Teacher Answer Key

Case Study

1. Spectral evidence lowered the legal standard for proof, making convictions easier. In Rebecca Nurse's trial, her neighbors testified to her good character, but the afflicted girls' claims of seeing her spirit attacking them drowned out the defense and led to her execution.

2. Salem represents one of the first times America tested whether community safety could justify abandoning due process and civil liberties. The tragedy showed the destructive consequences of choosing panic over evidence.

Multiple Choice

1. A

2. B

3. C

Matching

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

Fill-in-the-Blank

1) Massachusetts, 2) Red, 3) Pressed

Short Answer (Sample Responses)

Q1: Fear thrived due to strict religious beliefs, harsh living conditions, recent conflicts, and the acceptance of supernatural explanations; spectral evidence rewarded dramatic accusations.

Q2: Salem shows that in crises, societies may relax due process and accept weak evidence; it cautions against letting panic dictate policy or verdicts.

Q3: The episode illustrates how mass hysteria, weak legal safeguards, and community tensions can produce miscarriages of justice, making it a lasting civic lesson.