

Middle School Social Studies

Language of the Discipline

Term	Definition
Abolish	To do away with, to bring something to an end
Abolition	Efforts to get rid of something, such as slavery
Abolitionist	A person who worked to get rid of slavery during 1800's, mainly in the United States
Abolitionist movement	The organized effort to get rid of slavery in the United States
Absolute chronology	The exact measurement of time or periods of time; the exact position of events on a timeline
Acquire	To receive by, or as a result of, effort or experience; to get or gain
Acquisition	The act or process of receiving or gaining something
Adapt	To change so as to fit a specific or new situation
Adaptation	Adjustment to environmental conditions
Address	A formal speech to a person or audience
Admission	The process of accepting a state or other territory into a country
Admit	To accept a state or other territory into a country
Agriculture	The science of cultivating soil and growing crops; farming
Aim	A specific purpose, a goal
Ally	A person, group, or nation united with others for a special purpose
Alliance	A union of people, groups, or nations to promote common interest or plans
Amend	To add to, change, or do away with something
Amendment	An addition or correction to a document such as a constitution
Ancestry	Family members who came before
Annex	To add on or to attach
Annexation	The process of making something a part of a larger thing (e.g.; annex a state)
Anti-Federalist Writings	Articles written which proposed that the citizens of the United States do not ratify the Constitution, primarily because it did not provide for a bill of rights
Appointed leader	A person who has been given the position of authority in a government; someone not elected
Approximate (v)	To guess or estimate
Approximately	Close enough to correctness for a given purpose
Army	A large military unit whose purpose is to protect, defend, or use force for the nation

Term	Definition
Art	The human ability of creative expression
Assassinate	To murder a public figure
Assassination	The murder of a public figure, especially of a political or government official
Assembly	A group of people gathered together for a specific purpose
Authority	The power to influence people's thoughts, beliefs, or behavior
Banking	The type of business in which money is kept for saving, investing, lending, or exchanging
Battle	A large scale fight between armed forces on land, at sea, or in the air, most wars consist of many battles
Bessemer steel process	The method of making steel by blasting air through melted iron to burn away the impurities; this makes steel, which is stronger than iron
Capital (econ)	The amount of money or property that people or organizations use to increase their wealth
Capital (govt)	The <u>city</u> where the leaders of a state or nation meet to do the government's work
Capitol	The <u>building</u> where leaders of a state or nation meet to do the government's work
Capture	Taking or being taken by force, surprise, or skill
Care of the disabled	The political issue which states that people with handicapping conditions deserve certain rights and protections
Cash crop	Farm products (plants) grown primarily for sale to others rather than for the use of the grower
Cause	A person or thing which produces an effect
Cede	To formally give up one's rights to, or ownership of, something
Central government	A system of running a country where authority over the entire country rests with an individual or a small group of people
Change	To add to, take from, or correct something; to amend
Characteristic	A distinguishing trait, feature, or quality
Checks and balances	A system that allows each branch of government to limit the powers of the other branches in order to prevent abuse of power
Chronology	An arrangement of events in order in which they occurred
City	A large community where people live, work, and play
Citizen	A person with certain rights and responsibilities in his or her own community or country
Citizenship	The political duties, responsibilities, and rights of a person
Civic virtue	Thinking and acting like a good citizen

Term	Definition
Civil disobedience	Deliberate public refusal to obey a law
Civil disorder	A widespread disturbance within a community, state, or country
Climate	The weather patterns of an area over a period of time
Colonial	Having to do with a settled area ruled by another country
Colonist	A person who lives in a settled area ruled by his or her native country
Colonization	The process of settling an area which is to be ruled by the native country
Colonize	To found or establish an area where a group of people settle a land but remain under the rule of their native land
Colony	A territory apart from the native country and settled by people who will still be ruled by the native country
Commerce	The buying and selling of goods or services, especially when done on a large scale between cities, states, or countries
Commercial	Having to do with the buying and selling of goods or services, especially when done on a large scale between cities, states, or countries
Common Law	The laws of a country or state based on custom, usage, and the decisions and opinions of the courts; <u>it is not written</u>
Comparison	Showing the similarities and differences of two or more things
Compromise	An agreement in which each side gives up some of its demands or grants the other side certain privileges
Concern	An issue or principle which affects a person or group
Confederacy	People, groups, states, or nations united for some common purpose(another word for confederation)
Confederacy	The 11 Southern states which seceded from the United States to form their own country
Confederation	People, groups, states, or nations united for a common purpose(another word for confederacy)
Conflict	A fight, struggle, disagreement, or clash
Congress	A country's group of lawmakers; another word for legislature
Congressional	Having to do with a country's lawmaking body or legislature
Contemporary	Having to do with the present time
Constitution	The written or unwritten system of principles which govern a country
Constitutional	Having to do with the system of principles which govern a country
Continuity	The state of being uninterrupted or unchanged

