Overview of the Social Studies GED® Test

The GED Social Studies Test measures a candidate’s skill in understanding and interpreting key history, geography, economics, and civics concepts and principles and applying them to visual and written academic and workplace contexts.

- The test consists of 50 multiple choice questions.
- Candidates have 70 minutes to complete the test.
- The GED Social Studies Test includes questions in the following areas:

  **History**: 40% (U.S. history 25%, World History 15%)
  **Geography**: 15%
  **Civics and Government**: 25%
  **Economics**: 20%

- The questions are based on one of the following three types of source material:

  - **Prose** (40%): narratives, high school textbooks, editorials, speeches, newspapers, news magazines, historical documents
  - **Visual Text** (40%): maps, graphs, charts, diagrams, political cartoons, photographs, works of art
  - **Written and Visual Text** (20%): a combination of any 2 of the above

- Prose-based questions constitute 40% of the test, and visual text or visual/written questions represent 60%.
- Prose sources are no longer than 200 words, and text for a single question is 50 – 60 words.
- The types of questions include:

  **Comprehension**: 20%
  **Application**: 20%
  **Analysis**: 40%
  **Evaluation**: 20%
The GED® Social Studies Test Content

Items on the Social Studies GED Test are drawn from major concepts within the national standards in history:

U.S. History (25%)

- Native Peoples, Colonization, Settlement, Revolution, and the New Nation
- Western Expansion, Civil War Era, Reconstruction, and the Industrial Revolution
- Emergence of Modern America, Great Depression, World War II, Postwar U.S., Contemporary United States

World History (15%)

- Beginning and Early Civilizations
- Classical Traditions, Major Empires, World Religions
- Growing Trade, Hemispheric Interactions, Age of Revolutions (1750 – 1914)
- World Wars, Advances in Science and Technology, the Cold War, “Global Culture”

Civics and Government (25%)

- Civic Life, Politics, and Government
- Foundations of the American Political System
- American Government
- Relationship of the U.S. to Other Nations
- Role of Citizens in American Democracy

Geography (15%)

- World in Spatial Terms
- Places, Regions, and Physical Systems
- Human Systems, Environment, and Society
- Uses of Geography

Economics (20%)

- Economic Reasoning and Choice
- Comparison of Economic Systems, Business in a Free Enterprise System, Production, Consumers
- Financial Institutions
- Government’s Role in the Economy, Labor and the Economy
- Global Markets and Foreign Trade
The GED® Social Studies Test Context

Approximately 60% of the GED Social Studies Test questions relate to concepts and issues taken from a global or international perspective, and the other 40% address questions related to national issues.

Test questions are based on the following types of source material:

- Excerpts from narratives, high school textbooks, editorials, speeches, newspapers, news magazines, and historical documents
- Maps, graphs, charts, diagrams, political cartoons, and works of art

Each form of the GED Social Studies Test includes an excerpt from at least one of the following fundamental historical United States documents:

- Declaration of Independence
- United States Constitution
- Bill of Rights
- U.S. Landmark Supreme Court Cases

Each form includes one practical document, a source of information used by most adults in their roles as citizens, consumers, and workers, such as:

- Consumer information
- Voters’ guides
- Atlases
- Tax forms
- Budget graphs
- Political speeches
- Almanacs
- Statistical abstracts

NOTE: Students do not need to memorize Social Studies facts to pass the test. However, having general knowledge about the above Social Studies content is very important for a student’s success. Developing related vocabulary is another piece of the necessary foundation for GED success. Having basic Social Studies knowledge, coupled with strong reading skills and a developed vocabulary will help your students to become well-prepared candidates for the GED Test.
The GED Social Studies Test requires that candidates use higher-level thinking skills. However, students do need basic background in the content areas so that the contexts for the questions are familiar.

**Comprehension**
Comprehension questions (20 percent) measure the candidate’s understanding of the meaning and intent of text and/or visual material.

**Application**
Application questions (20 percent) measure the candidate’s ability to use information and ideas in a situation different from that provided by the question stimulus.

**Analysis**
Analysis questions (40 percent) measure the candidate’s ability to break down information and to explore the candidate’s understanding of the relationship between component ideas.

