

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies Vocabulary

1. culture – the way of life (food, language, art, beliefs, clothing, etc...) of a group of people
2. artifact – an object made by humans, which when found can give clues about culture
3. continent – one of the seven large, continuous land masses of the world: North America, South America, Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia, and Antarctica
4. ocean – one of the five large bodies of water separating the continents: Pacific, Atlantic, Indian, Arctic, and Southern
5. sea – a large body of salt water, much smaller than an ocean, and typically partially enclosed by land
6. Northern and Southern Hemispheres – two halves of planet Earth, using the Equator (0° latitude) as the dividing line
7. Eastern and Western Hemispheres – two halves of planet Earth, using the Prime Meridian (0° longitude) and Antemeridian (180° longitude) as reference boundaries
8. peninsula – a body of land surrounded by water on three sides
9. colony – a settlement in a new area that keeps close ties with its homeland

### Ancient Greece, Persia and Rome

10. agora – an open area that served as both a market and a meeting place
11. acropolis – a fortified area at the top of a hill, sometimes used for religious worship
12. polis – a Greek city-state, which was like a tiny independent country
13. monarchy – a system of government with rule by a royal family
14. oligarchy – a system of government with rule by a small, rich, powerful group
15. citizen – a person that is legally recognized as a member of a state or country, with associated rights and obligations
16. democracy – a system of government with rule by its citizens
17. empire – a group of territories or nations under a single ruler, often called an emperor
18. helot – a person who was conquered and enslaved by the ancient Spartans
19. tyrant – a person who takes power by force and rules with total authority
20. ephor – one of the five annually-elected judges in ancient Sparta, who enforced the laws and oversaw the actions of Spartan kings
21. Zoroastrianism – the Persian religion founded by Zoroaster; taught that humans had the freedom to choose between right and wrong, and that goodness would triumph in the end
22. satrap – an official who ruled a state in the Persian Empire under Darius
23. philosopher – a thinker who seeks wisdom and ponders questions about life
24. representative democracy – a system of government in which citizens choose a smaller group to make laws and governmental decisions on their behalf
25. direct democracy – a system of government in which people gather at mass meetings to decide governmental matters
26. fable – a short tale that teaches a lesson
27. myth – a traditional story describing gods or heroes or explaining natural events
28. epic – a long poem that tells about legendary or heroic deeds
29. oracle – a sacred shrine where a priest or priestess spoke for a god or goddess

30. Socratic method – a way of teaching developed by Socrates that used question-and-answer format to force students to use their reason to see things for themselves
31. Sophist -- a professional teacher in ancient Greece; believed that people should use knowledge to improve themselves and developed the art of public speaking and debate
32. Epicureanism – a philosophy founded by Epicurus in Hellenistic Athens; taught that happiness through the pursuit of pleasure was the goal of life
33. Stoicism – a philosophy founded by Zeno in Hellenistic Athens; taught that happiness came not from following emotions, but from following reason and doing one’s duty
34. Hellenistic Era – the period when the Greek language and Greek ideas spread to the non-Greek peoples of southwest Asia
35. civilization – a complex society with cities, government, art, religion(s), agriculture, long-distance trade, a division of labor, and a writing system
36. plane geometry – a branch of mathematics that shows how points, lines, angles, and surfaces relate to one another
37. solid geometry – a branch of mathematics that studies spheres, cylinders, and other three-dimensional objects
38. astronomy – the study of stars, planets, and other heavenly bodies
39. polytheism – a belief in many gods and goddesses
40. monotheism – a belief in only one god
41. Rome – capital city of Italy, situated on the banks of the Tiber River
42. Alps – a major mountain system of south central Europe
43. Pompeii – a Roman town partially destroyed and buried under 4 to 6 m (13 to 20 ft.) of ash and pumice in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79
44. Jerusalem – capital of Israel and a holy city for Christians, Jews, and Muslims
45. Byzantine Empire – Eastern part of the Roman Empire that survived after the breakup of the western part of the empire in the AD 400s
46. Etruscans – the early (pre-Roman) inhabitants of Italy
47. legion – smaller unit of the Roman army made up of ~ 6,000 soldiers
48. veto – to reject, from the Latin for “*I forbid*”
49. plebeian – member of the common people of ancient Rome
50. patrician – wealthy landowner and member of the ruling class in ancient Rome
51. dictator – in ancient Rome, a person who ruled with complete power temporarily during emergencies
52. Forum – open space in Rome that served as a marketplace and public square
53. Twelve Tables – laws carved on bronze tablets and placed in the Forum for everyone to see (c.451 BC), applied the rule of law to all Roman citizens
54. currency – system of money
55. aqueduct – human-made channel built to carry water
56. Pax Romana – Latin for “*Roman Peace*”, long era of peace and safety from about AD 27 – AD 180, beginning during the reign of Emperor Augustus
57. tax reform – the process of changing the way taxes are collected or managed by the government
58. Colosseum – a huge arena that could seat ~ 60,000 people, built in AD 80, used for gladiator fights and other public games
59. economy – organized way in which people produce, sell, and buy goods and services
60. anatomy – the study of body structure

