

Social Studies Vocabulary

Government and Civics

amendment- an addition to the Constitution

armed forces- the combined army, navy and air force of a nation

American freedoms- Examples: freedom of religion-citizens can worship any religion or none at all; freedom of speech-citizens can express their beliefs and ideas; freedom to petition the government-citizens can ask the government to make changes

Bill of Rights- the first ten amendments to the Constitution, ratified in 1791

branches of government- legislative, executive, judicial

checks and balances- a system in which the powers of government are balanced among the different branches so that each branch can check, or limit, the power of the other branches.

citizen- a person born in a country or who chooses to become a member of that country by law

community service- work done to benefit the community (usually on a volunteer basis) rather than to benefit the individual or a business.

constitutional government- government that is limited by a constitution.

Declaration of Independence- the document, written primarily by Thomas Jefferson, that announced the intent of the colonies to free themselves from Great Britain.

democratic government- a government in which the people of a nation either rule directly or through elected representatives.

democracy- a government in which the people take part

duties- the things we are required to do as citizens of the United States (e.g. obey laws, pay taxes, serve as a juror).

election- process of choosing by voting

executive branch- the part of government that carries out the laws

federal government- the government of the nation, as a whole.

federalism- government powers are divided between the National (federal) Government and the states. The two levels (national and state) have separate and shared powers:

- a. separate powers- The National Government has some exclusive powers that cannot be exercised by states. Examples of these include the power to coin (make) money and the power to make treaties with foreign countries.
- b. shared powers- Some powers can be exercised by both the National Government and the States. Examples include making laws and levying and collecting taxes.

government- an authority that acts on behalf of a group of people

governor- the head of the executive branch at the state level

judicial branch- the branch of government that decides the meaning of the laws and settles disputes

judicial review- the power of the Supreme Court to determine if laws passed by Congress or presidential actions are constitutional.

laws- rules of action or conduct made by governments

legislative branch- the law-making part of government with the power to raise the money needed to run the government (e.g., national level-Congress, state level-General Assembly)

levels of government- local, state, and national (federal)

liberty- freedom

maintain order- providing organization and safety for citizens

peer group- a group of people of similar age or social position

personal privacy- the freedom from unauthorized intrusion into one's life by the government; the 4th amendment protects US citizens from illegal searches or seizures.

Preamble- the introduction to the Constitution; explains the purpose of the Constitution

president- the head of the executive branch at the national level

property- anything a person owns, such as land, goods or money

republic- a form of government in which people elect representatives to carry on the work of government for them.

responsibilities- things that citizens should or must do in order to support the government (e.g., voting)

rights- freedoms or protections guaranteed by the U. S. government for all citizens

rules- statements of what may or may not be done

security- safety, freedom from risk or danger

separation of powers- three way division of power among the branches of the federal government.

society- a human group

state government- the government of the individual jurisdictions of a nation.

statutes- laws passed by Congress or other law making bodies

taxes- a payment of money that citizens and businesses must make to help pay the cost of government.

totalitarian government- a government that has total (unlimited) control over the lives of the people.

U. S. Constitution- in the United States, it is the supreme law and plan of the national government, adopted in 1789

voting- the act of expressing ones opinion.

Culture and Society

beliefs- something that is believed, a conviction; ideas that individuals or group hold to be true, that influence their behavior.

competition- act of competing, rivalry

compromise- the settling of a dispute by each side agreeing to give up part of its demands

conflict- to be opposed, to differ, a state of disharmony (Note: also see “war”)

cooperation- working together toward a common purpose

culture- the entire way of life of a people, including their customs, beliefs, and language

custom- an accepted practice followed by tradition

elements of culture- examples: language, music, art, dress, food, literature, beliefs

ethnic- of or relating to races or large groups of people classed according to common traits and customs.

holidays- days set aside to commemorate/honor special people or event

language- the words and expression of a particular group.

perspective-point of view: the position from which a person looks at an issue or situation

prejudice-a negative opinion formed without proof

social groups-examples: family, schools, teams, clubs

social institutions- government, economy, education, family, religion. These five social institutions are found in all societies.

stereotypes-a set of assumptions about people in a given category, either positive or negative, often based on half truths and non-truths

teams- a number of persons associated together in work or activity

unique- being the only one of its kind, very unusual

war- an armed conflict between nations, states, or faction

Economics

banks- a business that deals in money and credit

barter- exchange of goods and services for other goods and services

business- a company whose goal it is to make a profit

capital resources- an item that is used in the production of other goods and services.

