekeeper to someone else in your group.

Background: The president has so far remained resolute in his position: there will be no negotiations on the ACA (aka Obamacare) or anything else until Republicans re-open the government and agree to raise the debt ceiling. While he did meet with senior members of Congress on the second day of the shutdown (Oct 2), he refused to make any concessions and insisted that the House pass a “clean” continuing resolution (CR) stripped of the language defunding the ACA.

Quotes:

- “One faction of one party in one house of Congress in one branch of government doesn’t get to shut down the entire government just to refight the results of an election. You don’t get to extract a ransom for doing your job, for doing what you’re supposed to be doing anyway, or just because there’s a law there that you don’t like.”
- “Keeping the people’s government open is not a concession to me. Keeping vital service running and hundreds of thousands of Americans on the job is not something you ‘give’ to the other side.”
- “The only thing that is keeping the government shut down; the only thing preventing people from going back to work, and basic research starting back up, and farmers and small business owners getting their loans; the only thing preventing that from happening is that Speaker John Boehner won’t even let the bill get a yes or no vote, because he doesn’t want to anger the extremists in his party. That’s all. That’s what this whole thing is about.”
- “I’m happy to have negotiations with Republicans on a whole range of issues, but we can’t do it with a gun held to the head of the American people.”
- Just the other day, one tea party Republican called the idea of a shutdown “wonderful.” Another said that a shutdown is “exactly what we wanted.” Well they got exactly what they wanted, now they’re trying to figure out how to get out of it. Just yesterday one House Republican said, “We’re not gonna be disrespected, we have to get something out of this. And I don’t know what that even is.” That was a quote!

Shutdown Summit

Senator Ted Cruz (R – Texas)

Your Role: You're a freshman Senator who is supported by the Tea Party. Although freshman senators usually don't have a great deal of power, your ability to filibuster any legislation and support from the Tea Party give you the power to derail any deal that you don't support.

First, read the background information and quotes below, and review the “Comparing Democratic and Republican Party Policy Positions” handout to help you create your own plan to end the shutdown and raise the debt ceiling. You can also use any other notes or resources provided by your teacher to create a plan. Once you receive your role, do not share it with anyone else in your group until you meet with the rest of the committee. After your planning time, President Obama will call your summit to order and decide who which side should speak first. Afterwards, others may question you or challenge your idea, so be prepared to defend the plan you are presenting and convince the others to adopt some or all of your demands. Open debate may occur, but anyone being disrespectful (yelling, interrupting, etc.) will be reprimanded by the President. Once everyone has presented, President Obama he will end the advisory portion of the meeting and begin the negotiation portion of the meeting. Once an agreement is reached, President Obama, Senator Reid, Senator Cruz, and Speaker Boehner will declare how they will proceed. At the conclusion of the meeting, you have the option of filibustering any deal that you disagree with. Remember, if you filibuster, the US defaults and the government remains shutdown and people in your state may blame you for the negative effects.

Background: Senator Cruz of Texas has been in the Senate for less than a year, but has quickly established himself as one of the chamber's most conservative members. A darling of the Tea Party but a relative unknown to most Americans until recently, he and fellow Senate newcomer Mike Lee of Utah promised months ago to push Congress to defund the government over Obamacare, a movement which culminated in Mr. Cruz's 21-hour speech on the floor of the Senate. Mr. Cruz has become the unofficial leader of bloc of young senators who have made defunding Obamacare their primary objective. This has led to backlash from some in the Republican establishment, who feel that the fight Mr. Cruz has lead the GOP into cannot be won, and will be detrimental in the 2014 mid-term elections.

Quotes:

- “Why are they screaming so loudly? Why are they so personal? Why are they so filled with hate and fear? It's because the American people are mobilized, are passionate and energized. And even worse, they understand that Obamacare is hurting millions of Americans, and that has the left terrified out of their minds.”
- “I would do anything, and I will continue to do anything I can, to stop the train wreck that is Obamacare. The test that matters Jon [Karl], is are we doing anything for all the people that are getting hurt from Obamacare?”
- “We're winning the debate. That's why they are scared and they are attacking us. The more shrill it gets, the more scared they are.”
- “I opposed the shutdown from Day One. I think it was wrong that President Obama and Harry Reid forced the shutdown. They forced the shutdown because they wouldn't compromise on Obamacare
- “If we go to the 1940s, Nazi Germany—look, we saw it in Britain. Neville Chamberlain told the British people: Accept the Nazis. Yes, they will dominate the continent of Europe, but that is not our problem. Let's appease them... If this had happened in the 1940s, we would have been listening to them. Even then they would have made television. They would have gotten beyond the carrier pigeons and letters and they would have been on TV saying: You cannot defeat the Germans.”
- “I don't want a government shutdown. I don't think Harry Reid should shut down the government. Let me make one point. The House of Representatives did something else terrific last night, which is they passed a bill to make clear that, regardless of what happens, the men and women of our military should be paid. And Harry Reid, I believe, should bring that up. That passed unanimously in the House. And listen, right now, Harry Reid and President Obama have been essentially holding the military hostage, threatening their paychecks over this potential shutdown. They might force — I think regardless of what happened, we should pass the bill.”