61. satire – a work of literature, art, or media that pokes fun at human weaknesses
62. fascis – a bundle of wooden sticks with an axe blade emerging from the center, symbolizing the authority of Roman leaders and the idea of "strength through unity"
63. inflation – period of rapidly increasing prices
64. plague – disease that spreads quickly and kills many people
65. Pantheon – a domed temple built to honor Rome's gods
66. barter – to exchange goods without using money
67. mosaic – picture made from many bits of colored glass, tile, or stone
68. Judaism – the monotheistic religion of the Jewish (Israelite) people
69. Hebrew Bible – called the *Tanakh*, is a collection of written history and beliefs of the Jewish people, essentially the same book which is called the *Old Testament* of the *Christian Bible*
70. Zealots – a group of Jews who revolted against the Roman rule of Judaea, driving the Romans out of Jerusalem in AD 66
71. Old Testament – the first part of the *Christian Bible*, generally the same writings as the Hebrew Bible, but some Christians (Catholics and Eastern Orthodox, for example) also include other material as well
72. New Testament – the second part of the *Christian Bible*, a collection of works written in Greek by disciples of Jesus of Nazareth in the first and possibly second centuries AD
73. Christianity – a monotheistic religion based on the life and teachings of Jesus
74. messiah – savior or liberator of a people
75. parable – story that used events from everyday life to express spiritual ideas
76. resurrection – the concept of a living being coming back to life after death
77. disciple – close follower of Jesus
78. clergy – religious officials, such as priests, given authority to conduct religious services
79. martyr – person willing to die rather than give up his or her beliefs
80. hierarchy – organization with different levels of authority
81. excommunicate – to declare that a person or group no longer belongs to a church
82. schism – separation
83. iconoclast – person who opposed the use of icons (religious images or pictures) in Byzantine churches, saying that icons encouraged the worship of idols
84. Latin Alphabet – by the time of the Roman Empire (27 BC) this alphabet contained all of the letters we use today except for J, U, and W
85. Cyrillic Alphabet – an alphabet based on Greek letters, still used today by 252 million people in Russia and many other countries in Europe and Asia:  
а б в г д е ё ж з и й к л м н о п р с т у ф х ц ч ш щ ъ ы ь э ю я
86. Roman Catholic Church – branch of Christianity that by AD 600 was ruled by the authority of the Bishop of Rome, now called the Pope
87. Eastern Orthodox Church – branch of Christianity that did not accept the Pope's authority, instead ruled by the emperor and patriarch of the Byzantine Empire
88. missionary – person who travels to carry the ideas of a religion to others

### Ancient India

89. Himalayas – the highest mountains in the world, in the north of India
90. Ganges – a main river in India, sacred to Hindus, used for cremation rites

91. Indus – a main river in early India (now in Pakistan), site of the earliest cities of India's first civilization starting about 3,000 BC
92. South Asian Subcontinent – a land mass, smaller than a continent, that moved north on a tectonic plate, joining Asia 20-50 million years ago
93. Sanskrit – the oldest written language of India
94. caste – a social group that someone is born into and cannot change
95. monsoon – a strong wind that blows one direction in winter and the opposite direction in summer, producing heavy rains
96. theocracy – a government headed by religious leaders, ruled according to the doctrine of a particular religion
97. dynasty – a series of rulers from the same family
98. Hinduism – one of the world's oldest religions, today the third largest; its members worship thousands of gods and goddesses – all part of Brahman
99. Mahabharata – a Hindu epic poem (the longest in any language at 88,000 verses) about a great war for control of an Indian kingdom about 1,000 BC
100. Ramayana – a Hindu epic poem which tells of the adventures of king Rama, whose queen, Sita, is kidnapped by the demon Ravana
101. reincarnation – the idea of passing through many lives to reach Brahman
102. karma – for Hindus, the consequences of how a person lives
103. dharma – the divine or natural law that indicates your duties in Hinduism
104. virtue – a positive trait or quality deemed to be morally good
105. Buddhism – the religion founded by Siddhartha Gautama around 500 BC
106. Four Noble Truths – the Buddhist belief that life is full of suffering because people desire things and self-satisfaction, includes the belief that to end suffering you need to stop desiring things
107. Eightfold Path – a Buddhist set of eight steps for enlightenment, including: give up worldly things, don't harm others, tell the truth, don't gossip, don't kill, don't steal, don't live an unclean life, do rewarding work for good, use your mind to keep your senses in control, and practice meditation
108. nirvana – the Buddhist belief that if a person gives up all desires, he or she can reach a state of wisdom or enlightenment
109. bodhisattva – Buddhist word for enlightened people who postpone going to heaven, instead staying on Earth to help others and do good deeds
110. algorithm – a series of steps to solve a problem