**Evaluation**
Evaluation questions (20 percent) measure the candidate’s ability to use provided criteria to make judgments about the validity or accuracy of information.

For specific examples of each type of question refer to the Social Studies Locator Test and Answer Key at the end of this section.

For more information about critical thinking skills see the Critical Thinking section of this booklet.
GED® Social Studies Test Curriculum

The student will demonstrate and apply reading comprehension and critical thinking skills using Social Studies text and graphic selections.

1. The student will demonstrate a basic understanding and knowledge of key American documents and related vocabulary including:
   • The Declaration of Independence
   • United States Constitution
   • Bill of Rights
   • Landmark Supreme Court cases

2. The student will demonstrate a basic understanding and knowledge of major American historical events and related vocabulary including:
   • Colonization, the American Revolution, and the building of a new nation
   • Western Expansion, Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Industrial Revolution
   • Great Depression, World War I and II, Postwar United States, Civil Rights, and Contemporary America

3. The student will demonstrate a basic understanding and general knowledge of American civics, government and related vocabulary including:
   • American Government Structure
   • Foundations of the American Political System
   • Relationship of the United States to other countries
   • Role of Citizens in an American Democracy

4. The student will demonstrate a basic understanding and knowledge of major World History events and related vocabulary including:
   • Beginning and Early Civilizations
   • Major Empires and World Religions
   • Growing Trade, Global Interactions, and the Age of Revolutions (1750 – 1914)

5. The student will demonstrate a basic knowledge and understanding of geography and related vocabulary including:
   • World in Spatial terms (continents, latitude, longitude, compass rose, etc.)
   • Places, Regions and Political Systems
   • Human Systems, Environment and Society
   • Uses of Geography
6. The student will demonstrate a basic understanding and knowledge of Economics and related vocabulary including:
   • Economic Reasoning and Choice
   • Comparison of Economic Systems
   • Business in a Free Enterprise System, Supply and Demand
   • Financial Institutions
   • Government’s Role in the Economy and Labor
   • Global Markets and Foreign Trade

7. The student will apply comprehension skills to Social Studies passages and graphics. Comprehension Skills include:
   • Restate Information
   • Summarize ideas
   • Identify implications
   • Make inferences

8. The student will apply application skills to Social Studies passages, political cartoons, and graphics. Application skills include:
   • Use information in a new context or situation
   • Identify an illustration of a generalization, principle or strategy

9. The student will apply analysis skills to Social Studies passages and graphics. Analysis skills include:
   • Distinguish facts from opinions
   • Distinguish conclusions from supporting details
   • Recognize information that is meant to persuade
   • Recognize unstated assumptions
   • Recognize fallacies in arguments or conclusions
   • Recognize the point of view of a writer in a historical account
   • Compare and contrast points of view
   • Make inferences or predictions

10. The student will apply evaluation skills to Social Studies passages and graphics. Evaluation skills include:
    • Assess whether information is appropriate to substantiate conclusions or generalizations
    • Assess the accuracy of facts presented in a text or graphic
    • Compare and contrast different accounts of the same event
    • Recognize the roles that values, beliefs, and personal convictions play in decision making
TEACHING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

GEOGRAPHY

Have maps and globes in your classroom. Using these maps and globes:

• Have students list the continents and countries in the world or the states and regions in the U. S.
• Make games from the lists.
• Match countries to continents, states to regions. This often works well with small group teams, so no individual is put on the spot.
• Have students find pictures and information about regions, countries, or continents at www.nationalgeographic.com or www.un.org/cyberschoolbus.
• Match states and capitals.
• Find Geography games at www.geography.about.com


• Be sure students recognize regions of the United States and shapes of the continents.
• Have students label the continents and oceans on an outline map.

Have students draw a Compass Rose.

Be sure that students understand geography vocabulary.

• They should be familiar with words such as equator, latitude, longitude, Prime Meridian, etc.
• Many fun games can be made with vocabulary words and definitions and index cards. Students could work with these cards individually or in small groups.
• Use the vocabulary activities found in the Vocabulary Section.

If you’re in a center with ESOL classes, invite some of the students to talk about their countries.

Use online geography games such as those found at www.geography.about.com.

Use latitude and longitude to locate countries.

Visit www.census.gov/schools/for_teachers for maps, charts, activities.

