1. In comparing the European empires in the Americas with the Russian, Chinese, Mughal, and ottoman empires, should world historians emphasize the similarities or differences?
   - For similarities, students could emphasize that Europe was not the only center of vitality and expansion during the early modern period, and that the interaction of culturally different peoples occurred in the European, Russian, Chinese, Mughal, and Ottoman empires.
   - However, the European empires represented something wholly new in human history through their creation of an interacting Atlantic world. They had a far more significant impact on the people that they incorporated than did the other empires, and they had a far wider impact on the world as a whole.

2. In what different ways was European colonial rule expressed and experienced in the Americas?
   - European colonial rule in the Americas varied with the cultures and policies of the colonizing power, the character of the Native American cultures, and the kind of economy established in a particular region.
   - In the lands of the Aztecs and the Incas, the Spanish empire ruled over the most densely settled of the indigenous populations in the Americas and developed an economic system based on commercial agriculture and mining. Under such circumstances, colonial rule replicated something of the Spanish class hierarchy while accommodating the racially and culturally different Indians and Africans.
   - In the plantation colonies of Brazil and the Caribbean, colonial powers ruled over regions where no earlier civilization existed and where the production of sugar for export defined the economy. In these regions, large numbers of Africans were imported as slave labor, and a considerable amount of racial mixing took place. From the mixed-race population were drawn much of the urban skilled workforce and supervisors in the sugar industry, as well as some prominent members of the community. A variation on the colonial rule of a plantation-based economy occurred in British North America, where the raising of different crops (including tobacco, cotton, rice, and indigo), less racial mixing, and a self-reproducing slave workforces shaped a different society.
   - A third distinctive type of colonial society emerged in the northern British colonies of new England, New York, and Pennsylvania. Upon the arrival of British settlers, these regions were not heavily settled with Native Americans, in part because of the ravages of European-borne epidemic diseases. Because of the availability of land, the climate and geography of North America, and the “outsider” statues of many British settlers, they set up an economic and social system of small independent farmers without sharp class hierarchy, large rural estates, or dependent laborers. Because of weak British rule, the largely literate population of the region developed traditions of local self-government, elected colonial assemblies, and vigorously contested the prerogatives of royal governors sent to administer their affairs.
3. Why did the European empires in the Americas have such an enormously greater impact on the conquered people than did the Chinese, Mughal, and Ottoman empires?
   • Unlike in the Eurasian empires, European ironworking technology, gunpowder weapons, and horses initially had no parallel in the Americas.
   • European germs and diseases to which Native Americans had no immunities decimated indigenous populations, sometimes in advance of the Europeans actual arrival.

4. In what ways did the empires of the early modern era continue patterns of earlier empires? In what ways did they depart from those patterns?
   • Early modern empires continued many patterns of earlier empires, including rule over multiple cultural regions; the use of coercion in their creation and maintenance and the use of older imperial traditions of government, taxation, and law to administer the newer empires.
   • However, those empires created by Western Europeans departed from previous patterns because they were initiated by maritime expansion; they conquered territories an ocean away from their imperial heartlands, rather than adjacent to them; and the empires lay at the heart of patterns of global exchange that did not exist before their creation.