Shutdown Summit

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid

Your Role: As the Senate Majority Leader, you're a major spokesperson for the Democratic Party and you also control all the Senate's schedule and legislative agenda.

First, read the background information and quotes below, and review the "Comparing Democratic and Republican Party Policy Positions" handout to help you create your own plan to end the shutdown and raise the debt ceiling. You can also use any other notes or resources provided by your teacher to create a plan. Once you receive your role, do not share it with anyone else in your group until you meet with the rest of the committee. After your planning time, President Obama will call your summit to order and decide who which side should speak first. Afterwards, others may question you or challenge your idea, so be prepared to defend the plan you are presenting and convince the others to adopt some or all of your demands. Open debate may occur, but anyone being disrespectful (yelling, interrupting, etc.) will be reprimanded by the President. Once everyone has presented, President Obama he will end the advisory portion of the meeting and begin the negotiation portion of the meeting. Once an agreement is reached, President Obama, Senator Reid, Senator Cruz, and Speaker Boehner will declare how they will proceed. At the conclusion of the meeting, you have the option of not bringing any deal to the Senate floor for a vote. Remember, if you decline bringing the agreement to the Senate floor for a vote, the US defaults and the government remains shutdown and people in your state may blame you for the negative effects.

Background: Senator Harry Reid of Nevada is the top Democrat in the Senate, where his party holds a 55-45 majority. He has also been the strongest proponent of a hard-line on the standoff, urging Mr. Obama not to give ground and delivering scorching denunciations of Republicans both on and off the Senate floor. Mr. Reid has said he will not accept any bill that does not fully re-open the government and has rejected "piece-meal" offers from the House which would restore funding to individual agencies.

Quotes

- "We're not going to bow to Tea Party anarchists who deny the mere fact that Obamacare is the law. We will not bow to Tea Party anarchists who refuse to accept that the Supreme Court ruled that Obamacare is constitutional."
- "Here's a president, who less than a year ago, won the election by five million votes, five million votes. Obamacare has been the law for four years. Why don't they get a life and talk about something else? People deserve better."
- "You know with a bully you cannot let them slap you around, because they slap you around today, they slap you five or six times tomorrow. We are not going to be bullied."
- "What right do they [Republicans] have to pick and choose what parts of government can be funded?"

Shutdown Summit

Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-Ohio)

Your Role: As the Speaker of the House, you're the leader of the majority party. You also determine what bills are brought for a vote on the House floor and attempt to persuade members of his party to support your party's policy goals.

First, read the background information, quotes, and possible options below to help you create your own plan to end the shutdown and raise the debt ceiling. You are not limited to the suggestions below and you can also use any other notes or resources provided by your teacher to create a plan. Once you receive your role, do not share it with anyone else in your group until you meet with the rest of the committee. After your planning time, President Obama will call your summit to order and decide who which side should speak first. Afterwards, others may question you or challenge your idea, so be prepared to defend the plan you are presenting and convince the others to adopt some or all of your demands. Open debate may occur, but anyone being disrespectful (yelling, interrupting, etc.) will be reprimanded by the President. Once everyone has presented, President Obama he will end the advisory portion of the meeting and begin the negotiation portion of the meeting. Once an agreement is reached, President Obama, Senator Reid, Senator Cruz, and Speaker Boehner will declare how they will proceed. At the conclusion of the meeting, you have the option of not bringing any deal to the House floor for a vote. Remember, if you decline bringing the agreement to the House floor for a vote, the US defaults and the government remains shutdown and people in your state may blame you for the negative effects.