### Economics and Financial Literacy

111. profit – the money a business or individual makes after accounting for all expenses, such as materials, labor, advertising and taxes
112. supply – the amount of a product which is available to customers
113. demand – the amount of a product people are willing to buy at a certain price
114. price – the quantity of payment given by one person to another for goods or services
115. Four Basic Laws of Supply and Demand -- If demand increases and supply remains unchanged, a shortage occurs, leading to a higher price. If demand decreases and supply remains unchanged, a surplus occurs, leading to a lower price. If demand remains

- unchanged and supply increases, a surplus occurs, leading to a lower price. If demand remains unchanged and supply decreases, a shortage occurs, leading to a higher price.
116. scarcity – the economic problem of having humans with unlimited wants and needs in a world of limited resources
  117. imports – a good or service brought from one country into another country for sale
  118. exports – a good or service sent out from a country for sale
  119. outsourcing – the contracting out of part of a business' processes to avoid or reduce costs such as labor, medical benefits, or taxes
  120. cost-benefit analysis – a process of calculating and comparing benefits and costs of a project or decision, by comparing different options, and comparing the total expected cost of each option against the total expected benefits, to see if the benefits outweigh the costs, and by how much

### Rise of Islam

121. Islam – the name of the religion of the Muslim people, from the Arabic word meaning “surrendering to the will of God”
122. Muhammad – founder and prophet of the Islamic faith, born in 570 CE
123. Allah – the Muslim word for God
124. Makkah – largest and richest town on the Arab trade routes, holiest city for Muslims
125. Mosque – Muslim house of worship, also serves as a school and a court
126. Sharia – law code from the Muslim holy books, gives rules for how society should be run
127. Sunni and Shiite – two main branches of the Muslim religion
128. Arabs – people who trace their ancestors to Arabia, or whose first language is Arabic
129. Quran – the holy book for Muslims
130. Crusades – ‘holy’ wars declared by the Christian Pope against Muslims in Jerusalem
131. genocide – the deliberate and systematic destruction, in whole or in part, of an ethnic, racial, religious, or national group
132. religious tolerance – allowing people of multiple religions to live in relative peace in a community or region, even when ruled by a single religion
133. bazaar – open marketplace in a Muslim city
134. caravan – a group of merchants and animals, traveling together for safety
135. oasis – a green area in the desert fed by underground water
136. Al-Razi – best known Muslim chemist who classified things according animal, mineral, or vegetable; wrote many books on disease
137. Ibn Khaldun – great historian who understood the connection between geography, climate, and history
138. Ibn Sina – Persian doctor who showed how diseases spread from person to person, not because a person was cursed by spirits or gods
139. Omar Khayyam – Persian poet who, in 1100 CE, wrote many beautiful poems, including the *Rubaiyat*, considered one of the most beautiful poems ever written
140. Abbas Ibn Firnas – inventor who lived in Cordoba, Spain; first person to achieve flight; also a mathematician, poet, musician, astronomer, and doctor