Term	Definition
Contribute	To give
Contribution	The money, goods, or services given by a person or group
Controversy	An issue which causes a disagreement, or the disagreement itself
Convention	An assembly of people or groups, often at a regular time, to discuss and resolve issues
Cotton gin	The machine invented by Eli Whitney which separates cotton fibers from the seeds; “gin” is short for <u>engine</u>
Country	The land, the people who live in that land, and its government; a nation
Court system	The way a country uses judges and laws to determine whether some action or belief follows the laws of that country
Cruel & unusual punishment	The principle that some methods of penalizing people for criminal behavior cause too much pain and suffering or do not follow the beliefs or ideas of the people of the country
Cultural activity	A demonstration of the beliefs, traditions, and customs of a particular group
Culture	A way of life; the pattern of a people’s knowledge, skills, traditions, and beliefs
Current event	An important occurrence of today
Debate (n)	An argument or discussion of opposing points of view
Debate (v)	To argue or discuss opposing points of view
Defeat (n)	A victory over an enemy or competitor
Defeat (v)	To achieve victory over, to overcome, to beat
Defense	The military system used by a government to protect its people
Demand (n)	An urgent requirement, need, or claim
Demand (v)	To make an urgent claim or need
Democracy	A form of government in which supreme power rests with the people and is exercised directly by them
Democratic	Referring to the belief that all people are equal, especially in their right to a voice in their government
Democratic process	The system which grants the citizens of a country equal rights in government affairs
Depend	To rely upon for support or aid
Dependence	The state of having to rely upon some other person or organization for some needs or decisions
Dependent	Having to rely upon another person or organization for needs or decisions
Development	Something that has changed, grown, or strengthened
Discover	To find out, learn of the existence of, or realize something
Discovery	The act of finding out, learning the existence of, or

Term	Definition
	realizing something
Document	A written or printed paper or other object which gives information or evidence
Domestic problem	A special concern in a particular country
Double jeopardy	Being tried for the same crime twice; prohibited by the US Constitution
Drama	Plays, one of the arts
Due process (of law)	The right of an accused person to be treated fairly and according to the law
Economic activity	Any event having to do with the production, distribution, or use of resources
Economic system	The ways in which an organization manages its money and resources
Economics	Having to do with the management of the income and expenditures of an organization or government
Economy	The system of producing, distributing, and using resources
Elect	To choose a person for an office or position by voting
Elected leader	A person chosen to a position of authority by a vote
Election	The system of choosing a person for an office or position by a vote
Environment	The surroundings that affect a person or group
Equal	Having the same rights, status, and privileges as others
Equality	The condition of having the same rights, status, and privileges as others
Era	An important or outstanding period of time
Ethnic group	A group of people with the same customs, language, social ideas, or culture
Event	An important happening
Execute (kill)	To put a person to death according to a legal order
Executive	The person who carries out the laws of a government, such as the president, governor, or other ruler
Executive branch	The part of a government that carries out the laws
Expansion	Growth in size, weight, or amount
Explore	To go into, or travel through, a place for the purpose of discovery
Exploration	Traveling into little known or unknown lands or seas for the purpose of discovery
Export (n)	A product which a country makes, or takes from nature in that country, to sell other countries
Export (v)	To send a product out of a country into another country for sale or trade
Exportation	The act of sending a product out from a country to another country for trade or sale