Practice geography GED-type questions often. They can be found on many levels in different materials. See recommended websites and materials.

U. S. HISTORY

Use timelines. Illustrated timelines are frequently included in Upfront Magazine from Scholastic. www.upfronthandout.com
• Create pages with pictures and dates showing important events; students stand and move around to create a time line by putting events in order.
• Give an index card with one event to each student; put a clothes line across the classroom and use clothespins to hang the index cards in order.
• Have students list more recent events and people such as moon landing, Hitler, Martin Luther King. Put events in order.
• Use sidewalk chalk to create a time line in the school parking lot.

Collect interesting historical pictures to use with students.

Show movies related to historical eras, e.g., 1776

Visit www.zinnedproject.org for downloadable lessons, activities, photos, films, and readings organized by time period or theme and presented from a social justice perspective.

Show short video clips and pictures from www.Historychannel.com or www.pbs.org. Students can watch on laptops or use an LCD projector.

Read passages from historical fiction and nonfiction aloud. Discuss what is read and practice reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. America’s Story, published by Steck-Vaughn, gives simple and interesting background information about historical events on a lower reading level.

Invite re-enactment speakers from New Hampshire Humanities Council.

Read important historical documents with students including the Bill of Rights and the Constitution.

Visit the Freedom Museum online at www.freedomproject.us for interactive lessons on First Amendment issues.

Visit www.virtualfreesites.com for other online exhibits on historical topics. Visit www.besthistorysites.net for links to a wide variety of educational materials and resources including oral history archives of speeches.

**WORLD HISTORY**

Use time line activities similar to those under U. S. History; show major events in world history.

Introduce major civilizations and religions.

Encourage students to watch or listen to news once a day; relate the news to locations on a map or globe.
Visit the Holocaust Museum at www.ushmm.org for a virtual tour and first person accounts.


CIVICS

Use a newspaper in class frequently. Bring in a copy or get a classroom set through your local Newspapers in Education program.

Use an outline showing the three branches of government.
- Categorize state and national news items by the branches.
- Using index cards, match branches with their related vocabulary words. As an example, president, cabinet, Joe Biden, and enforce laws, would match Executive Branch.
- Be sure students understand checks and balances.

Look at voter registration forms with students and encourage them to vote.

Write US senators and representatives about important issues, including Adult Education funding.

Encourage students to watch the news and discuss current events.

Visit www.frontdoorpolitics.com as a source for NH legislation currently being discussed by state legislators.
- Have students react to proposed legislation orally or in writing.
- Students write persuasive letters to their state legislators expressing their opinion on particular legislation.

Visit www.nh.gov as source for identifying students’ state house and senate districts and identify their state representatives and senators.
- Research recently passed and currently proposed bills.
- Email their state legislators and ask their positions on legislation.
- Discuss the concept of the “nanny state” and have students brainstorm examples (for example helmet laws, smoking bans, texting while driving, etc.)

Using pictures from news magazines, students create collages on theme “Challenges facing the United States.”

Students design a poll on identified challenges facing the United States.
- Conduct poll with adult education students and staff asking them to prioritize the issues.
- Graph results of poll and post.

- Provide general descriptions of conservative and liberal political philosophies and have students discuss which philosophy aligns most closely with their views.
- Students take the online quizzes and thereby identify their political philosophies. Compare to previous results.

Invite state representatives from both parties to visit class and present their views.

**ECONOMICS**

Use www.econedlink.org/lessons as a source for lessons on supply and demand.

To demonstrate the concept of opportunity cost, students calculate the annual cost of cigarettes or Dunkin Donuts coffee and discuss to what use the sum could have been applied.

Have students research statistics on how education levels affect lifetime earnings.

Brainstorm ways that gas prices can be affected by world and national events.

Discuss the history of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation as a response to the Depression. Have students express whether insuring bank deposits is an appropriate role for government.

Use www.usa.gov to identify and become aware of the role of regulatory agencies. Discuss whether regulation and consumer protection is an appropriate role for government.

- Prioritize products and services that should be regulated.
- Refer to new credit card and financial regulations.

Visit www.affluenza.org and www.pbs.org/kcts/affluenza for resources on consumption, materialism, and environmentalism.

