Teacher Answer Key

Case Study

1. Glittery wrapping paper, plastic ribbons, and foam packing blocks mixed with cardboard and paper caused the loads to be labeled contaminated.

2. By placing non-recyclable items into the blue carts, residents increased contamination so much that entire truckloads had to be landfilled instead of recycled, reducing the system's overall effectiveness.

Multiple Choice

1. C

2. B

3. D

Matching

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

Fill-in-the-Blank

1) contamination, 2) stream, 3) costs

Short Answer (Sample Responses)

Q1: Plain kraft paper is typically just paper fiber, with no foil, plastic, or glitter, so it can be recycled more easily if clean and tape is removed; foil or glitter paper is a mixed material that many facilities cannot process.

Q2: Examples: choose reusable gift bags, boxes, or fabric wraps; buy items with minimal packaging; avoid glitter and foil paper; reuse bows and ribbons instead of buying new; combine several small gifts into one box.

Q3: Programs could provide simple, visual guides showing "yes/no" materials, send text or social media reminders about holiday-specific rules, or label bins with clear examples, helping residents understand exactly what belongs in recycling and what should go in the trash.