Teacher Answer Key

Case Study

1. The scientific justification is strongest because it addresses a genuine preservation need independent of economic or cultural interests. The cultural/educational argument is weaker because it benefits primarily non-Indigenous audiences. The economic justification is ethically the weakest — generating tourism revenue is not a justification for overriding Indigenous burial rights. None may be individually sufficient; the question of whose authority governs human remains in a shared national space remains unresolved.

2. The observation suggests that both sides are arguing about institutional power — scientific authority, legal ownership, cultural sovereignty, economic control — rather than the actual wellbeing or dignity of the three children buried 500 years ago. Centering the children might mean asking what they would have wanted, what their own culture said about disturbing the dead, and whether any institution today has the right to override that.

Multiple Choice

1. A

2. B

3. D

Matching

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

Fill-in-the-Blank

1) Boy, 2) weeks, 3) Indigenous/descendant

Short Answer (Sample Responses)

Q1: Hair analysis revealed a precise timeline of the children's preparation — diet shifts, escalating coca and chicha consumption, the timing of sedation — that no written account describes in this detail. Blood cell preservation confirmed the degree of physical protection. These physical traces give us direct evidence of lived experience that Spanish colonial documents, written by outsiders with political motives, could not have provided.

Q2: Children selected for capacocha were taken from noble families across the empire, presented to the Sapa Inca in Cusco, and then walked to their sacrificial sites over months. They were given the finest clothing and offerings, including

spondylus shells and gold figurines, indicating their status as divine gifts. The mountains (apus) were understood as living deities, and offering a human child — the most precious possible gift — was the highest form of tribute the state could make on behalf of the empire.

Q3: The preservation argument addresses a practical problem but does not address the principle at stake: whether institutions have the right to move, analyze, and display human remains that were placed deliberately in a specific location with spiritual and cultural meaning. Indigenous communities are not arguing the children will be better preserved on the deteriorating mountain; they are arguing that the act of removal and display itself violates the dignity and intent of the burial. These are different questions, and the scientific answer does not resolve the ethical one.