Background: The pragmatic Republican leader has found himself forced to the right by the influence of the Tea Party and he is now holding together a fragile coalition of conservatives and more moderate members of the House. Although growing numbers of Republicans have called for an end to the standoff – and a cave-in to the Democrats – Mr. Boehner has so far held firm. He is demanding concessions on Obamacare in return for funding the government and has attacked the White House for being unwilling to negotiate. Democrats have cast him as beholden to radical elements within his party.

Quotes:

- “We believe we should fund government, and we think there ought to basic fairness for all Americans under Obamacare. The Senate has continued to reject our offers, but under the Constitution, there's a way to resolve this problem, and that is to go to conference and talk through your differences.”
- “I thought the fight would be over the debt ceiling. But you know, working with my members, they decided, well, let's do it now. And the fact is, this fight was going to come, one way or the other.”
- “It's pretty clear that the president was re-elected. Obamacare is the law of the land. If we were to put Obamacare into the CR and send it over to the Senate, we were risking shutting down the government. That is not our goal.”
- “That's the path we're on. ... I don't want the United States to default on its debt. But I'm not going to raise the debt limit without a serious conversation about dealing with problems that are driving the debt up. It would be irresponsible of me to do this.”

Shutdown Summit
House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D – California)

Your Role: As the Minority Leader of the House, you're the leader of the House Democratic Party. You help keep party members "in line" and help determine party's policy & legislative agenda.

First, read the background information, quotes, and possible options below to help you create your own plan to end the shutdown and raise the debt ceiling. You are not limited to the suggestions below and you can also use any other notes or resources provided by your teacher to create a plan. Once you receive your role, do not share it with anyone else in your group until you meet with the rest of the committee. After your planning time, President Obama will call your summit to order and decide who which side should speak first. Afterwards, others may question you or challenge your idea, so be prepared to defend the plan you are presenting and convince the others to adopt some or all of your demands. Open debate may occur, but anyone being disrespectful (yelling, interrupting, etc.) will be reprimanded by the President. Once everyone has presented, President Obama he will end the advisory portion of the meeting and begin the negotiation portion of the meeting. Once an agreement is reached, President Obama, Senator Reid, Senator Cruz, and Speaker Boehner will declare how they will proceed. At the conclusion of the meeting, you can urge President Obama to support or veto the agreement.

Background: Mrs. Pelosi is the leader of the Democrats in the House. She has been responsible for making sure that the Democratic caucus in the chamber remains unified in opposition to any bill which weakens Obamacare. She has also led the charge against the Republican strategy of funding certain departments, such as the Department of Veteran's Affairs, without ending the shutdown entirely.

Quotes:

- "House Democrats want to reopen the government but can't compromise when House Republicans keep moving the goal posts and refuse to take yes as an answer."
- "We will prevail if we see the big picture: Our unity gives the president leverage,"
- "It's very hard to negotiate with the Republicans when they can't negotiate with themselves. They can't say, 'Our first premise is you have to overturn the Affordable Care Act.' "

Shutdown Summit

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R – Kentucky)

Your Role: As the Senate Minority Leader, you're the leader of the Republican Party in the Senate. You also determine what bills are brought for a vote on the House floor and attempt to persuade members of his party to support your party's policy goals.

First, read the background information, quotes, and possible options below to help you create your own plan to end the shutdown and raise the debt ceiling. You are not limited to the suggestions below and you can also use any other notes or resources provided by your teacher to create a plan. Once you receive your role, do not share it with anyone else in your group until you meet with the rest of the committee. After your planning time, President Obama will call your summit to order and decide who which side should speak first. Afterwards, others may question you or challenge your idea, so be prepared to defend the plan you are presenting and convince the others to adopt some or all of your demands. Open debate may occur, but anyone being disrespectful (yelling, interrupting, etc.) will be reprimanded by the President. Once everyone has presented, President Obama he will end the advisory portion of the meeting and begin the negotiation portion of the meeting. Once an agreement is reached, President Obama, Senator Reid, Senator Cruz, and Speaker Boehner will declare how they will proceed. At the conclusion of the meeting, you can urge Senator Cruz to support the agreement.

Background: Senator McConnell, the top Republican in the Senate, has often been the go-to person for the White House when it's time to cut a deal. However, after stating early in the budget debate that he was opposed to shutting down the government over Obamacare, Mr. McConnell has maintained a relatively low profile. He is facing a primary challenge from the right flank of the GOP in 2014, and although he has indicated that he disagrees with Mr. Cruz's approach, Mr. McConnell has not risked open confrontation.