Visit www.teachablemoment.org for primary source materials representing opposing viewpoints on a number of economic issues.

Discuss the difference between a developing country and a developed country. Brainstorm a list of factors that might affect the success or failure of a country’s economic system.

- Using www.cia.gov as source of statistics, compare the economies of two countries and that of the United States.
- Construct graphs illustrating the comparative statistics.

Visit www.taxpolicycenter.org for information including tables and charts.
Social Studies Locator Test

A GED Social Studies Locator Test and an answer key are available to print and photocopy (for classroom use) at LiteracyLink.Org

The answer key identifies the critical thinking skill needed to correctly answer each question.

Go to www.LitLink.org

• Click on Teach
• Click on Resources
• Click on Locator Tests
• Choose Tests or Guidelines for answer key

Print free for classroom use.

The Social Studies Locator Test, answer key and student answer form are also included in the hard copy booklet of this curriculum available free from the Bureau of Adult Education (page 39A-39F).

www.nhadulted.org
Recommended Social Studies Websites & Materials

www.geographic.org
• Easy to access information about every country in the world
• Flags, maps, climate, people, government, and pictures included

www.americaslibrary.gov
• Short, interesting stories about famous Americans, history, and states
• Each passage contains a timeline and pictures, video and music on some, and links to more information
• The short, interesting articles can be printed, copied, and used in class
• Good source for social studies reading material

http://bensguide.gpo.gov/index.html
• U.S. government site for grades K to 12 (good for multi-level class)
• Short, multi-level reading passages with excellent illustrations that can be used on-line or printed and used in class
• Topics include historical documents, branches of government, how laws are made, national verses state government and more
• Vocabulary defined, games and activities included

www.yourchildlearns.com/geography
• Many US and world maps available
• Interactive geography games and puzzles
• Printable maps
• Online Atlas

www.classbrain.com
• This site is listed because of its excellent lessons on political cartoons
• Click on CB Teens at the top of the homepage, click on Subjects at the top of the next page, click on Political Cartoons on the left or go to www.classbrain.com/artteens/publish/cat_index_19.shtml
• This site also has a good collection of Defining Documents of the United States, link found on homepage

http://www.ourcourts.org/default.php
• Includes games, worksheets, and lesson plans related to Civics education

Map Links
http://www.enchantedlearning.com/geography/
http://www.eduplace.com/ss/maps/usa.htm

Civics:
www.ontheissues.org: political leaders’ positions on a variety of issues, political quizzes
www.theadvocates.org: libertarian site focusing on individual liberty, quiz
www.procon.org: arguments for and against current economic, social, political issues
www.vote-smart.org: provides background information, voting records, and funding sources of political figures
www.politico.com: political news and commentary
www.pbskids.org/democracy  The Democracy Project Lesson Plans
www.270towin.com  interactive Electoral College map and historical information on past elections
www.teach-nology.com  lesson plans and rubrics for all subjects and grade levels
www.time.com:  current and archived articles from Time magazine
www.wsj.com:  Wall Street Journal
www.chicagotribune.com:  Chicago Tribune
www.boston.com:  Boston Globe
www.nh.gov:  official site of the State of New Hampshire, source for specific information on government and names and contact information for state senators and representatives
www.seacoastonline.com:  New Hampshire news and editorials
www.pbs.org/independentlens/getinvolved/democracy:  click on classroom for independent films paired with lesson plans
www.cnn.com:  news, politics, current events
www.teachablemoment.org:  topical activities for all levels that foster critical thinking
www.dnc.org:  Democratic National Committee
www.gop.com:  Republican National Committee
www.taxpolicycenter.org:  information and statistics on US tax policies
www.electoral-vote.com:  interactive map and poll data on US political races
www.americanprogress.org:  articles on current issues from a progressive viewpoint
www.nationalpriorities.org:  analysis of federal budget and how tax dollars are spent
www.costofwar.com:  provides information on tradeoffs for each state as alternative to war spending

