



## Some words history students should know:

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**Paradigm:** Refers to a pattern or model; a collection of assumptions, concepts, practices, and values that constitutes a way of viewing reality, especially for an intellectual community that shares them. Ideas which must be accepted before a larger body of knowledge can be understood: think, evolution, heliocentric model of the universe etc.

**Technology:** the practical application of knowledge to a useful end.

**Science:** the search for abstract knowledge of the workings of the universe. A method which depends upon empirical evidence and rational observation of phenomena.

**Cognition:** the process of thinking. The accumulation of knowledge through reason and logic.

**Trope:** Any literary or rhetorical device which consists of words used in other than the literal sense. Words used to change the meaning of something.

**Simile** – two different things made to be the same. “My love *is like* a rose.”

**Synecdoche** – the specific to mean the general. “Give us this day our *daily bread*.”

**Metonymy** – an object or idea used to represent something of which it is only a part. “What does the *Oval Office* say?”

**Metaphor** – a word applied to an idea to which it is not literally applicable. “She is the *bedrock* of my life.”

**Ontology:** the study of the nature of reality.

**Epistemology:** the study of the nature of knowledge.

**Positivism:** the belief that conditions will always improve or at least are capable of improving.

**Historicist:** history proves something was meant to be or happen.

**Scientific:** Science has the answers to everything.

**Modernism/Structuralism:** the belief that certain 'structures' govern the course of history. These include conflicts of race, gender, and class. Events have only a limited number of meanings and interpretations. *Verify evidence, establish causation and you get meaning.*

Modernist assumptions:

- \* There is a knowable reality which can be discerned.
- \* compare the facts to that reality and you get 'truth.'
- \* Language is adequate to do this.
- \* From these three we get a basic law of human behavior:

individuals act rationally and possess intentionality.

**Post-Modernism:** (The opposite of Modernism). events can have multiple meanings and interpretations. There are no fixed truths. Meaning is created, not discovered.

Post-Modernist assumptions:

- \* There is no knowable reality to discover.
- \* Truth is at best a transient concept.
- \* Language is never objective.
- \* Humans are irrational

**Rationalism:** ideas clearly stated and rules applied in order to reach a conclusion.

**Empiricism:** knowledge based on direct observation and employment of gathered facts.

**Induction / *A posteriori* knowledge** – after experience,  
OBSERVE/EXPERIMENT/HYPOTHESIS

**Deduction / *Apriori* knowledge** – before knowledge  
HYPOTHESIS/OBSERVATION/EXPERIMENT/NEW HYPOTHESIS

**Objectivity:** detachment from opinion. Conclusions free of personal feeling.

**Subjectivity:** Conclusions which include personal feelings.

**Metaphysics:** beyond physics. To do with religion, philosophy, supernatural events; those intangible qualities beyond the scope of explanatory science.

**Discourse:** the discussion of an intellectual problem.

**Reductivist:** reducing an idea down to the point where it loses its meaning. Over-simplification.

**Fallacy:** a misleading notion. Reasoning which is contrary to logic.

**Pragmatism:** value only in terms of practical consequences, worth by results alone.