Teacher Answer Key

Case Study

1. The distinction shows that mingqi production was a commercial industry that varied in quality based on budget and time. Wealthier or better-prepared families got more detailed, accurate objects while poorer or rushed orders got simpler ones. This means archaeologists must be careful about which tombs' mingqi they use as evidence — a rich family's tomb gives a better picture of elite life than a modest one.

2. Liu Ban modeling the dancer on a real performance he had seen means the mingqi captured accurate details of actual Han performance and costume rather than purely stylized or invented figures. The reading argues that tomb models reveal specific details about Han daily life precisely because craftsmen like Liu Ban drew on real observations of the world around them.

Multiple Choice

1. D
2. A
3. B

Matching

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

Fill-in-the-Blank

1) preservative, 2) Han, 3) flexible

Short Answer (Sample Responses)

Q1: The suits show that the Han invested enormous resources — years of skilled labor, vast quantities of precious jade — based on a specific belief about how the afterlife worked. Even though the belief was wrong, the suits document that belief with physical evidence, showing us how the Han understood death, the body, and the need to maintain social status beyond the grave.

Q2: Written records typically focus on politics, laws, and elite events. Mingqi show the visual reality of daily life — the layout of Han houses, the design of farm buildings, the appearance of servants and entertainers — providing a picture of ordinary existence that scholars and officials rarely thought worth recording in words.

Q3: This information reveals what diseases and health conditions afflicted even the wealthy in ancient China, showing that coronary disease and parasites were common even among elites who ate well. It provides data for understanding ancient health, diet, and medicine — details that no written text from the period preserved with this level of accuracy.