Human Rights:
www.hrw.org:  Human Rights Watch
www.npr.org:  audio news stories
www.womenforwomen.org:  promotes social and political change by empowering women victims of civil strife
www.cia.gov:  >World Fact book; source for economic, social, and political information on countries around the world including interactive map
www.wfp.org:  World Food Program; information on world hunger and relief efforts including photo gallery
www.care.org:  poverty statistics and relief efforts including videos
www.cartercenter.org:  President Carter’s foundation, description of programs including interactive map
www.gatesfoundation.org:  Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, description of programs, photo galleries, videos
www.un.org/cyberschoolbus:  source for statistics, lesson plans, interactive maps
www.freedommuseum.us:  interactive lessons regarding First Amendment rights
www.millenniumpromise.org:  information on villages participating in the UN sponsored Millennium Development Goals programs
www.poverty.com:  statistics and information on world poverty and efforts to combat its effect
www.unicef.org:  information on UN programs geared toward children living in poverty
www.csmonitor.com:  Christian Science Monitor newspaper
www.facinghistory.org:  organization that provides strategies, lessons, and resources based on the consequences of hatred including materials related to the Holocaust
www.thehungerwebsite.com:  visit to site provides cup of food to needy community
GED PRACTICE TEST PRACTICE

www.gedpractice.com
- Steck-Vaughn’s free GED practice site
- Tests are broken down into sub-topics
- Excellent charts, graphs, and maps
- Correct answers are given and explained
- Simple registration required

http://litlink.ket.org
- Must register and log onto GED Connection (How to get started)
- Test information and tips, learning modules, Internet activities, and practice tests with answers and explanations are available for each GED subject
- Includes a Learner Resources link that provides an atlas, dictionary, thesaurus, calculator, and writing guide

www.mhcontemporary.com
- This site has a new GED Satellites Internet-based Supplemental Study Center
- Interactive flashcards, chapter review quizzes, practice GED questions are available for each GED subject
- An instructor Center provides tips and resources for teachers

MATERIALS

No-Glamour Reading: Content Vocabulary  Books I and II
Each book has about 245 reproducible pages written at about a 5th grade level, but full of challenging science and social studies vocabulary.

www.linguisystems.com

Steck-Vaughn materials: www.steck-vaughn.com

America’s Story  Books 1 and 2  Reading Level 3

Building Strategies Social Studies
Beginning GED books with lots of vocabulary, 4 – 6 reading level

Pre-GED Social Studies
Written at about a Reading Level of 8

Pre-GED Booklets
Lots of excellent practice questions and background information
Social Studies Glossary

amendment changes in, or additions to, a constitution; must be proposed by a two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress or by a convention called by Congress at the request of two-thirds of the state legislatures; ratified by approval of three-fourths of the states

Articles of Confederation the first constitution of the United States (1781); created a weak national government; replaced in 1789 by the Constitution of the USA

balance of trade the difference between the total amount of exports and imports for a country in one year

barter the direct exchange of one good or service for another without the use of money

bias a strong opinion held by a person about a topic, sometimes without good reason

bicameral a legislative body composed of two houses

Bill of Rights the first ten amendments to the United States Constitution; ratified in 1791; limits governmental power and protects basic rights and liberties of individuals

boycott a form of protest in which a group refuses to buy the products of a country or company until it makes some demanded change

bureaucracy an administrative organization that implements government policies

business cycle the periods of recession and expansion that an economy goes through because production does not increase continuously over time

cabinet secretaries, or chief administrators, of the major departments of the federal government; appointed by the president with the consent of the Senate

capital manufactured resources such as tools, machinery, and buildings that are used in the production of other goods and services; sometimes called real capital

capital gains tax money paid to the federal government out of profits from the sale of land, buildings, stocks, and other capital assets

capitalism an economic system that is based on the private ownership of property and the resources of production

case study an in-depth examination of an issue

checks and balances the Constitutional mechanisms that authorize each branch of government to share powers with the other branches and thereby check their activities

civil rights the protections and privileges of personal liberty given to all U.S. citizens by the Constitution and Bill of Rights

civilization an advanced state of a society possessing historical and cultural unity