Quotes:

- “The Democrats shut down the government and now they're praying the American people think someone else is responsible.”
- “I'm for stopping Obamacare, but shutting down the government will not stop Obamacare.”

Shutdown Summit

Representative Peter King (R – New York)

Your Role: As a long serving Representative, you're a spokesman for the "moderate" Republican members of the House and a vocal opponent of the Tea Party members of the Republican Party.

First, read the background information, quotes, and possible options below to help you create your own plan to end the shutdown and raise the debt ceiling. You are not limited to the suggestions below and you can also use any other notes or resources provided by your teacher to create a plan. Once you receive your role, do not share it with anyone else in your group until you meet with the rest of the committee. After your planning time, President Obama will call your summit to order and decide who which side should speak first. Afterwards, others may question you or challenge your idea, so be prepared to defend the plan you are presenting and convince the others to adopt some or all of your demands. Open debate may occur, but anyone being disrespectful (yelling, interrupting, etc.) will be reprimanded by the President. Once everyone has presented, President Obama he will end the advisory portion of the meeting and begin the negotiation portion of the meeting. Once an agreement is reached, President Obama, Senator Reid, Senator Cruz, and Speaker Boehner will declare how they will proceed. At the conclusion of the meeting, you can urge Speaker Boehner to support the agreement.

Background: Moderate New York Republican Peter King was among the first congressional Republicans to call on Mr. Boehner to abandon the current strategy and put a "clean" continuing resolution on the floor of the house. Several other House Republicans have joined him in this stance, and Mr. King is confident that the bill would have sufficient Republican support to pass both chambers and end the shutdown.

Quotes:

- "Ted Cruz led us down this path. This was a disaster from the start, I could have predicted this, and this is what the leadership predicted three weeks ago when they said they would never pursue defunding because it was going to work against us and we'd be blamed."
- "I think President Obama should send a campaign contribution to Ted Cruz. He has done more to boost Obamacare than anyone."
- "I am a lifetime Republican. I have a conservative rating of 75 percent. There's nothing Republican about shutting down the government when you don't get what you want."
- "The fact is, it was done in the House, the government is now shutdown and ObamaCare is going forward. This was a strategy that never would have worked. It was almost nullification, saying we're going to shut down the government to defund a law we don't like. If we want to defund something, we should repeal it, and do it the same way the president got it signed: elect Republicans to both houses of Congress, repeal it, and have a Republican president sign it."
- "We are the ones who shut the government down."
- "I honestly don't know what they [Tea Party members of Congress] want. Started off by saying they wanted to defund ObamaCare, now they realize that can't be done. It's sort of a moving target."
- "We just can't wait for this to be put on the floor by the speaker [of the House, John Boehner]. We're going to have to force the action. In some ways maybe that makes the speaker's job easier. If twenty or twenty-five of us say we're going to vote no on everything until a continuing resolution [ending the shutdown and raising the debt ceiling] is put on the floor, that's how you get results."

2013 Shutdown: How Did We Get Here? Timeline

Now that the congressional standoff over the government shutdown and the debt ceiling, here's a look back at the key events of the crisis:

Jan. 18: At a Republican retreat in Williamsburg, Va., GOP leaders agree not to force a debt ceiling showdown and to address deficit reduction demands later in the year.

Aug. 19: The conservative group Heritage Action's anti-Affordable Care Act town hall tour begins in Fayetteville, Ark. The tour features Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and his father, Rafael Cruz, and Heritage Foundation President Jim DeMint, the former South Carolina senator.

Aug. 21: 80 House Republicans sign a letter to Speaker John Boehner urging him to "affirmatively de-fund the implementation and enforcement of ObamaCare in any relevant appropriations bill brought to the House floor in the 113th Congress, including any continuing appropriations bill."

Sept. 20: House Republicans approve legislation that would defund the health care law while keeping the government open through Dec. 15. The White House has already said that the president would veto such a measure.

Sept. 24-25: Although it is not a filibuster, designed to stop legislation from being voted on, Senator Ted Cruz stages a 21 hour speech on the Senate floor to protest the Affordable Care Act.

Sept. 26: Boehner says President Obama needs to negotiate with Republicans on raising the debt limit. The Treasury has warned it will run out of "extraordinary measures" it has been using to keep paying the nation's bills by Oct. 17.

