Teacher Answer Key

Case Study

1. The 'safe to breathe' announcement brought her home while indoor dust was still heavily contaminated, and without warnings about safe cleanup she used methods that re-suspended asbestos and other toxins. The reassurance itself became a cause of exposure.
2. Because she cleaned before official testing existed, her apartment never appeared in contamination records. Self-cleaned homes like hers make the documented footprint of the disaster smaller than the real one, biasing health studies and compensation programs toward undercounting.

Multiple Choice

1. A
2. B
3. C

Matching

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

Fill-in-the-Blank

1) 2,500, 2) EPA, 3) December

Short Answer (Sample Responses)

Q1: Dust penetrated apartments, offices, and ventilation systems, where it persisted long after outdoor air cleared. People re-occupied and cleaned these spaces without protection, so indoor exposure continued for months and drove much of the long-term illness.

Q2: Officials needed to calm panic, restart the financial district, and restore normal life, so reassuring language was politically valuable. The cost was thousands of preventable exposures and a lasting loss of public trust when the Inspector General revealed the data gap.

Q3: Answers will vary. Strong responses weigh the risk of public confusion from raw data against the demonstrated harm of premature certainty, and may propose publishing data with clear explanations of uncertainty.