Cold War struggle for world power between the United States and the Soviet Union (1945-1989)

command economy an economic system in which the means of production are publicly owned and economic activity is controlled by the government

common or public good to the benefit, or in the interest, of a politically organized society as a whole

communism a political and economic system in which factors of production are collectively owned and directed by the state

compass rose map tool including the principal directions (N, S, E, W, NE, NW, SE, SW)

concurrent powers powers that may be exercised by both the federal and state governments

confederate of, or pertaining to, a group of states more or less permanently united for common purposes

conservatism a general preference for the existing order of society and an opposition to all efforts to bring about rapid or fundamental change in that order
Constitution the rules and laws of the United States government
consumer a person or organization that purchases or uses a product or service
continents seven large landmasses on Earth
contrast to look for ways in which two things are different
criminal justice the branch of law that deals with disputes or actions involving criminal penalties; regulates the conduct of individuals, defines crimes, and provides punishment for criminal acts
criteria standards or reference points used to judge the worth or value of something
cultural diffusion the adoption of an aspect (or aspects) of another group’s culture, such as the spread of the English language
culture the learned behavior of people, such as belief systems and languages, social relations, institutions, organizations, and material goods such as food, clothing, buildings, and technology
deflation a general lowering of prices; the opposite of inflation
delegated powers powers granted to the national government under the Constitution, as enumerated in Articles I, II and III
demand how much a consumer is willing and able to buy at each possible price
democracy the practice of the principle of equality of rights, opportunity, and treatment. Rule by the people.
demographics the statistical data of a population
developing nation a country with low levels of well-being, as measured by economic, social, and technological sophistication
dictatorship a system of government in which one person has absolute authority, including complete domination of the citizens’ lives; the most basic of citizens’ rights are taken away in order to guarantee the leader’s hold on power
due process of law the right of every citizen to be protected against arbitrary action by government
economic growth an increase in an economy’s ability to produce goods and services, which brings about a rise in standards of living
economics the study of the process of producing and distributing a good and how it relates to buying, selling, and making a profit in a society
emigration the process of leaving a country (or other political unit) to live in another country
entrepreneur a person who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk for a business venture
Equal Protection Clause The Fourteenth Amendment provision that prohibits state from denying equal protection of the laws to all people; prohibits discrimination against individuals in an arbitrary manner, such as on the basis of race
equal protection of the law the idea that no individual or group may receive special privileges from, nor be unjustly discriminated by, the law
exchange rate the price of one currency in terms of another
fact a statement that can be proved to be true
Federal Reserve System a system of 12 district banks and a Board of Governors that regulates the activities of financial institutions and controls the money supply
federal supremacy a concept established in Article VI of the Constitution providing that the Constitution and all federal laws and treaties shall be the "supreme Law of the Land;” therefore, all federal laws take precedence over state and local laws
federalism a form of political organization in which governmental power is divided
between a central government and territorial subdivisions—in the United States among the national, state, and local governments

**Federalist Papers** a series of essays written by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison that were published to support the adoption of the proposed United States Constitution

**Federalists** advocates of a strong federal government and supporters of the adoption of the U.S. Constitution

**feudalism** a political and economic system in which a lord required services from his vassal, and in return granted the vassal certain privileges, such as control over castle and the surrounding territory

**fiscal policy** how the government uses taxes and/or government expenditures to change the level of output, employment, or price

**foreign policy** policies of the federal government directed to matters beyond U.S. borders, especially relations with other countries

**free enterprise** the freedom of private businesses to operate competitively, for profit and without government controls

**freedom of expression** the freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and petition that are protected by the First Amendment

**freedom of the press** the freedom to print or publish without governmental interference

**genocide** the systematic destruction of an entire cultural or ethnic group

**global warming** the progressive gradual rise of Earth’s surface temperature thought to be caused by the greenhouse effect and responsible for changes in global climate patterns

**globalization** the integration and democratization of the world’s culture, economy, and infrastructure through transnational investment, rapid proliferation of communication and information technologies, and the impacts of free-market forces on local, regional, and national economies

**good** a product that is desired and purchased by consumers

**government** a political organization constituting the individuals and institution authorized to formulate public policies and conduct affairs of state

**Great Compromise** an agreement made at the Constitutional Convention of 1787 that balanced the interest of the small and large states, resulting in the United States Senate being made up of two senators from each state and a House of Representatives based on population

**gross domestic product** a measure of how much an economy produces within it borders each year, stated in the dollar value of final goods and services

**gross national product** a measure of the total amount of goods and service produced by an economy, both domestically and internationally