Sept. 27: The Democratic-controlled Senate strips language from the House bill that defunds Obamacare and sends legislation back to the House that keeps the government open through Nov. 15.

Sept. 29: The House passes another spending bill tied to the Affordable Care Act — this time voting to delay implementation of the law for one year and to repeal a medical device tax. The House also votes to pay active-duty troops and some Defense Department civilian workers and contractors in the case of a shutdown. The Senate approves this bill and the president signs it on Sept. 30.

Sept. 30: Obama makes a statement to the media, saying a government shutdown is "entirely preventable if the House chooses to do what the Senate has already done, and that's the simple act of funding our government without making extraneous and controversial demands in the process."

Senate strips language from the House bill that delays the health law and repeals the medical device tax.

The House puts forth legislation that delays the health law's individual mandate for a year and requires members of Congress and their staffs to buy plans on the exchange without subsidies from the government. The Senate rejects that plan as well.

Oct. 1: Shutdown begins. The House stands by its language from the previous day and requests negotiations with the Senate, which the Senate rejects.

Oct. 2: The House begins passing piecemeal funding bills for programs and entities affected by the shutdown, including the national parks and the National Institutes of Health. The Senate refuses any bill that doesn't reopen the entire government.

Rep. Marlin Stutzman (R-IN) explains that the shutdown is about being disrespected: "We're not going to be disrespected. We have to get something out of this. And I don't know what that even is."

Oct. 4: After an unnamed Obama administration official saying it doesn't matter how long the shutdown lasts because "we are winning," Boehner tells reporters: " "The American people don't want their government shut down and neither do I," Boehner added. He called on the president and his aides to "sit down" and negotiate. [...] This isn't some damn game!"

Oct. 5: The House passes legislation to provide back pay to furloughed federal workers once the shutdown ends. Obama tells the Associated Press that Boehner is the only obstacle to ending the shutdown.

Oct. 6: Boehner says House Republicans won't end the shutdown or raise the debt ceiling without negotiations.

Oct. 10: Boehner proposes a six-week extension of the debt limit if Obama negotiates over spending cuts. The Senate passes House legislation to provide death benefits to the families of deceased military personnel during the shutdown.

Oct. 12: Boehner informs House Republicans that talks with the White House are stalled. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and his GOP counterpart, Sen. Mitch McConnell, begin meetings to negotiate funding the government and raising the debt ceiling.

Oct. 13: Senate Democratic leaders reject Maine Republican Sen. Susan Collins' proposal to reopen the government and repeal the medical device tax.

Oct. 14: Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada listens to a reporter's question about a meeting with Senate Republicans. Reid and McConnell say they're working toward a deal that would extend the debt limit through Feb. 7 and keep the government open through Jan. 15.

Oct. 15: House Republican leaders cancel a vote on Boehner's proposal to fund the government through Dec. 15, raise the debt ceiling through Feb. 7 and end federal health insurance subsidies for Congress and staff. The rating agency Fitch warns that the United States' AAA credit rating is being reviewed for a possible downgrade.

Oct. 16: After Senate leaders announce a deal to reopen the government and raise the debt ceiling, Boehner says the House won't block it. First the Senate and then the House vote to approve the deal. A majority of the Republican caucus actually voted against the bill, but it passed due to overwhelming Democratic support.

Oct. 17: President Obama signs the bill and the government reopens, a day before the United States reached the debt limit. Thousands of federal employees head back to work. The bill also raised the debt ceiling until February 7, 2014, included a continuing resolution to fund the federal government through January 15, 2014 at sequestration levels, stricter income verification rules for citizens accessing the health insurance marketplaces.

Adapted and edited for formatting by the NC Civic Education Consortium from the following sources:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/10/here-is-the-short-gop-quote-that-perfectly-defines-the-shutdown/280220/>; <http://www.npr.org/blogs/itsallpolitics/2013/10/16/235442199/how-we-got-here-a-shutdown-timeline>;

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2013_government_shutdown#End_of_shutdown_and_temporary_debt_limit_suspension

Analyzing Political Cartoons

1. List the objects, people, and symbols you see in the cartoon.

2. Identify the cartoon caption.

3. Record any additional words or phrases used by the cartoonist.

4. List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon.

5. Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.

