



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

Glossary of Terms for the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Social Studies

Terms are used throughout the [Kentucky Academic Standards \(KAS\) for Social Studies](#). This document provides an alphabetical list of definitions and descriptions of these terms. The writing committee identified terms that they felt were essential to understanding the content and skills in the standards. The identified key vocabulary terms listed are possible suggestions; they are not the only terms that may be used during instruction. Additionally, it is important to note that merely knowing the definitions of these terms is not enough to obtain mastery of the standards.

Absolute Location - the exact geographic spot where something is located based on where latitude lines intersect with longitude lines on the global grid.

Afro-Eurasian - the continents of Africa, Asia and Europe.

Allocation - the action or process of distributing resources.

Amendments - the process of altering or changing a document such as the U. S. Constitution.

Anti-Federalists - first used in 1787 during the creation of the U.S. Constitution to identify people who opposed the adoption of the U.S. Constitution.

Authority - a person or organization having power, control and knowledge in a particular area or environment.

Benefit - something that is good, helpful or promotes well-being.

Cabinet - made up of a group of people that provide advice to a head of state such as the President's Cabinet.

Capital - an important city in a state or region where the government is located (such as Frankfort, the capital of the state of Kentucky); financial assets or goods dedicated to production of other goods (net worth = excess assets over liabilities).

Cause and effect - a relationship between events or things, where one is the result of the other or others. This is a combination of action and reaction; a cause produces an effect which in turn can become a cause and produce another effect.

Chain of supply - a system of people, resources, activities and information involved in moving a product from producer to consumer.

Characteristic - a feature that helps to identify, tell apart or describe a distinguishing mark or trait.

Checks and balances - the system in which each of the three branches of the United States government has specifically granted abilities to limit ("check") the actions of the other branches, which ensures that no one branch becomes too powerful.

Chronological - arranging items in order by date or time.

Citizen - a person with certain rights, responsibilities and duties to a country.

Citizenship - status of being a citizen; membership in a community.

Civic - relating to a city, citizens or citizenship such as civic responsibility or civic duty.

Civic engagement - actions to make a difference in the civic life of our communities through both political and non-political processes such as participating in the electoral process or volunteering.

Civic identity - how an individual sees oneself in regard to citizenship and their government.

Civic responsibilities - actions that can be completed by citizens, such as community service, running for elected office and voting.

Civic virtues - actions and duties citizens undertake to contribute to the common good of their local, state, national or international community.

Claim - an argument derived from and backed by evidence.

Classical republicanism - a theory of democracy that promotes the general welfare for all citizens in a society.

Classical Period - the period of global history after the decline of river valley civilizations, from about 600 BCE-600 CE

Colonial America - the period from 1492-1763 when lands in North America were colonized by European nations such as England, Spain and France with the intent to increase their wealth and world power. This period saw forced immigration and voluntary immigration from these nations and others to North America.

Colonial Kentucky - the general period corresponding to Colonial America in which Kentucky was claimed by the Spanish, French and English. This period in Colonial Kentucky history can extend through the period when Daniel Boone and others brought the first non-Native settlers into the area for the purpose of permanent settlement and up to the date of statehood on June 1, 1792.

Collaboration - to work jointly together or to cooperate with others.

Commerce - the activity of buying and selling.

Common goods - goods that have a limited abundance that are difficult to stop people from using in unlimited quantities such as land, air, wildlife and water.

Communicating Conclusions - a student's ability to effectively communicate his/her own conclusions and listen carefully to the conclusions of others. Traditional products such as essays, reports, tables, diagrams, graphs, multimedia presentations and discussions can be used to share conclusions with a variety of audiences.

Community - a group of people who have common interests and goals and typically share a space, culture, heritage or government.

Comparative advantage - the ability of an individual or group to carry out a particular economic activity (such as making a specific product) more efficiently than another individual or group.

Compelling Questions - should reflect an enduring issue and be relevant and engaging for students.

Conflict - the opposition of persons or forces which leads to disagreement.