## Medieval Africa

141. Ibn Battuta – young Arab lawyer from Morocco who set out to explore the Muslim world in 1325; he traveled for almost 30 years
142. Mansa Musa – last strong king of the Mali kingdom; he made Mali famous after making a pilgrimage to Makkah in 1324, but Mali began a slow decline after his death
143. Nzinga – a queen of lands in what are now Angola and Congo; she spent almost 40 years battling Portuguese slave traders
144. Mali – West African kingdom which conquered the kingdom of Ghana
145. griots – West African story tellers
146. plateau – an area of high, flat land
147. Timbuktu – founded in the 11th century by the Tuareg, it became a major trading center (primarily for gold and salt) by the 14th century.
148. dhow – an Arab sailboat
149. clan – group of families related by blood or marriage
150. sultan – military and political leader with absolute authority over a Muslim country
151. Swahili – refers to the culture and language of East Africa
152. migrations – movements of large groups of people
153. African diaspora – the spreading of African peoples and cultures around the world
154. matrilineal – refers to a group that traces descent through mothers rather than fathers
155. Dahia al-Kahina – Queen who led the fight against the Muslim invasion of her kingdom, located about where Algeria is today
156. climate zones – a system for classifying geographic places based on native vegetation, as well as average temperatures and precipitation
157. desert – region with extremely low rainfall, usually less than 16 inches (40cm) per year
158. Mediterranean – a climate with warm to hot, dry summers and mild to cool, wet winters. Examples include the lands around the Mediterranean Sea, much of California, parts of Western and South Australia, southwestern South Africa, sections of Central Asia, and in parts of central coastal Chile.
159. rain forest – forest with a high rainfall, typically 70 or more inches (175 – 200 cm) per year
160. savanna – grassland, often with some tree cover

## Medieval Japan

161. constitution – a plan of government which establishes the fundamental principles for a state or other organization, usually setting limits on the power of the state
162. animism – a belief that all natural things (winds, mountains, rivers, etc.) are alive and have spirits
163. shrine – holy places where religious rituals are performed
164. samurai – Japanese warriors who served lords
165. shogun – commander of all of the Japanese emperor's military forces
166. daimyo – powerful Japanese military lords
167. vassal – a samurai who gave an oath of loyalty to a daimyo
168. feudalism – the bond of loyalty between a lord and a vassal which resulted in protection for the lord and land for the samurai

169. sect – smaller sub-group of a religion; for example, Zen Buddhism is an important sect of Buddhism in Japan
170. martial arts – sports that involved combat and self-defense
171. meditation – the practice of sitting for long periods with the mind cleared of thoughts and desires in order to relax and find inner peace
172. calligraphy – the art of writing beautifully
173. tanka – unrhymed poem of five lines which captures nature’s beauty and the joys and sorrows of life
174. guild – a group of artisans or merchants who work together to set standards for their craft or business, and to protect and increase their profits
175. archipelago – a chain or cluster of islands

### Medieval Europe

176. knight – warriors in armor who fought on horseback
177. excommunicate – exclude a person from church membership
178. Charlemagne – king of the Franks, who lived from AD 742-814, and conquered much of Western Europe, creating courts and schools, despite being unable to write
179. siege – an attempt to take an enemy’s property by force
180. code of chivalry – rules for knights
181. Black Death – a disease, the Bubonic Plague, which killed ~25,000,000 Europeans in the 14<sup>th</sup> century
182. mail – chain link armor
183. medieval – time period which refers to the middle ages, ~ 400CE – 1400CE
184. consensus – a general agreement
185. bailiff – person who enforces the lord’s wishes, bosses the peasants around
186. noble – a wealthy, powerful ruler in feudal society
187. peasant – a poor, hardworking member of feudal society – at the bottom of the social order
188. serf – peasant who could not leave the manor, own property, or marry without the lord’s approval
189. social order – the rank of classes of people in a society
190. manor – a farming community with a lord’s residence at its center
191. heresy – beliefs which question or challenge official church doctrine
192. apprentice – a person who is learning a craft or trade from a master
193. Vikings – people also known as the Norsemen, who raided Europe, sailing from the fjords of Scandinavia
194. Magyars – nomadic people from Hungary who invaded Europe
195. Holy Roman Empire – territory now called Germany and Northern Italy, which formed out of the Eastern Frankish kingdom
196. William the Conqueror – a descendant of Viking invaders who conquered Normandy, France, this king invaded England in 1066 and was crowned king of England
197. grand jury – the jury which decides whether people should be accused of a crime
198. trial jury – the jury which decides whether an accused person is guilty or innocent
199. King John – English king who raised taxes and punished his enemies without trials; angry nobles finally met with him in 1215 and forced him to sign the “Great Charter”