command economy-an economic system characterized by a central authority that makes most of the major economic decisions.

competition- buyers and sellers participating in the market.

consumer- any person or group that buys or uses goods and services to satisfy personal needs and wants

distribution- getting goods and services from the producer to the consumer.

economics- the study of how individuals and societies make choices about ways to use scarce resources to fulfill their wants and needs

economic choices-making decisions about what goods and services are produced and consumed

economy-the way people use resources to meet their needs

exchange-to give in return for something else

financial institutions- examples: banks, credit unions, mortgage companies

free enterprise-an economic system in which people are free to operate their businesses as they see fit

goods- objects or things that can satisfy people's wants

invest- to put out money in order to earn a future financial

labor (human resources)- any human activity- mental or physical- used in the production process.

limited resources-all resources are limited, some more than others, so choices must be made about them use.

market-freely chosen activity between buyers and sellers of goods and services

market economy- an economic system in which supply, demand, the price system help people make decisions and allocate resources.

mixed economy- an economy that includes both private ownership and government guidance and regulation.

money- a medium for exchange, unit of account

natural resources- any material provided by nature that can be used to produce goods or provide services

opportunity cost-the cost of giving up one thing to get another

price- monetary value of a product.

producer-a person who makes a good or provides a service

productive resources- what is required to produce goods and services that people want.

productivity- the amount of output (goods and services) produced per unit of input (productive resources) used.

profit-the difference between revenues and the costs entailed in producing or selling a good or service

revenue- total income from sales of output

resources- what is required to produce goods and services that people want.

scarcity-the problem of limited resources

services-actions that can satisfy people's wants

specialization-the situation in which people produce a narrower range of goods or focus on a particular good; results in interdependence with other products

supply and demand- the amount of goods or services available (supply) is dependent on the willingness of consumers to purchase goods or services (demand)

taxes-payment of money that citizens and businesses must make to help pay the costs of government

traditional economy- economic system in which the allocation of scarce resources and other economic activity is the result of ritual, habit or custom.

wants and needs-**wants-**things people would like to have but do not need to live; **needs-**things people must have in order to live

Geography

absolute location-the unique location of a place on Earth's surface (e.g., latitude and longitude measurements, address, and grid locations)

barriers-something that hinders

climate-the weather of an area over a number of years (includes temperature, precipitation, wind and water currents)

famine- an extreme scarcity of food.

fertile land-rich and productive land for growing crops

geography-the study of Earth and the way people live on it and use it

human characteristics- examples: language, religion, housing

human environmental interaction- how people depend upon, adapt to, and modify their environment

depend-to rely on-(e.g., using land for farming)

adapt-to adjust to-(e.g., putting on a coat in cold weather)

modify-to change-(e.g., building a dam)

irrigation- to supply with water through man made means.

landforms-mountain, valley, hill, plain, plateau

latitude-an imaginary line, or parallel, measuring distance north or south of the equator (measured in degrees)

limit-to confine or restrict (e.g., physical environment that limits human activities- mountains as barriers)

location-the place, position, or boundaries where something is or can be located

longitude-an imaginary line, or meridian, measuring distance east or west of the prime meridian (measured in degrees)

movement-how people in one place make contact with people from another place. People, ideas, information, and products are constantly moving around the world.

migration- the movement of people or animals from one place to another

natural disasters-floods, droughts, tornadoes, hurricanes, fires, etc.

natural resources-materials found in nature that people use to meet their needs and wants

place-a particular location that can be described by its human and/or physical characteristics (e.g., school, Rocky Mts.)

physical characteristics-examples: landforms, climates, water, vegetation, animals

physical environment-all the physical surroundings (landforms, bodies of water, climate, natural resources) in which people, plants, and animals live

physical map-a map that highlights Earth's natural features

political map- a map that shows the boundaries of states and countries

population-the total number of people living in a particular area or place

promote-to further the progress, to advance (e.g., physical environment that promotes human activities-rivers used as boundaries or transportation routes)

region-an area with common features (geographic, cultural, economic) that set it apart from other areas

relative location-the position of a place in relation to other places (e.g., next to, south of...)