**hemisphere** the northern or southern half of Earth divided by the equator or the eastern or western half divided by a meridian

**human capital** the knowledge and skills that enable workers to be productive

**human characteristics** the pattern that people make on the surface of Earth, such as cities, roads, canals, farms, and other ways people change Earth

**human resources** labor used to produce goods and services

**immigration** the process of moving to a country (or other political unit)

**impeachment** the act of accusing a public official of misconduct in office by presenting formal charges against him or her by the lower house, with a trial held before the upper house

**imperialism** the practice by which powerful nations or peoples seek to extend and maintain control or influence over weaker nations or peoples
import goods brought into a country that are produced in another country
inalienable rights fundamental rights of the people that may not be taken away; a phrase used in the Declaration of Independence
incentive a benefit offered to encourage people to act in certain ways
income tax a percentage of wages, profits, and other income paid to federal, state, and local governments
indigenous a group that derives its identity from its environment
Industrial Revolution the period when machines replaced most production by hand
infer to read between the lines to determine the writer’s key thought
inflation a general rise in the level of prices
initiative a form of direct democracy in which the voters of a state can propose a law by gathering signatures and having the proposition placed on the ballot
innovation the process of putting an invention to use and modifying it as the situation demands
interdependence reliance on people in other places for information, resources, goods, and services
isolationism the belief that the United States should not be involved in world affairs and should avoid involvement in foreign wars
Jim Crow Laws laws in many Southern states enforcing the segregation of the African American and white populations
judicial review the doctrine that permits the federal courts to declare unconstitutional, and thus null and void, acts of the Congress, the executive branch, and the states; the precedent was established in the 1803 case of Marbury v. Madison
justice fair distribution of benefits and burdens, fair correction of wrongs and injuries, or use of fair procedures in gathering information and making decisions
land use how people use Earth’s surface; often subdivided into specific uses
landform a description of Earth’s shape at a certain place, such as a mountain range, plateau, or flood plain.
latitude the distance north or south of the equator, measured in degrees along a line of longitude
legend the map key that explains the meaning of symbols on a map
liberalism a political viewpoint or ideology that advocates political change in the name of progress, especially social improvement through governmental action
liquidity the ease and speed with which something can be turned into cash
longitude The distance east or west, almost always measured in relation to the prime meridian that runs north and south through Greenwich, England
macroeconomics the branch of economics that considers the overall aspects an workings of a national economy such as national output, price levels, employment rates, and economic growth
Magna Carta the document signed by King John of England in 1215 that limited the king’s power and guaranteed certain basic rights; considered the beginning of constitutional government in England
market any setting in which exchange occurs between buyers and sellers
market economic system a system in which most resources are owned by individuals and the interaction between buyers and sellers determines what is made, how it is made, and how much of it is made
market price the price at which the quantity of goods and services demanded by consumers and the quantity supplied by producers are the same; sometimes called
the equilibrium price

**Mayflower Compact** the document drawn up by the Pilgrims in 1620, while on the Mayflower, before landing at Plymouth Rock; provided a legal basis for self-government

**microeconomics** the branch of economics concerned with the decisions made by individuals, households, and firms and how these decisions interact to form the prices of goods and services and the factors of production

**migrations** movements of groups from one location to another

**moderate** generally, a “middle-of-the-road” set of beliefs, rather than an ideology

**monarchy** a type of government in which political power is exercised by a single ruler under the claim of divine or hereditary right

**monetary policy** management of the money supply and interest rates to influence economic activity

**national security** condition of a nation’s safety from threats, especially threats from external sources

**natural disaster** a process taking place in the natural environment that destroys human life, property, or both

**natural resources** naturally occurring materials such as plants, animals, mineral deposits, soil, clean water, clean air, and fossil fuels, which can be used by people

**normal unemployment** the level of unemployment that is considered acceptable for a healthy economy (usually less than 4 percent)

**opinion** a statement that expresses the writer’s feelings or ideas about a topic; influenced heavily by the writer’s background, values, and outlook on life; cannot be proved or disproved

**oligarchy** a system of government in which a small group of people exercises total control

**overriding a veto** the ability of Congress to pass a bill into law by a two-thirds majority vote after it has been vetoed by the president

