

Big words with which to baffle and dismay!

Note that the definitions are a bit rough because they are short and you should always check key language out in a good sociology dictionary

Behaviourism	The belief that behaviour has causes which can be understood through the study of science
Deconstruction	Taking something apart to see how it works, applied to features of society
Discourse	A line of argument, a story, a narrative, a form of thought which develops
Empiricism	The study of things observable to science
Epistemology	The study or the nature of truth
Essentialism	The belief that research can reveal the essence or truth of something
Ethnocentrism	The view that one's own culture is superior and more interesting than others
Ethnomethodology	Value free social science concerned with the details of human interaction
Fallacy	A false belief
Fallible	Admits to the possibility of failure
Feminism	The definition tends to depend on the person using the term, but generally any perspective which acknowledges the existence and perspectives of women as an equal gender
Globalisation	The world is becoming a single place, culturally and economically. This is occurring because of media and consumption patterns. There is a political dimension too.
Hermeneutics	The study of meaning
Ideology	A belief system
Interpretivism	This refers to interpreting social phenomena
Left Wing	Ideas associated with socialism, community values, change, equality etc.

Masculinism	The desire of males to control and dominate situations
Masculinity	Socially accepted ways of being male in a society
Modernism	The idea that society and things are improving and developing
Nomothetic	The study of scientific laws
Ontology	Assumptions that are made in study
Phenomenology	The study of experiences and events
Positivism	This is a mode of thought that recognises only objective fact and observed phenomena (Think of Scully in the X files or Vulcans in Star Trek)
Post-modernism	Things are merely changing, and society is becoming fragmented
Praxis	Uniting thought and action
Qualitative	Concerned with the quality of meaning
Quantitative	Concerned with numbers and data collection
Racism, racialism	Any perspective or viewpoint which suggests that certain 'racial' groups are inferior in any way to another
Radical	Extreme
Resistance	The rejection of a dominant hegemony or set of ideas
Right Wing	Ideas associated with conservatism, the New Right, individualism, market economics, tradition etc.
Semiology	The study and understanding of the meaning of symbols, of which language is merely one form.
Social exclusion	Use this term carefully. It refers to those who are deemed as more powerless than most in society. Newly fashionable term.
Socio-biology	A belief rejected by sociologists that individual biology determines behaviour
To objectify	To turn something into an object or to create it in the image of a preconception
To reify	To make something real in the sense that you now

	believe in it
Underclass	A term used to describe those poorer and more powerless than the rest of society. Use this term carefully
Verstehen	The process of acquiring deep meaning