Mesoamerica: Tribute & Markets



Name _____ Date _____

1 Recall, then make a connection.

Start from memory. Write a meaning or quick example for each term.

Tribute	Market exchange	Subject community

Contrast tribute with market exchange. How could these two routes of moving resources affect a subject community differently even when the goods reached the same city?

Context for the task

Mesoamerica is a region with many societies and long histories; it is not another name for one empire. This activity focuses on the Mexica, often called Aztecs, and their capital Tenochtitlan. The city was connected to markets and a system of tribute from subject communities. Goods could arrive through different relationships, including exchange and political obligation.

2 Organize the records.

Two routes into the city

The fictional records distinguish required deliveries from negotiated exchanges.

Classify each transaction by the relationship described.

A. Tribute obligation

B. Market exchange

Write the category letter beside each record.

1. ___ A subject town must deliver cloth to the ruling center.

2. ___ A buyer and seller agree to exchange food for a tool.

3. ___ Officials record a required delivery of goods from a province.

4. ___ A craftsperson trades a finished item for materials.

5. ___ A community's scheduled payment is enforced by political authority.

Evidence, application & transfer.



3 Read the evidence closely.

Whose burden?

Claim: "The ledger alone proves that every household found the tribute easy to supply."

Select all records that would help test that claim.

A. Household production and consumption records from the same community and period.

B. Community accounts describing how deliveries were collected and distributed.

C. A picture of the ruler's ceremonial clothing.

D. A list of market goods from a different region a century later.

Selections: _____ Explain your reasoning:

4 Apply the idea.

Write a bounded conclusion

The practice case includes markets, tribute, and a colonial-era manuscript.

Which conclusion best fits the evidence?

A. The Aztec case combined different economic relationships; their effects need evidence from both rulers and communities.

B. Every Mesoamerican society had exactly this system.

C. All resources reached Tenochtitlan through voluntary purchases.

My choice: _____ Explain why it fits:

5 Carry the idea forward.

Write a short museum commentary explaining how tribute could support imperial power and create demands on subject communities. Contrast it with market exchange, and include one source limitation.