Term	Definition
Factor	Anything that leads to making something happen
Federal	Having to do with a government in which power is shared between the central government and individual governments (like states)
Federal government	The system set up to run a country in the central authority shares its powers with its states or provinces
Federalism	The idea of sharing powers between the national, state, and provincial governments
Federalist Papers	Writings by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay in favor of the ratification the Constitution of the United States
Fine arts	Creative expressions such as drawing, painting, sculpture, music, drama, and literature
First Great Awakening	A religious movement of the 1730's and 1740's that emphasized a personal relationship with God and the importance of doing good
Foreign policy	The ways in which a country deals with other countries
Found	To start or establish something (example - The school board founded Mark Twain Junior (Middle) School in the 1920's!)
Freedom	Being in control of one's own life and being able to make one's own choices
Free enterprise system	The plan that allows people to own land and businesses and to run them as they wish with little interference by the government
Free press	The right of people to print what they want so long as they don't take away other peoples' rights
Free speech	The right of people to say what they want, so long as they don't take away other peoples' rights
Geography	The study of where living and non-living things are found on the earth and how they affect one another
Geographic distribution	How something is spread out or shared by different part of the earth
Geographic pattern	The regular appearance of something on the earth that allows people to predict where else it may appear
Goal	An aim
Government	The system set up for running a country or other organization
Grievance	A cause for complaint
Guarantee (n)	A promise that something or someone will act a certain way or that any failure to do so will be made up
Guarantee (v)	To promise that something or someone will act a certain way or to make up for any failure to do so
Historic document	A written or printed paper or other object from the past

Term	Definition
	that gives information about or proves something
Historical	Having to do with actual events from the past
Historical event	An important happening from the past
History	The record of important events from the past
Human characteristics	The ways people or groups of people look or act that make them different from others
Immigrant	A person who leaves his or her home country to live in another country
Immigration	Moving from one country to another
Impact	A forceful or dramatic event or condition produced by a cause
Import (n)	A product which a country buys from another country
Import (v)	To bring a product into a country from another country for sale or trade
Importation	The act of bringing a product into a country from another country; or the product brought into the country from another country
Inaugural address	The speech a person makes at the ceremony admitting him or her to office
Indentured servant	A person who agrees to work for another for a stated period of time under a written agreement
Independence	The state of being free from outside control or support
Independent	Not being controlled or ruled by another
Individual rights	Privileges and authorities guaranteed by the government to its citizens
Industry	All the companies that make the same product or provide the same service, for example: the tourist industry; also all businesses that manufacture things
Industrial	Relating to manufacturing businesses
Industrialization	To increase manufacturing in a place
Industrial Revolution	A period beginning in the 1700s when fewer items were made by hand in people's homes and more were made in factories by machines
Influence	The power to produce change
Institution	An organization for the promotion of social goals such as government, education, science, art, etc.
Interest group	People organized to promote and defend the common goals of its members
Interstate commerce	The buying and selling of goods between states
Invasion	A forceful or hostile entrance or intrusion
Invention	Something that has been made for the first time
Issue	A question or topic under discussion or debate
Judicial	Relating to the courts, judges, law, and the enforcement of

Term	Definition
	the laws of a country
Judicial branch	The third division of the government that explains the laws and make decisions based on the law
Judicial review	The power of the Supreme Court to decide if laws are constitutional
Judiciary	The part of the government that explains the law and makes decisions based on the law; another term for the judicial branch
Jury	A group of people sworn to hear evidence about a case and to make a decision about the case
Landmark decision	A court ruling on a case that serves as an example for later cases
Leader	A person who gives guidance or direction
Legal	Allowed by law
Legislative	Having to do with the branch of government that makes the laws
Legislative branch	The branch of government that makes the laws
Legislature	The group of people responsible for making the laws; in the US, the Congress
Liberty	Freedom to exercise one's individual rights
Limited government	A ruling body restricted by the authority of the people and the groups that represent them
Literature	Writings such as novels or poetry; one of the arts
Location	Where a place is
Manufacture	To make goods by hand or machinery
Manufactured goods	Things made by hands or machinery
Manufacturing	The making of goods by hand or machinery
Market (n)	The system of buying or selling something such as goods, services, stocks, bonds, or money
Market (v)	To offer for sale
Mercantilism	A set of economic principles based on policies which stress government regulation of economic activities to benefit the home country
Migrant	A person who has moved from another place
Migration	The movement of people or animals from one place to another
Military	The armed forces trained and paid by the government to protect and defend the country or to use force when necessary
Militia	An army made up of citizens rather than professional soldiers
Model	An example
Modify	To change or alter