200. Magna Carta – the “Great Charter”, this document limited the power of government and established the idea that people have rights: it took away some of the king’s power to collect taxes and gave freemen the right to fair, speedy trials by their peers
201. parliament – a gathering of representatives from different parts of England who advised the King and helped him make laws
202. Slavs – people who organized medieval villages in Eastern Europe – in the region of the modern countries of Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Croatia
203. Mongols – people who lived north of China, following their herds of grazing animals, traveling and attacking on horseback, conquering China, much of Southwest Asia, and much of Eastern and Central Europe, creating the largest land empire in the world
204. anti-Semitism – prejudice against Jews; in the middle ages this included special clothing restrictions, separate living areas (ghettos), loss of the rights to own land and practice certain trades, expulsion from some countries, and attacks from violent mobs
205. cathedrals – large churches paid for by church leaders and wealthy merchants and nobles

#### The Renaissance, Reformation, Age of Exploration, Scientific Revolution, and Enlightenment

206. Renaissance – a cultural movement, beginning in Italy and spreading throughout Europe, from the 14th to the 17th century
207. Florence – a city in central Italy, on the Arno River: capital of the former grand duchy of Tuscany; the city where the Renaissance began
208. Medici – important ruling family of Florence; patron of the arts and literature
209. Leonardo da Vinci – Italian painter, 1452–1519, sculptor, architect, musician, engineer, mathematician, and scientist
210. Marco Polo – merchant from Venice who traveled to China and met with Mongol ruler Kublai Khan in the 1270s, then wrote a book about his travels
211. Johannes Gutenberg – German goldsmith who built a moveable type printing press in the 1450s, making books quicker and cheaper to print, spreading ideas more quickly
212. William Shakespeare – English playwright, 1564 – 1616, who wrote tragedies, comedies, and historical plays
213. Humanism – any system or mode of thought or action in which human interests, values, and dignity predominate
214. scholarship – learning; knowledge acquired by study; the academic attainments of a scholar
215. Botticelli – Italian painter
216. Michelangelo – Italian sculptor, painter, architect, and poet
217. Machiavelli – Italian statesman, political philosopher, and author
218. Sir Thomas More – English writer on religious subjects
219. Raphael – Italian painter
220. aesthetic – pertaining to a sense of the beautiful or to the science of aesthetics
221. Filippo Brunelleschi – Italian architect; engineered the dome of Florence Cathedral
222. St. Peter’s Basilica – a Late Renaissance church located within the Vatican City, the rebuilding of which was an architectural feat, combining the skills of Bramante, Michelangelo, Raphael, Sangallo and Maderno



223. scientific method – a method of research in which a problem is identified, relevant data are gathered, a hypothesis is formulated from these data, and the hypothesis is empirically tested; developed during the Renaissance
224. Erasmus – Dutch humanist, scholar, theologian, and writer
225. sculpture – the art of carving, modeling, welding, or otherwise producing figurative or abstract works of art in three dimensions
226. architecture – the profession of designing buildings, open areas, communities, and other artificial constructions and environments, usually with some regard to aesthetic effect
227. secular – relating to earthly life rather than to religion or spiritual matters
228. Martin Luther – young monk who challenged the Roman Catholic Church, was upset by the Church’s sale of indulgences, and argued that the Pope could not decide what a person had to do to get into heaven; this led to the Reformation, a Christian movement which became known as Protestantism, which led to many new and different Christian denominations
229. New World – the name given by Europeans to the Americas, which were unknown in Europe before the voyages of Christopher Columbus
230. subject – a person under the rule of a monarch
231. patron – a wealthy or influential supporter of an artist or writer
232. Ferdinand Magellan – explorer who led the first expedition to circumnavigate the globe; he was killed in the Philippines, but his sailors made it home to Spain
233. Columbian Exchange – new exchange of goods, technology, ideas, people, and disease which happened after Columbus sailed to the Americas
234. Age of Enlightenment – a period during the 1700s in which educated Europeans came to believe that scientific thinking and reason was a “light” which revealed error and showed the way to truth
235. Nicolaus Copernicus – Polish mathematician who, in 1543, wrote a book stating his theory that the Sun (not the Earth) was the center of the solar system
236. Isaac Newton – English mathematician who developed calculus, discovered white light is made of color, and in 1687, published his law (well-tested theory) of gravitation
237. John Locke – English thinker in the late 1600s who believed that the purpose of government is to protect people’s rights to life, liberty, and property
238. Baron Montesquieu -- French thinker in the 1700s who argued that England’s government was the best because it separated the government’s powers into three equal branches: executive, legislative, and judicial
239. Mary Wollstonecraft – English writer who wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, in 1792, claiming that all humans have reason, so women should have the same rights as men
240. Thirteen Colonies – by the early 1700s, English settlers had sailed to the Atlantic Coast of North America in order to make money and to find religious and political freedom, creating Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia