Teacher Answer Key

Case Study

1. Controllers had no way to know which of the thousands of planes still in the air might be hijacked, since the attackers had turned off transponders and used ordinary flights as weapons. Grounding more than 4,500 aircraft had never been done before, but it was the only way to be certain no more planes could be turned into missiles.

2. The pilot's hesitation shows that even clear emergency orders meet resistance and confusion in real time, because people want confirmation before doing something unusual. The controllers had to overcome that doubt firmly and calmly. Landing every plane in about two hours without a single accident prevented further chaos, which is why aviation experts treat it as a model emergency response.

Multiple Choice

1. A
2. C
3. D

Matching

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

Fill-in-the-Blank

1) seventeen, 2) 10:28, 3) Shanksville

Short Answer (Sample Responses)

Q1: Controllers had to land more than 4,500 planes at once, including large jets diverted to small airports that rarely handled them, all while not knowing which planes might be hijacked. They cleared the entire sky in a little over two hours without a single accident, which is why aviation experts still study it as a model of emergency coordination.

Q2: In the North Tower, the impact destroyed all three stairwells above the crash zone, trapping everyone above the 91st floor. In the South Tower, one stairwell remained passable, so a small number of people above the impact zone found it and escaped. The difference came down to where each plane hit and what the impact destroyed.

Q3: Because Flight 93 took off forty-two minutes late, the other three planes had already crashed by the time its hijackers took control. Passengers calling family and airline workers learned planes were being flown into buildings, understood their own plane was a weapon, and voted to storm the cockpit, which forced the plane down in a field instead of striking the Capitol or White House.