Conquest - the claiming and controlling of a place or people gained by military force.

Constitution - a written plan of government with rules for political and social organization within a nation or state; it determines the powers and duties of the government and guarantees certain rights to the people in it.

Contributions - the act of giving something such as money or time.

Consensus building - a conflict-resolution process used mainly to settle complex, multiparty disputes; collaborative problem-solving.

Consent of the governed - a condition considered by modern democratic societies as a requirement for legitimate government: that the authority of a government should depend on the consent of the people, as expressed by votes in elections.

Consequences - something produced by a cause or action; can be either positive or negative.

Construct - Students demonstrate understanding by connecting new and prior knowledge either verbally or in writing.

Consumers - a person who uses economic goods.

Context - the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed.

Corroborative value - when a second source supports the credibility of another source.

Cost-benefit analysis - a procedure for estimating all costs involved and possible profits to be derived from a business opportunity or proposal.

Counterclaim - an argument in opposition to a previous statement.

Culture - a social institution created within the learned behavior of people, including but not limited to their specific norms, values, belief systems, language(s), knowledge, social relations, technologies, institutions and organizations.

Cultural characteristics - specific ideas, belief systems or patterns of behavior that characterize a society or a particular social group.

Cultural diffusion - the spreading of social institutions and ideas.

Cultural diversity - the existence of a variety of cultural/ethnic groups within a society or in the same place.

Customs and traditions - a common way of doing things; something that many people do, and have done for a long time.

Deliberative and democratic processes - a process where deliberation is central to decision-making. This process also looks to generate outcomes that promote the common good through reasoning, rather than through a law-making process.

Demand - willingness and ability to purchase a commodity or service.

Democracy - a system of government in which the power is held by the people, either directly or through elected representatives.

Democratic discourse - debate where one or more highly valued positions search for authentic truth and are recognized without giving up their valid claims/position.

Democratic principles - equality before the law, inalienable rights, consent of the governed, right to alter or abolish the government, justice, responsibility, freedom.

Disciplinary concepts - the major strands of Social Studies: Civics, Economics, Geography and History.

Disciplinary thinking - the ability to think from different perspectives of a historian, geographer, economist and political scientist.

Diverse - showing variety or differing from one another.

Diverse groups - includes diverse racial, religious, and ethnic groups, and those of various national origins.

Diverse perspectives - the ability to see the world through the eyes of others; awareness and understanding of the customs, practices, methodologies and viewpoints of varied groups of people that are different from you.

Diversity - a range or variety of different things which may include but is not limited to a group or organization made up of people of different races, ethnicities, cultures, religions and economic statuses.

Economic incentive - extrinsic motivation to complete a task or make a decision.

Economic interdependence - when nations are dependent on another nation for products and goods that they cannot produce efficiently for themselves.

Economic markets - the exchange of goods and services by buyers and sellers.

Economy - an exchange of goods and services; the wealth and resources of a country or region, especially in terms of the production and consumption of goods and services.

Efficiency - an economic state in which every resource is optimally allocated to serve each individual or entity in the best way while minimizing waste and inefficiency.

Empire - a group of people and land under one supreme ruler.

Enlightenment - an intellectual and philosophical movement of the late 18th through the early 19th century that focused on the power of human reasoning and his/her own inalienable rights.

Entrepreneurship - the activity of setting up a business or businesses, taking on financial risks in the hope of profit.

Environmental characteristics - aspects of a place or region shaped by the earth's physical processes or stemming from the physical environment.

Equilibrium price (market price) - the price that occurs when supply and demand are equal.

Evidence - the skill of using evidence requires students to collect, evaluate and synthesize evidence from primary and secondary sources to develop and support a claim.

Evidentiary limitations - the ability to recognize that when researching a topic, the source may not address all perspectives of the time period as well as availability of credible sources.

Executive Branch - the branch of federal and state government that is broadly responsible for implementing, supporting and enforcing the laws, led by the office of the President of the United States.