6. What events, if any, from the 2013 Shutdown Timeline are being depicted in this cartoon?

7. What message is the artist conveying?

8. Who would agree/disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?

9. What cartoon did you personally agree with? Why?

US government gets back to business as parties feel effects of shutdown crisis

Republican infighting continues after last-minute deal avoids default while president and Democrats express new unity

By Dan Roberts, Paul Lewis, and Ed Pilkington, *The Guardian*, October 17, 2013

The US federal government gradually came back to life on Thursday after a 16-day shutdown and a bruising political battle, as the political recriminations from the crisis reverberated around Washington. Republican rancour over the budget deal boiled over with accusations that hardliners in the party had trashed their reputation and handed a gift to their political opponents. Democrats emerged from the crisis united and emboldened.

In remarks delivered at the White House, President Barack Obama was scathing about the Republicans' doomed bid to dismantle his healthcare reforms and undermine his authority. Visibly angry, he told them: "You don't like a president? Go out and win an election."

Nancy Pelosi, the Democratic minority leader in the House of Representatives, highlighted the cost of the shutdown as estimated by Standard & Poor's and blamed it on Republicans, saying: "Was their temper tantrum worth \$24bn?"

There was also fury between Republicans when details emerged of a last-minute add-on to the bill that reopened the government and extended the federal borrowing limit. The bill authorised \$2.8bn on infrastructure work to the Ohio river in Kentucky, where Senate minority leader Mitch McConnell is facing a tough re-election battle. It will also improve navigation along the river, which passes within 20 miles of the Ohio congressional district represented by the House speaker, John Boehner. Senator John McCain, a former Republican presidential candidate, said the plan had been slipped in the at the last minute and was "disgraceful".

Wednesday night's deal to end the crisis will fund the government until 15 January and lift the debt ceiling until 7 February, setting the stage for a possible repeat of the showdown. Both sides also agreed to a formal budget conference, in an attempt to reach a longer-term deal by 13 December.

On Thursday, senior Republicans were divided about the wisdom of their high-risk strategy of forcing the shutdown and bringing the US close to defaulting on its debt. "This was a terrible idea," McCain told CNN. He said it would not happen again when the next deadlines arrive, and added: "I guarantee it."

McConnell also said the party would not repeat the tactic. "One of my favorite sayings is an old Kentucky saying, 'There's no education in the second kick of a mule'," he said, in an interview with the National Journal. "The first kick of the mule was in 1995; the second one was the last 16 days. A government shutdown is off the table. We're not going to do it."

He also hinted that there may be more compromise to come between Republicans and the White House, in forthcoming budget discussions over taxes and welfare payments.

"The price for entitlement reform, so far from the administration, has been taxes," added McConnell. "There is some willingness to discuss trading entitlement spending reductions for discretionary spending relief. But, so far, there has been no real willingness on the part of the administration to do that. That's worth discussing, though."

Stalled Agenda

Hoping to jump start his own stalled agenda, Obama urged lawmakers to concentrate on three items in the coming weeks: a balanced plan to reduce long-term deficits, legislation to overhaul the immigration system and passage of a farm bill. This may prove wishful thinking, given the continued rancour and recriminations among Republicans.

Obama's party, meanwhile, emerged from the three-week showdown in Congress united. All Democrats in Congress supported the legislation that passed on Wednesday night, to fund the government and raise the debt limit. Of the Republicans, 18 in the Senate and 144 in the House opposed the legislation, while 27 in the Senate and 87 in the House supported it. The fault line separated Tea Party adherents from the balance of the rank and file, and there were clear signs the split will be enduring.

In Mississippi, where Republican senator Thad Cochran has not yet announced if he will seek a new term in 2014, the Club for Growth and Senate Conservatives Fund endorsed a potential rival, the Republican state senator Chris McDaniel. The group is among several that have played an increasingly active role in Republican primary elections in recent years, often supporting Tea Party-aligned challengers.

Another group, Heritage Action, played an influential role in the two-week political showdown. In the days leading to the impasse, it was a strong backer of the campaign to demand that "Obamacare" be defunded in exchange for Republican approval of funding for the government. On Tuesday, as it was hosting a fundraiser at a high-end golf resort in Bandon, Oregon, the group weighed in to oppose legislation that Boehner put together in hope of retaining influence in final negotiations.

Americans for Limited Government, meanwhile, attacked Representative Scott Rigell, of Virginia, who voted for the legislation that reopened the government and raised the debt limit. Noting that the measure had not defunded the healthcare law, the group said the congressman "owns Obamacare just as much as if it had been a vote to adopt it in the first place".