Term	Definition
Nation	A country with one central government; or the people of that country
National	Relating to a country as a whole
National government	The central authority in a country
National identity	The people's recognition of the culture and values of their own country
Nationalism	Patriotic feelings for one's country
National origin	The country in which a person was born
Native	Belonging to an area or country by birth
Naturalized citizen	A person who became a member of the country to which he or she has immigrated and who gained the rights, privileges, and authorities of people born in that country
Natural resource	Material supplied by nature
Navy	A military fleet of ships and the people who serve in that part of the military
Novel	A long prose narrative that usually portrays imaginary characters and events
Opinion	A belief that has not been proved
Oppose	To be against
Opposition	Any person, group, or thing that is against something
Organization	A group a people with a common goal or common beliefs
Origin	The starting point from which anything comes; the source; the beginning
Participation	The act of joining with others in something
Passage (written)	A usually brief portion of a written work or speech
Patriot	One who loves his or her country and supports its authority and interests
Patriot	A person who fought for and/or supported the interest of the Americans in their fight for freedom from Great Britain during the colonial period
Patriotic	Having feelings of love and support for one's country
Patriotism	Feelings of love and support for one's country
Peace	A state of security or order within a community or nation
Physical characteristic	A distinguishing quality of the exterior features of the earth
Plantation	A large farm usually worked by resident labor
Plantation system	An agriculture program in which cash crops were grown mostly on very large farms
Political	Of or concerning government
Political office	A special duty or position of authority of a person in government
Political party	A group that works to elect certain candidates and promotes certain goals (such as Democrats and

Term	Definition
	Republicans)
Political process	The method by which the government and its agencies handle their affairs
Politics	The means by which people try to influence the government process
Popular sovereignty	Principle that all political power comes from the people; self-government
Populate	To furnish or provide with settlers
Population	The people of a city, country, or district
Power (authority)	Possession or control of influence over others
Power (country)	A country or state that possesses authority and influence over others
Principle	A belief; what person or group believes is right
Procedure	A series of steps followed in a regular definite order to accomplish a goal
Produce (v)	To bring into existence by labor or effort
Production	The act of manufacturing and creating goods and services
Profit	The money made by a person or business after subtracting its costs
Protective tariff	A tax on goods from another country which is designed to get people to buy products made in their own country and not to buy imported goods
Public education	Schools paid for by the government
Purchase (n)	Something bought
Purchase (v)	To buy
Racial group	Persons belonging to one of the divisions of human beings based upon common ancestry
Ratification	An agreement which causes a matter to become law
Ratify	To give legal or official approval
Rebel (n)	A person who disobeys authority
Rebel (v)	To resist authority
Rebellion	A resistance or fight against any power or restriction
Reconstruction	The process by which the Southern states, after the Civil War, were reorganized in order to re-establish their relations with the national government
Reform movement	An organized group which promotes changes to improve government or society
Region	Any large part of the earth's surface with definable features or characteristics
Relative chronology	The approximate measurement of time or periods of time; also the relation of one event to another in time (ex: first, second, third; before and after)
Religion	A system of beliefs, rights, and celebrations centered on

