Teacher Answer Key

Case Study

1. The stratigraphy is destroyed because the backhoe mixed materials from different layers together, making it impossible to determine which artifacts belonged to which time period. Without intact layers, archaeologists cannot establish the chronological sequence of Roman, Byzantine, and Classical occupation.

2. A more thorough initial survey using methods like ground-penetrating radar could have detected the buried wall and layers before construction began. This case shows the ongoing tension between development timelines and the need to preserve irreplaceable archaeological information.

Multiple Choice

1. D

2. A

3. C

Matching

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

Fill-in-the-Blank

1) stratum, 2) Harris Matrix, 3) context

Short Answer (Sample Responses)

Q1: A Roman coin in a medieval layer suggests someone in the medieval period was using or collected an older coin, perhaps as a curiosity or trade item. The same coin in a Roman layer confirms it was used during the Roman period, providing direct evidence of Roman-era activity at the site.

Q2: Bioturbation from burrowing animals can move newer artifacts into older layers, making it appear that objects are older than they actually are. Erosion can strip away upper layers entirely, creating gaps in the record that make it seem like a site was abandoned when it may have been continuously occupied.

Q3: Excavation is destructive because once a layer is removed, it cannot be replaced. This means archaeologists must record everything carefully before removing each layer, using small tools and detailed documentation because any mistake permanently destroys information about the past.