**pluralism** the acceptance of many groups in society

**political cartoon** a visual aid that expresses opinions about political events in humorous and pointed way

**price ceiling** a government policy that prevents the price of a good or service from exceeding a particular level

**principle** a basic rule that guides or influences thought or action

**producer** a person who changes resources into an output that tends to be more desirable than the resources were in their previous form

**profit** the monetary difference between the cost of producing and marketing goods or services and the price subsequently received for those goods or services

**progress** a series of improvements in human life marked by inventions and discoveries

**progressive tax** a tax structure where people who earn more are charged a higher percentage of their income

**property rights** the rights of an individual to own property and keep the income earned from it

**property tax** money paid by property owners in local communities to local government to offset expenses of services provided including street construction and maintenance an often public schools

**protectionism** the practice of protecting domestic industries from foreign competition by imposing import duties or quotas

**public service** service to local, state, or national communities

**quota** a limit on how much of a good can be imported; set either by quantity or by
the dollar value

**radical** a person who advocates sweeping changes in the laws and methods of government with the least delay

**ratify** to confirm by expressing consent, approval, or formal sanction

**referendum** a form of direct democracy in which citizens of a state, through gathering signatures, can require that a legislative act come before the people as a whole for a vote; also allows the legislature to send any proposal for a law to the people for a vote

**refugee** a person who has fled or been expelled from his or her country of origin because of natural disaster, war or military occupation, or fear of religious, racial, or political persecution

**region** a larger-sized territory that includes many smaller places, all or most of which share similar attributes, such as climate, landforms, plants, soils, language, religion, economy, government, or other natural or cultural attributes

**regressive tax** a tax structure where people who earn more pay a smaller percentage of their income in taxes

**representative democracy** a form of government in which power is held by the people and exercised indirectly through elected representatives who make decisions

**republican government** a system of government in which power is held by the voter and is exercised by elected representatives responsible for promoting the common welfare

**resources** land, labor, capital, and entrepreneurship used in the production of good and services

**return** how well you do by investing in one asset as opposed to another

**revolution** a complete or drastic change of government or society and the rule which are followed by that government or society

**risk** how much uncertainty accompanies your choice of investment

**rule of law** the principle that every member of a society, even a ruler, must follow the law

**sales tax** money paid to federal, state, or local governments on the purchase of goods or services

**scale** the relationship between a distance on the ground and the distance on a map

**scarce** when a good or service is insufficient in quantity to satisfy the demand or need for it

**seasonal unemployment** unemployment caused by a change from one season or time period to another

**separation of powers** the division of governmental power among several institutions that must cooperate in decision-making

**Social Security** the use of contributions made by workers and employers through social security tax to provide income to people and their families during retirement or in the case of unemployment, disability, or death

**socialism** an economic system in which property and the distribution of income are subject to social and governmental control rather than individual determination of market forces

**sovereignty** the ultimate, supreme power in a state

**specialization** when a business focuses on producing a limited number of goods and leaves the production of other goods to other businesses; how each person working to produce a good might work on one part of the production instead of producing the whole good
standard of living  the overall quality of life that people experience
suffrage  the right to vote
summarize  to briefly express a writer’s key thought supply  the quantity of a product
        or service a producer is willing and able to offer for sale at each possible price
surplus  an excess in supply of a good or service
tariff  a tax on an imported good
technology  the application of processes, methods, or knowledge to achieve
        specific purpose
theocracy  any government in which the leaders of the government are also the
        leaders of the religion and they rule as representatives of the deity
totalitarianism  a centralized government that does not tolerate parties of differing
        opinion and that exercises dictatorial control over many aspects of life
treaty  a formal agreement between sovereign nations to create or restrict rights and
        responsibilities
United Nations  an international organization composed of most of the nations of the
        world, formed in 1945, to promote global peace, security, and economic development
urbanization  the process of an increasing number of people moving to cities to work
        and live, and the development that results
veto  a privileged single vote that, according to some systems of rules for decision
        making, has the effect of blocking or negating a majority decision

This glossary was adapted from Contemporary’s Online Learning Center.
There are many resources for students and teachers on this website including a GED practice
        test and student flashcards.

www.highered.mcgraw-hill.com