In a statement issued in connection with his vote, Rigell said he was voting for the bill "given the lack of a viable alternative at this moment".

Around the country on Thursday, federal workers returned to their jobs. Erin Klein, who tracks US radio stations for the Broadcasting Board of Governors, was relieved to be returning to work in Washington and was keen to check on the status of the database she manages. "I can't believe we have been gone so long. I'm very glad to be back," she said.

Asim Akbari, a lawyer at the Department of Health and Human Services, said he had first heard that he would be allowed back when watching the news about the congressional deal. "Almost the whole department has been out," he said. "I was surprised when I checked my email this morning how empty it was."

Many federal workers have been explicitly banned even from monitoring work emails during the shutdown. "We were paid for four days during the first week, but we were due our next pay next week, so the shutdown has ended just in time," Akbari said.

The vice-president, Joe Biden, greeted workers returning to the Environmental Protection Agency with hugs, handshakes and muffins. "There was no economic rationale for any of this," he said. "I hope everybody walks away with a lesson that this is unnecessary and I hope we can regain the trust of the American people."

Tourists in the capital, who have been deprived of some of the country's best-known sights, flocked to the reopened destinations – though not all were open. The National Zoo and National Archives were both closed until Friday and the National Gallery of Art was set to reopen on Saturday. Standing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Shen Ling, 29, a teacher from China, said she and her friends had heard the news that the shutdown was over in Chicago airport, as they were about to board their flight. "We had prepared for the worst," she said.

Another Chinese tourist, on the National Mall with his fiancée, said he had not followed the politics of the fiscal crisis closely. "But this is what happens when you have two parties," he quipped. "One party is better."

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/17/us-government-open-shutdown-republicans-democrats>

US Rep. Mark Meadow's (R-NC) letter to House Republican Leaders, John Boehner & Eric Cantor

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Cantor,

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (“ObamaCare”) remains broadly unpopular across America. More and more Americans are now feeling its impact – from job losses and part-time downgrades, to insurance policy changes and violations of religious liberties, to state budget strains caused by Medicaid expansions. Americans don’t like these impacts. Most Americans still believe that healthcare should be controlled by patients and doctors, not by the government.

Moreover, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), an agency now publicly known to have deliberately discriminated against conservative entities, pro-Israel groups, and other organizations, is charged by law with enforcing significant portions of ObamaCare. IRS enforcement of a law Americans do not like in the first place is a double-whammy that is totally unacceptable.

Therefore, we should continue our efforts to repeal ObamaCare in its entirety this year, next year, and until we are successful. However, in the meantime, there is more we can do in Congress.

Since much of the implementation of ObamaCare is a function of the discretionary appropriations process, including the operations of the “mandatory spending” portions of the law, and since most of the citizens we represent believe that ObamaCare should never go into effect we urge you to affirmatively de-fund the implementation and enforcement of ObamaCare in any relevant appropriations bill brought to the House floor in the 113th Congress, including any continuing appropriations bill.

As many of us have quoted before, James Madison wrote in Federalist No. 58 that the “power over the purse may, in fact, be regarded as the most complete and effectual weapon... for obtaining a redress of every grievance...” We look forward to collaborating to defund one of the largest grievances in our time and to restore patient-centered healthcare in America.

Sincerely,

[Signatures of 80 Congressmen/women]

Discuss the following questions as a group:

- Do you consider the ACA “broadly unpopular”? Why or why not?
- What are some of the Republican complaints about the ACA?
- What tactics are the Republican House Members urging Speaker Boehner to use in order to stop the ACA? Do you agree with this tactic? Why or why not?
- How many times have House Republicans in the House tried to defund Obamacare?
- Why do you think these efforts have been unsuccessful?
- Do you think that President Obama would sign a law to defund the ACA? Why or why not?

Rep. Mark Meadows pushed for a shutdown. What did it bring his N.C. district? Frustration.

By Greg Jaffe, *the Washington Post*, Published: October 19

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. — The shutdown may have changed little about politics in Washington, but here in the home town of one of its biggest champions, it had a measurable impact. And not in a good way.

The area encompassing the district of Rep. Mark Meadows lost as much as \$1 million per day during the more-than-two-week stretch when the national parks were closed, according to one estimate, suspending the foliage tourism industry that usually props up the local economy this time of year.

