

GLOSSARY

adaptation

adjustment to environmental conditions

amendment

a change made to an original document or statement; an article added to the U.S. Constitution

ancestor

a person from whom one is descended or who lived in the past; a person who came before

assumption

something you accept as truth without checking or proving

Australopithecus afarensis

an extinct hominid that existed about three million years ago

bipedal

the ability to walk on two legs

Brown v. Board of Education

A 1954 court case that made segregation illegal in U.S. schools

census

a count of the population; in the U.S. it takes place every 10 years

characteristic

a distinctive trait or quality; typical of a particular person or place

colorblindness

The idea that the best way to end racism is to ignore racial differences and treat all individuals equally

dark continent

an expression, now considered offensive, used to describe Africa in the colonial era that signifies the continent's supposed mysterious or savage nature

descendent

a person or animal that is descended (comes down from) from a specific ancestor

DNA

the genetic code that determines all the characteristics of a living thing

emergence

the process of coming into existence

evolve/evolution

develop gradually; a process of gradual change and growth

exploitative

unfairly using another person, group, or environment for one's own profit or gain

extinct

no longer existing

FHA

The Federal Housing Administration is a government agency that insures loans so lenders can offer consumers a better deal

fossil

the remains of a plant or animal of a past time

genes/genetics

the traits we inherit from our parents, grandparents and ancestors; the branch of science that studies the passing down of traits

G.I. Bill

A law passed in 1944 that provided benefits for returning World War II veterans in the areas of housing, education and employment; it helped millions, but failed to benefit African Americans on an equal basis

hominid

the group of primates that includes humans, gorillas and chimpanzees

Homo erectus

an extinct species that is an ancestor of modern humans

Homo sapiens

the species to which all modern humans belong

identity

how you view yourself; the qualities that make you different from others

imperialist

refers to a country using its wealth and power to overtake a weaker country in order to use their resources

indigenous

produced, growing, or living naturally in a particular environment; originally from a place

institutional

relating to or involving a large organization, such as a government, corporation, university, or hospital

integration

the act of bringing together separate people or things

intimidation

the act of frightening or making someone afraid

melanin

the pigment or substance in all humans that gives us our skin, hair and eye color

migrate

to move from one region or climate to another

missionary

a person on a religious mission, for example to promote Christianity in another country

Neanderthal

an extinct species or subspecies of humans who lived in Eurasia until about 40,000 years ago

paleontologist

someone who studies past geological periods; a scientist who studies fossils

race

a socially constructed (made up) category for grouping people, based on features like skin color, hair texture and eye shape.

racism

prejudice or discrimination directed against someone based on their perceived race. (These biased attitudes and actions are based on the belief that one's own race is superior and that one group has more power over another. Racism is reinforced and supported by institutions, policies and laws in systematic ways.)

redlining

a process by which banks and other lenders refuse to offer home loans on an equal basis to customers due to the racial makeup of their neighborhood

savagery

the quality of being cruel, violent or uncivilized

scientific racism

the false belief that evidence exists that the "races" belong to separate lineages and that some are inherently superior or inferior to others

**Segregation**

the act of keeping different groups separate from each other; de jure segregation is enforced by law while de facto segregation refers to separation by “fact” or custom

social construct

an idea that has been created and accepted by the people in a society

species

a category of living organisms; a class of organisms of the same kind

suffrage

the right to vote; the women's suffrage movement was a long struggle to win the right to vote for women in the U.S.

suppress/suppression

to stop or put down using force or authority

urban/suburban

urban refers to cities or people who live in cities; suburban to areas just beyond a city's border