Explanatory products - make an idea, situation or problem clear to someone by describing it in more detail or revealing relevant facts or ideas through a product.

Externalities - side effects or consequence of an industrial or commercial activity that affects other parties without this being reflected in the cost of the goods or services involved, such as the pollination of surrounding crops by bees kept for honey.

Factors of production - land, labor, capital and entrepreneurial skills.

Families - includes all types of family units such as but not limited to: adoption, step, foster, group houses, friends, neighborhood and school family.

Federal System - when the powers of government are divided between the national (federal) government and state

and local governments; the Constitution of the United States established the federal system, also known as federalism.

Federalism - the distribution of power between the levels of government.

Fiscal policy - the use of government spending and tax policies to influence macroeconomic conditions, including aggregate demand, employment, inflation and economic growth.

Founding generation - the many people of diverse backgrounds who forged the path to a new nation.

Founding principle: ideas and virtues that are outlined in the foundational documents that shaped and guided the founding of the United States. Examples include, but are not limited to: freedom of speech, freedom of religion and freedom of the press.

Fundamental documents: documents that provide significant insight into key actions, movements or moments or help establish a precedent or core principles.

Geographic (relating to geography) - belonging to or characteristic of a particular region based on the physical features of an area.

Geographic features - are natural characteristics, such as soil, mountains, clouds, natural bodies of water, etc.

Geographic representations - globes, graphs, diagrams, and aerial and satellite images (remote sensing) that allow us to visualize spatial patterns on Earth.

Geospatial technologies - tools used to map and analyze earth's geography and human societies.

Global interconnectedness - the ability to identify, understand and function in a world that is increasingly multicultural and international.

Global interconnections - relationships between various countries.

Global market - to participate in the buying, selling and trading of services or goods outside of one's own country.

Goods and services - a good or a service is something you can buy. A good is something you can touch; a service is a job that you pay someone else to do.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) - the total value of goods produced and services provided in a country during one year.

Goods - possessions or personal property; items of value used for trade or sale.

Governing Bodies - a group of people who help direct the affairs of an institution or nation in partnership with its leaders.

Government - a system of rule used to govern a community, state or country.

House of Representatives - the lower legislative branch in a bicameral governing body, where each state has a number of representatives proportionate to its population.

Human Characteristics - the defining traits or features that are found in most people.

Human settlement - a location where people have built physical structures to use as permanent or temporary living spaces.

Human resources - an organization's workforce.

Human systems - ways by which humans, through their daily activities, shape and reshape the earth.

Hunter-Gatherer Societies - a community that survives by foraging for food (collecting wild plants and hunting wild animals) which may cause them to regularly move their settlement in order to obtain these resources.

Immigrant - a person who migrates to a new country, usually to take up permanent residence.

Inalienable rights - rights inherently possessed by all people. This term is used in the Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson. (See also, "Natural rights".)

Incentive - something that encourages action or effort such as a reward.

Indian Ocean Maritime System - a series of interconnected trade routes linking China, Southeast Asia, South Asia, East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula from the beginning of the Classical Period and remaining in use until the Early Modern Period.

Influence - a person or group that can inform the actions and decisions of others.

Ingenuity - to be clever, inventive or resourceful.

Innovations - new knowledge which leads to the development of new or improved products, processes or ideas.

Inquiry - in social studies, a process by which students reach and share conclusions. The steps in the inquiry process are to question, investigate, use sources and communicate conclusions.

Integrate evidence - students explore and gather information about topics they want to investigate in order to present information.

Interdependence - the dependence of two or more people or things on each other.

Investigative questions - are synonymous with supporting questions. These questions support the compelling question by asking a more focused question. These can be answered through the use of the concepts and practices of each social studies discipline.

Institution - an established law, practice or custom.

Judicial Branch – in the United States, the branch of government at the federal and state levels that interprets laws and administers justice.

Judicial review - the process by which legislative and executive actions are subject to review by the judiciary; it is part of the checks and balances process that can determine if an act is unconstitutional.