Some residents blame Meadows, a Republican elected in 2012, for writing the original letter that suggested party leaders could kill President Obama’s signature health-care law by hobbling the federal government. More than 79 Republicans signed on to the Meadows missive in August, and by the time the shutdown began in October, Meadows had been labeled a chief architect of the strategy.

Yet on the day the shutdown ended, residents here seemed most disgusted by Washington writ large. “I think all those people in Congress are idiots,” Mike Tate, a 66-year-old retiree who voted for Meadows, said as he ate breakfast at a small coffee shop. “I feel they ought to be replaced.”

Peter Adams, 72, a Democrat sitting nearby, agreed.

“Our politics are terrible right now,” Adams said. “It is so sad.”

With the impasse over, at least temporarily — and with Republicans in Congress admitting defeat — people along Main Street here mostly said they want the same things out of Washington: more compromise, less posturing and an end to all of the bitterness that has divided the country in recent years.

“I’d like to see everyone act like more of grown-up,” Tate said.

Republicans expressed disbelief that Meadows — a former real estate developer who has been in office less than a year — was behind one of the biggest and most divisive political dramas in recent years.

“The whole thing was petty,” said Jim Foster, 74, a Meadows supporter. “But the real roadblock was in the Senate and with Obama.”

An economic hit

The shutdown came at a terrible time for many small businesses in Meadows’s largely rural district, which is heavily dependent on tourism in the autumn, when visitors come to see changing leaves. The \$1-million-a-day loss estimate came from a study by economist Steve Morse at Western Carolina University.

Meadows’s strident stance on the shutdown does seem to have hurt him with some in the tourism industry here. Burt Kornegay, who runs a backpacking and canoeing business, said he nearly had to cancel two major trips planned for October because of the closure. The news of a deal Wednesday night had him scrambling to tell his customers that the October trips were going forward as scheduled.

“I’ve never had anything like it,” he said. “Those trips were 30 percent of my gross revenue for the year. This has been incredibly stressful.”

Kornegay, who voted for Meadows’s Democratic rival in November, said he e-mailed the Republican lawmaker two times and called once to express his anger but got no response.

“I am very sorry that he is my congressman,” Kornegay said. “He nearly put me and a lot of other people around here out of business.”

In recent days, Meadows has played down his role in the shutdown drama, saying that it was inflated by the media. The congressman declined to comment for this article but told an Asheville newspaper that stories of Americans hurt by the shutdown tore “at his heart.” Local political observers also suggested that Meadows may have been more frontman than mastermind.

“I find it hard to believe that he’s the architect,” said Chris Cooper, a political scientist at Western Carolina. “But he’s a likely candidate for the shutdown caucus to put out there.”

Although Democrats have been more competitive in North Carolina in recent years, Meadows represents one of the most conservative districts in the state and is unlikely to face a serious challenge in next year’s midterm elections. He was elected to Congress in 2012 after North Carolina Republicans led a successful effort to redraw his district’s boundaries to exclude the more liberal city of Asheville. Heath Shuler, a conservative Democrat and former Washington Redskins quarterback, held the office before Meadows but opted not to run for reelection after the boundaries shifted.

Meadows’s rise is representative of a broader national trend in which migration patterns and redistricting have produced districts that are less competitive and far more partisan.

‘A dirty word’

At the coffee shop in Hendersonville, Republicans and Democrats sat at different tables, complaining loudly of the growing political drama that was dividing them.

“Somehow ‘compromise’ has become a dirty word in Washington,” said Harley Stepp, 79, a retired trial lawyer. “The first thing they taught us in law school is that you are not going to get every damn thing you want.”

One of the places where Republicans and Democrats do mix is on the small commuter jets that land daily at the Asheville airport. As lawmakers cast their votes Wednesday night, a Republican and a Democrat from Meadows’s district spent the 45-minute flight from Atlanta complaining about the partisan divide.

“I hate what’s happening to our politics,” said Jacquy Riser, 68, who voted for Meadows.

“Everything has become so polarized,” said Susan Penland, 42, a Democrat, crammed into the seat next to her.

Penland was returning home from a religious retreat in Oregon. Riser had been visiting her daughter in Baltimore.

“We have to be more a part of people’s lives who are different from us,” Riser said.

“We have to make ourselves uncomfortable,” Penland agreed.

Source: http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/rep-mark-meadows-pushed-for-a-shutdown-what-did-it-bring-his-nc-district-frustration/2013/10/19/d8a1dcf2-380c-11e3-8a0e-4e2cf80831fc_print.html