Teacher Answer Key

Case Study

1. Cuauhtli's embedded Mexica stylistic elements suggest that Indigenous artisans used the visual language of their craft as a form of quiet cultural resistance — maintaining identity and tradition within the framework of colonial demands. The act of making a Christian object in an Indigenous style is not compliance but negotiation, a way of surviving while preserving something of who you are.

2. Cuauhtli survives by selling his skills to the colonial economy, which is a form of adaptation. But his master is dead, his tradition is suppressed, and the meaning his craft once carried — producing sacred objects for Aztec religion — is gone. His survival comes at the cost of the cultural context that gave his work significance, illustrating how conquest could preserve individual people while destroying the civilizations that gave their lives structure.

Multiple Choice

1. B
2. C
3. A

Matching

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

Fill-in-the-Blank

1) burned/destruction, 2) Great Pyramid/pyramid, 3) hybrid

Short Answer (Sample Responses)

Q1: Written Spanish accounts were produced by victors with political motives to justify conquest and conversion. The archaeological record provides independent physical evidence — burned layers, mass graves, destroyed temples, hybrid objects — that neither confirms nor denies the written accounts but adds perspective and detail the winners chose not to record, especially regarding the Indigenous experience of defeat.

Q2: Settlement pattern studies map entire regions over time, revealing how many communities existed, how large they were, and what happened to them. In the conquest period, they show the dramatic shrinkage of many sites simultaneously — evidence of population collapse at a regional scale that individual burials can confirm

but cannot quantify. Abandoned agricultural terraces provide additional landscape-level evidence of the collapse of complex food systems.

Q3: Hybrid objects show that cultural transmission continued even under suppression — artisans trained in Indigenous techniques found ways to practice those techniques within colonial contexts. This means cultural traditions were not simply eliminated by conquest but transformed, adapted, and sometimes covertly preserved within new frameworks. The next generation's loss of training is the real moment of rupture, not the conquest itself.