Teacher Answer Key

Case Study

1. Knorosov faced Cold War political hostility because he was Soviet, making Western scholars dismiss his work as propaganda, and academic gatekeeping from Thompson, who had institutional authority to define the field. This shows that scientific acceptance can be blocked by politics and personal authority rather than evidence alone.

2. Landa destroyed enormous amounts of Maya knowledge while simultaneously recording enough information about the writing system that later scholars could use his notes to decode it. This shows colonial sources must be used critically — they can be both valuable and deeply compromised by the biases and destructive acts of their creators.

Multiple Choice

1. A

2. C

3. B

Matching

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

Fill-in-the-Blank

1) Knorosov, 2) four, 3) Dresden

Short Answer (Sample Responses)

Q1: Because Knorosov was a Soviet scientist, Thompson and Western scholars labeled his work Marxist propaganda during the Cold War, using political identity to dismiss legitimate research. This demonstrates that institutional authority and geopolitical bias can delay scientific progress even when the evidence supports a new conclusion.

Q2: Inscriptions revealed warrior-kings conducting brutal military campaigns, capturing and sacrificing rival rulers, and engaging in intense political competition. This directly contradicted the Thompson-era model of peaceful priest-astronomers focused only on calendrical calculations.

Q3: Only four Maya codices survive because Landa burned 27 books and hundreds of objects in 1562. This destroyed merchant records, religious texts, historical

chronicles, and scientific knowledge that can never be recovered, leaving enormous gaps in our understanding of Maya intellectual and economic life.