Teacher Answer Key

Case Study

1. Laws on paper do not automatically change power dynamics in real life. Naram won the case legally, but Enlil-bani's higher social status means informal retaliation is possible. The Code limited what the powerful could do openly, but it did not eliminate their ability to use non-legal pressure — suggesting that the gap between legal equality and social equality can be enormous.

2. By showing Hammurabi receiving the law from Shamash, the stele frames the legal code as divinely authorized rather than invented by a king for his own benefit. Public display made the law known to subjects, creating a basis for legitimacy: people could not claim ignorance of rules that were literally carved in stone and set up in public spaces.

Multiple Choice

1. D

2. A

3. B

Matching

1-C, 2-A, 3-E, 4-B, 5-D

Fill-in-the-Blank

1) 282, 2) Susa, 3) proportional

Short Answer (Sample Responses)

Q1: It advanced justice by introducing proportionality — punishments were required to match the offense rather than exceed it, which limited arbitrary punishment by the powerful. But it reinforced inequality by explicitly encoding different punishments based on class: destroying a free person's eye cost you your own eye, but destroying a slave's eye cost only half the slave's purchase price.

Q2: A carved public monument gave the law permanence and visibility that administrative documents lacked. Stone is harder to alter than clay tablets. Public display meant subjects could not claim ignorance, while the physical monument itself communicated Babylonian power and order. It was simultaneously a legal document and a piece of political propaganda.

Q3: Even if earlier law codes existed, Hammurabi's Code is the most complete ancient legal document that has survived, covering 282 specific situations in

remarkable detail. It is also significant for the insight it gives us into Babylonian society, economics, and values. Its survival and completeness make it the primary evidence historians use to understand Mesopotamian law.