Labor - an activity that is often done for economic gain; a group of people that works for a wage.

Land - the part of earth's surface not covered by water; an area of ground that is defined by specific boundaries.

Landforms - a specific physical feature on the earth's surface such as mountains, plains and valleys.

Latitude - the angular distance of a place north or south of the earth's equator that is expressed in degrees.

Law - the principles and regulations within a community to which people are held accountable.

Law code - a comprehensive written statement of the law.

Leaders - people who are in charge and can dictate or influence change.

Legislative Branch – In the United States, the branch of government at the federal and state levels that makes the laws. Includes the Senate and House of Representatives

Legislative processes - the process of making laws.

Limited resources - productive resources that are finite; for example: money, time, workers, land, materials, natural resources (both renewable and non-renewable).

Longitude - the angular distance of a place east or west of the earth's prime meridian that is expressed in degrees.

Market conditions - the environment of factors that affect business, investing and employment.

Market economy - a system in which economic decisions and the pricing of goods and services are guided solely by the interactions of a country's individual citizens and businesses with little government intervention or central planning.

Meaningful Questions: are synonymous with compelling questions. These questions should reflect an enduring issue and be engaging and relevant for students.

Mediums of exchange - instruments with a standard accepted value used to facilitate the exchange, for example, currency.

Mesoamerica - the historical region and cultural area from central Mexico through Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and northern Costa Rica.

Migration - occurs when a group of people or animals move from one location to another.

Monarchy - a form of government where the supreme authority is a single person whose power is heredity.

Monetary Policy - tools used by the Federal Reserve Bank to manage the supply of money and interest rates in the US economy.

Monopoly - the exclusive possession or control of the supply or trade in a commodity or service.

Monotheism - belief or worship in only one god.

Multicultural - of, relating to, or reflective of many cultures.

Multiple disciplinary lenses - Using the disciplinary concepts and practices of civics, economics, geography and history to make sense of the world.

Multiple perspectives - the ability to see things from several points of view and understand that perspectives are based one's way of thinking, position or beliefs/attitudes.

Natural environment - all living and nonliving things that are found in nature, such as water, forests, minerals and fertile land.

Natural resources - materials found in nature that can be used for economic gain.

Natural rights - also referred to as "inalienable rights," natural rights as those rights inherently held by each person. According to the Virginia Declaration of Rights in 1776, "...all men are by nature equally free and independent and have certain inherent rights, of which, when they enter into a state of society, they cannot, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity; namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety." Drawing on Enlightenment thinkers like John Locke, these rights undergird the structure of democratic government. (See also, "inalienable rights")

Needs - things that are necessary to have for survival.

Neolithic Revolution - the transition from hunting and gathering to one of agriculture and settlement.

Non-Renewable Resource - natural resources that once used are gone forever.

Oligopoly - a state of limited competition, in which a market is shared by a small number of producers or sellers.

Opportunity costs - benefit missed when an investor, individual or business chooses one alternative over another.

Origin - the point or place where something starts or is derived.

Patriotism - a demonstration of support or defense of one's country.

Physical Characteristics - the defining traits or features of a person or place.

Physical environment - the part of the human environment that includes purely physical factors (such as soil, climate, water supply).

Political institutions - organizations that create, enforce and apply laws.

Political system - the set of formal legal institutions that create a government.

Polytheism - the belief or worship of more than one god.

Popular sovereignty - government is ruled by the people.

Preamble - an introduction or preface to a document such as the Declaration of Independence or U.S. Constitution.

Price stability - in an economy means that the general price level in an economy does not change much over time. In other words, prices neither go up nor down; there is no significant degree of inflation or deflation.

Primary sources - primary sources were created by someone who experienced the events first-hand. A primary resource may include, but is not limited to: a diary, government manuscript, photograph, autobiography, speech audio recording, video recording or interview.

Private Institutions - organizations that are not under government control.

Producers - provide a good or service of economic value.

