1. What does the term "social stratification" mean? Identify some of the effects of being a member of the social class to which you belong? That is, what opportunities, advantages, disadvantages, etc. do you have that would not be true from someone belonging to a different (higher or lower) social class? (Note: For your example you could choose the situation of one member of your group or create a hypothetical member that generally represents the group as a whole.)

2. The text identifies 4 major systems of social stratification.
   (a) Identify each major system, its basic divisions, and an example of where it is (or was) practiced
   (b) In each system, what criterion (or criteria) are used to sort members into different levels?
   (c) In each system, what (if any) opportunity is there for changing one's position in the hierarchy?

3. The text suggests that gender is a dimension that is used to rank people in most societies. That is, regardless of the particular class (or caste, etc.) a family member belongs to, a female in that family will have a lower status (i.e., less power, fewer opportunities, etc.). To what extent do you think that is true in the United States today? Provide examples that support your position.

4. Karl Marx and Max Weber disagreed on the bases for stratification in society and on the dimensions that should be used to identify differences in social class. Briefly summarize the position of each theorist and identify the dimensions he thought were most useful in defining a person's position in the stratification system.

5. Functional theory and conflict theory offer contrasting explanations for why stratification occurs in society and how people acquire their social class positions.
   (a) Compare the explanations of the two theories and provide an example illustrating each.
   (b) Which explanation do you feel is more valid (i.e., explains the facts better)? Elaborate.

6. As the text suggests, people at the higher end of the stratification system attempt to maintain their position.
   (a) Identify the main tactics they use (or have used) to keep their higher positions.
   (b) Since they are already in positions of greater power, why don't the powerful completely exploit those members of society with less power?

7. Identify the main idea(s) involved in the following, and provide examples where possible.
   (a) most industrialized vs industrializing vs least industrialized nations (in the global stratification system)
   (b) colonialism vs neocolonialism
   (c) world system theory
   (d) globalization of capitalism
   (e) culture of poverty
   (f) multinational corporation