Term	Definition
	the supernatural belief in a higher power
Religious freedom	The freedom to worship as one desires
Religious group	A group of people who practice a particular faith or form of worship
Represent	To serve as a spokesman or agent for others, especially in a legislature
Representative	One who acts or speaks on behalf of another person or organization
Representative government	A system for running a country in which elected delegates speak and vote for the people
Republic	A form of democracy in which the citizens elect representatives to run the government
Republican	Having to do with a government in which the citizens elect representatives to run their country (not the Republican political party)
Republican government	A system for running a country in which the citizens elect representatives to make decisions, set policies, and make and enforce laws for them
Republicanism	Belief in, and approval for, a form of government in which people elect representatives to run their country
Resettlement	A government process of moving large groups of people from their homes to live in other places
Resolution	A course of action decided upon by an official group
Resolve	To make a firm decision about something
Resource (economic)	A supply of something that can be used when needed
Resource (research)	A reference that can be used to find information or to support an idea
Responsibility	A person's or group's duty, obligation, or burden
Revolt	To attempt to overthrow an authority, to rebel
Revolution	The attempt to overthrow an authority, a rebellion
Right	A guaranteed privilege or authority
Science	Ideas and information which we know are correct because they have been tested
Search and seizure	A legal term meaning a thorough examination of and/or the taking possession of a person's property, usually because of suspected wrongful actions
Secede	To formally break away from membership in something, often from a country
Secession	The act of breaking away from something, usually referring to the 11 states which left the United States to become the Confederate States of America
Second Great Awakening	A religious movement during the early 1800s which furthered church membership, abolition, prison reform, the temperance movement, and the women's rights

Term	Definition
	movement
Sectionalism	A narrow-minded loyalty to the region in which a person lives
Self-government	A political system in which the people, or their representatives, make policies and laws
Self-incrimination	Testifying against one's interests, welfare, or advantage in a criminal trial
Separation of powers	The division of a central government into two or more branches, each having its own responsibilities and authorities
Separation of church & state	The principle that the government will not support any one religion
Session	A meeting, or a series of meetings, in which a group conducts its business
Slave	A person owned and controlled by another person, usually for work
Slavery	A system in which people own and control other people for the purpose of getting work done
Slave trade	The system of buying and selling slaves for profit
Social	Having to do with people and the groups in which they live
Society	A part of a community thought of as a unit, set apart by common interests or values; people, for the most part
State	A group of people living in an area and organized under one government as a division of a country (in the United States)
State	A nation
States' rights	The authorities of a division of a country that are not given to the federal government
Steamboat	A ship powered by water boilers, invented during the Industrial Revolution, which changed the way people transported goods
Supply and demand	A comparison of the amount of a product or service that people want to the amount available
Supreme court	The governmental body with the highest authority to judge
Supreme Court decision	The final judgment passed by the Supreme Court; it influences how other court cases will be decided
System	The order in which things are done
Tariff	A government tax on goods brought into the country
Tax	Money paid for the support of the government
Taxation	System of collecting money for the support of the government
Technology	The use of scientific knowledge to control objects and

Term	Definition
	forces
Temperance	The act of completely avoiding alcoholic beverages
Territorial	Having to do with a particular area of land
Territory	An area of land controlled by a country, but not having self-governing powers
The arts	Music, drama, literature, painting, sculpture, and other creative expressions
Trade	The business of buying and selling goods and services; commerce
Trait	A characteristic
Transportation	Moving goods, people, or ideas from one place to another
Treason	The crime of betraying a person's own country
Treaty	A formal agreement between two or more political groups, usually countries
Trial	A formal examination of evidence to make a decision about charges or claims
Triangular trade	A system of trade used in American colonial times which involved the buying and selling of gold and slaves from Africa; rum, molasses, sugar, and honey from the West Indies; and flour, meat, and lumber from the 13 colonies
Troop	A group of soldiers
Unalienable rights	Privileges and authorities which cannot be given or taken away
Unconstitutional	Against the principles and laws established to govern a country or other organization
Union	An alliance of people or political bodies, used especially for a country which is made up of more than one state
Universal	Having to do with, or affecting, everyone
Unlimited government	A system for ruling a country in which the ruling person or party does not have to answer to any other authority; a dictatorship
Urbanization	The growth of cities and towns
Victory	Final and complete defeat of an enemy or opposing party; triumph
Victorious	Being the winner of a contest or struggle
War	Open, armed, prolonged conflict between two or more countries or groups; often consists of many battles
Warrant	A document issued by a judge which gives a police officer the authority to make a search, seizure, or arrest
Wealth	Plenty of valuable possessions and/or resources
Women's rights	The legal, equal citizenship privileges for the females of a country

