

Effective Academic Vocabulary Instruction for Social Studies

Why is it important to teach academic vocabulary in Social Studies?

Vocabulary Self-Assessment

The goal is for students to rate their knowledge of vocabulary periodically and to see how words go from “never heard of it” to “know it well” over time. Model how to rate knowledge of a selected word, and then ask students to rate their knowledge of the additional words. Invite students to use www.vocabulary.com as a resource.

Word	I have no idea what this word means.	I have some idea about what this word means.	I could explain this word to my partner.	Notes on words.

Vocabulary Wall

Key terms that will be relevant all year

Key terms that relate to the current unit

General academic words that support understanding of the key terms

Vocabulary Wall Prompts and Activities

Write down one new thing you learned today and use at least two of our vocabulary wall words.

Write down the words ____, ____, and ____ from our vocabulary wall. With a partner, write down everything you think you know about them.

From our vocabulary wall, select the words that were most important from today’s lesson. Explain to a partner why you selected these words.

Vocabulary Journals

Allows for opportunities to practice Social Studies language.
Students can revisit and add to their entries as their understandings develop.

Concept Sort

Purpose: To develop a deep understanding of concepts through the process of comparing, contrasting, and categorizing. The words to be sorted are key vocabulary words, and any important related words for a topic of study.

Open:

Closed:

Other Notes

Generative Vocabulary Instruction

Over 60% of English vocabulary is created through a combination of Latin and Greek roots, prefixes, and suffixes. Some estimates go as high as 75%. Morphological knowledge makes a significant contribution to reading ability. Visit <http://www.etymonline.com> for word meanings.

