Teacher Answer Key

Case Study

1. Lady Ix is leaving specific buildings and a political structure behind, but carrying her family, social connections, and cultural identity — exactly what the reading means when it says populations migrated rather than died. She preserves the culture while relocating its physical expression, which is reorganization, not collapse.

2. Presenting migration as rational decision-making by ordinary people normalizes what happened as a human response to environmental stress rather than a mysterious catastrophe. This directly challenges the 'collapse' narrative, which implies something incomprehensible happened rather than people choosing to move when conditions became unsustainable.

Multiple Choice

1. A

2. B

3. D

Matching

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

Fill-in-the-Blank

1) Uxmal, 2) 810, 3) indigenous

Short Answer (Sample Responses)

Q1: 'Collapse' implies a complete and total failure, but the Maya people continued to exist, migrate, and maintain cultural traditions through and after the 9th century. The evidence supports 'regional decline and demographic redistribution' — specific cities were abandoned as populations moved northward and into the highlands.

Q2: Drought reduced food production, creating resource scarcity, while warfare between cities competing for those resources destroyed the agricultural surplus and political stability needed to survive drought. Each problem made the other worse: drought created competition, competition destroyed the infrastructure needed to manage drought.

Q3: Describing Maya civilization only in the past tense erases living Maya communities and their ongoing connection to their heritage. Classroom discussions should acknowledge Maya people as a present community with agency over their own history, not merely historical subjects studied by outside archaeologists.