**Discussion**

**Americo or Amerigo Vespucci**

Comment the following quote from Americo Vespucci’s letter to Piero Soderini, in page 112-113: “…but the confidence I have in your virtues [Soderini’s], as well as in the truth of what I write, concerning things described neither by ancient not modern authors, has emboldened me in my undertaking.” Why is this quote very important to understand that Vespucci is a different man than Columbus? In what way?

Vespucci writes in his letter to Soderini that he made four voyagers, two of them, have been questioned by modern scholars. However, what are the reasons that he says he went on those voyagers?

In page 117 Vespucci writes about how the indigenous people retreated to a mountain even though Vespucci was trying to signal friendship and peace. Explain how this assumption reveals that Europeans thing their ways are universal.

In pages 118 and 119, Vespucci describes the physical aspect of the indigenous he encountered. Make a list of the most remarkable aspects.

In page 120-123 Vespucci writes about those indigenous societies, their values, economies, etc, comment on the aspects that Vespucci writes.

What do some indigenous do when they are sick? What kind of food they have? How their ways would be considered “sustainable” by our modern standards?

Comment on the passage that Vespucci narrates about the sixteen girls who are sent to his ship.

In page 129, Vespucci describes a type of snake that the indigenous people eat. What do you think this animal is?

Columbus in his letter to Santangel narrates that the “good” indigenous people have told him about a group of other indigenous people who are very ferocious and eat human flesh. Vespucci narrates an encounter with a similar group, comment what happens in this episode.

Comment on the value of describing the animals and nature in page 133-134

Vespucci informs in his letter that he and his men deliberately tell the indigenous people that they came from heaven. This is a very important aspect which might indicate that other European told the indigenous people the same thing. However, when we read Columbus or Cortes’ accounts they only write that the indigenous people believe that they came from heaven. Maybe some of the Europeans deliberately muffle this aspect. If that was the case, why do you think Columbus and Cortes’ were not as candid as Vespucci?

Make a list of the similar aspects between Columbus’ descriptions of the land and people and Vespucci’s and the major differences between both views.