Production - to create or manufacture something of value.

Profit - financial gain in return for a product or service.

Property - goods, land or possessions owned by an individual or group.

Public Institutions - organizations that are run and funded by the government.

Push and Pull Factors - factors that drive people away from a place and draw people to a new location.

Relative Location - the relationship of one geographic place to another.

Reconstruction - the process of building or creating something again that has been damaged or destroyed; the period after the Civil War.

Region - a defined geographic area.

Regions of Kentucky - Bluegrass, Pennyroyal, Jackson Purchase, Eastern Coalfields, Western Coalfields.

Regions of the World - Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe, Oceania.

Relevant information - data that can be applied to solve a problem.

Renaissance - means "rebirth" and refers to the period in Europe between the 14th and 17th centuries when there was a surge of interest in and production of art and literature from Ancient Greece and Rome.

Renewable Resource - resources that are naturally replenished as they are being used.

Representations - the act of speaking on behalf of someone or portraying someone or something.

Republic - a government in which citizens elect representatives to make decisions about the law for all the people.

Responsibility - to be aware of and accountable for something within one's power or control.

Resources - a source of supply or aid that can be accessed when needed; the collective wealth (money and assets) of a country.

Rights - a moral or legal entitlement to take a certain action.

River Valley Civilizations - ancient civilizations centered (especially in terms of economy) around a river, including Ancient Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, Ancient India, and Ancient China.

Rule - prescribed guide for conduct or action; an accepted procedure, custom or habit

Rule of law - all citizens are held accountable to the same rules as established by government law.

Sectionalism - an exaggerated concern for local or regional interests as opposed to concern for the interests of the whole.

Senate - the upper house of the United States Congress, which contains two members per state.

Separation of Powers - separating power between three branches of government - executive, legislative and judicial - to prevent abuse of power.

Scale - the relative size or a ratio of the size of a location.

Scarcity - insufficient supply to meet demand.

Scientific Revolution - when developments in mathematics, physics, astronomy, biology and chemistry transformed the views of society about nature.

Secondary sources - created by someone who did not experience first-hand or participate in the events or conditions being researched. A secondary source may include, but is not limited to: a scholarly book or article.

Services - to supply help to someone; systems to meet public needs, such as utilities and transportation.

Settlement - to make a stable or permanent home or community.

Silk Road - land based trade routes connecting China to the Mediterranean beginning in the Classical Period and remaining in use until the Early Modern Period.

Society - a community, nation or grouping of people having shared institutions, traditions and other common standards of living.

Source - someone or something that supplies information; where something comes from, a starting point or can be used as a reference.

Spatial - the relationships and interactions that occur within a place, anchored in a physical location; arrangement of a phenomenon (such as people or density) across the Earth's surface.

Specialization - the process of concentrating on and becoming an expert in a particular skill.

State-building - developing the political body of a geographic area.

Structure - how the information within a source is organized.

Supply - to furnish or supply something that is lacking.

Supporting Questions - these questions support the compelling question by asking a more focused question. These can be answered through the use of the concepts and practices of each Social Studies discipline.

Symbols - a letter, figure, character or mark (or combination of) that is used to represent a person, place, object or idea.

Theme - an overarching message that applies to multiple topics; an approach where many areas of curriculum are connected together and integrated within a theme.

Theocracy - a form of government in which a god or other deity is recognized as the supreme ruler.

Trace - find or discover by investigation.

Trade network - transfer of goods and/or services amongst an interconnected system.

Tradition - a long-established way of thinking or behaving; the handing down of customs, beliefs, legends and information through the generations.

Traditional economy - a system that relies on customs, history and time-honored beliefs to guide economic decisions on production and distribution.

Transitioning - when people experience a change in their way of life as a result of moving from place to place.

Unintended costs & benefits - when the actions of people and governments have unintended effects.

Veto - the power of one branch of government to cancel or postpone the decision or another branch.

Virtues - moral goodness or an adherence to ethical principles.

Wants - to desire or wish for something.