

Key Vocabulary for Social Studies by Grade Level

Why Teach Vocabulary Development? Effective vocabulary instruction is critical for increasing students' academic achievement. Educational researchers have shown for years that vocabulary knowledge plays a significant role in reading comprehension. Robert Marzano also notes the importance of vocabulary development for building background knowledge, and thereby increasing students' opportunities to learn new concepts. This is especially important for social studies, as **55 percent of students' academic vocabulary comes from social studies disciplines**: history, geography, government and economics. Although wide reading increases students' vocabulary significantly, direct and explicit instruction in vocabulary is also an important component of learning vocabulary.

The vocabulary listed here is considered Tier 3. Tier 3 words are "domain specific;" meaning they apply to a specific content area/school subject. These words are critical to understanding key social studies concepts. It is **important** for Tier 3 words not to be separated from their context. This document was specifically created K-12 to show the progression of terms students need to have access to in order to grasp the content. The terms were selected using Robert Marzano's cross-referenced with the Alabama Course of Study.

6	7 - Civics	7 - Civics	7- Geo	7- Geo	8th	8th
agrarian	amend	recession	acculturation	migration	ancient	medieval
agriculture	coalition	representative democracy	Apartheid	navigable	Black Death	monotheism
alien	commodity	scarce	assimilation	OPEC	Buddhism	monsoons
ally	Congress	separation of powers	biodiversity	population density	caste system	polytheism
bicameral	democracy	theocracy	capital	tributary	Christianity	republic
boycott	democratic forms of gov't	trial	cash crop		chronology	middle class
citizenship	dictatorship		consumer		circa	military
compromise	diversify		continental divide		city-state	socioeconomics
debate	economic systems		crusade		civilization	sub-continent
generation	economy		deforestation		conflict	subsistence
genocide	entrepreneur		ethnic group		conquest	
Industrial Revolution	export		ethnicity		culture	
justify	Federalism		Euro		developing	
mission	gross domestic product		genocide		diplomacy	
neutrality	gross national product		geography		diversity	
nullify	legislature		global economy		domesticate	
popular sovereignty	monarchy		hemisphere		dynasty	
precedent	nationalism		illiteracy		emperor	
prejudice	natural resource		industrialization		empire	
propaganda	oligarchy		infrastructure		empire	
ratify	parliament		innovation		famine	
revolution	per capita income		interdependence		feudalism	
secede	philosophy		irrigation		Hinduism	
tolerance	political		map scale		Islam	
	president		maritime		Judaism	