rivers- a natural stream of water usually of considerable volume.

rural-related to an open, sparsely populated area.

satellite images- photographs of earth's features as seen from satellites above earth's surface.

settle-to establish residence

spatial factors-factors to consider when making decisions about where to locate human activities on Earth's surface (e.g., where to locate a playground, store, house...)

suburban- the area surrounding the city. Contains housing and small cities, communities.

technology-the design and use of tools, ideas, and methods to solve problems

thematic map-a map that shows a particular topic such as a product map, climate map, population map, rainfall map...

urban- related to a city or densely populated area

Students should be able to use maps, globes, charts, and graphs to find and explain locations and display information. Therefore, terminology of parts of a map and other tools should be familiar to the students (e.g., compass rose-a symbol on a map that shows direction, legend/key-explains what each symbol on a map means, scale-relationship between the distance shown on a map and the real distance on Earth)

History

agrarianism- life style that is dependent on farming and agriculture

artifact-an object made by people; historians often study artifacts left behind by people who lived long ago

architecture- a method or style of building

capitalism- an economic system in which natural resources and means of production are privately owned, investments are determined by private individuals rather than by government and prices are determined by competition.

cause and effect- the occurrence of one event is the result of a previous occurrence.

change over time-can be caused by changes in communication, innovations/inventions, traditions, homes, recreation, transportation...

civil war- war between citizens of one nation

civilization- society with a developed knowledge of farming, trade, government, art and science.

classical civilizations- the Greeks and the Romans

equality- being equal

explore-to search the unknown

feudalism- Medieval political system based on the relation of lords and vassals.

Great Convergence- the coming together of European, African, and Native American people beginning in the late 15th century.

historical event-an important event or occurrence that has taken place in the past

historical period or era-a time period in history distinguished by certain characteristics (e.g., Age of Exploration, Colonization...)

history-the story or record of what happened in the past

immigrant- a person who comes to live in a country from his or her home country

industrialism- social organization in which large scale industries are dominant

interpretation- to understand or explain in own belief, judgment or interest.

Manifest Destiny- belief that the United States should extend from coast to coast.

monarchy- government ruled by a king or queen.

multiple causes- more than one reason for an event (e.g., reasons for the American Revolution, Lewis and Clark Expedition, the Civil Rights Movement)

nation states- an independent nation of people having a common culture and identity.

Native American- earliest inhabitants of the western hemisphere; also known as American Indians or by specific group names (e.g., Cherokee, Iroquois, Mandan, Navaho...)

patriotic- loyal to one's country

perspective- to see or think of events in relationship to other events. Different perspectives sometimes influence the accounts of historical events.

philosophy- the general beliefs, concepts and attitudes of an individual or group.

primary source- a firsthand account of an event or an artifact created during the period of history that is being studied (e.g., artifacts, diaries, photographs)

religion- a system of beliefs

revolution- a sudden, radical change; change of government by force.

secondary source- an account of the past based on information from primary sources and written by someone who was not an eyewitness to those events (e.g., textbooks, encyclopedias)

settlements- establishment of residence of people in a new area

slavery- the state of being held in servitude and as property of another.

symbol- something that stands for something else (e.g., flag, Uncle Sam, Statue of Liberty)

tariff- taxes placed on goods entering one country from another.

timeline- a graphic organizer that shows a sequence of events.

****** *It is recommended that students become familiar with the titles given to the historical periods (eras) in the KDE Core Content and review additional vocabulary related to these time periods. (Topics in the Core Content Guides for grade 8 are arranged by these time periods.)*

- **The Americas**
- **Age of Exploration**
- **Colonial Settlements**
- **Conflict and the American Revolution**
- **Establishing a new nation**
- **New government**
- **Manifest Destiny**
- **Industrialization**
- **A Nation Divided (Civil War)**

****** *It is recommended that students become familiar with the titles given to the historical periods (eras) in the KDE Core Content and review additional vocabulary related to these time periods. (Topics in the Core Content Guides for grade 7 are arranged by these time periods.)*

- **Prehistoric People**
- **Mesopotamia**
- **Indus River Valley**
- **Ancient China**
- **Egypt**
- **The Greeks**
- **The Romans**
- **Early Middle Ages**
- **Emerging Empires**
- **Late Middle Ages**
- **Middle Ages- Non western World**
- **Europe in Transition**