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Three Survivors - Titanic Education Resource

Teachers' Notes

The lessons centre on photographs, pictures, written information and artefacts from three Titanic passengers. Lady Duff-Gordon was a first class passenger, Elsie Doling, second class and Rosa Abbot, third class. The underlying purpose is to compare the experiences of different classes of passengers by using original information. In part 5 the pupils can use this information in a creative writing activity, reflecting the many fictional representations of Titanic.

The lessons can be taught as a whole class activity, or the class could be divided into three groups and take one survivor/ passenger class each – comparing findings at the end.

The format is as follows

Introduction

Factual information summarizing the life on board ship.

Breakdown of passenger numbers and survivors

Suggested learning intentions and links with appropriate areas of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

Parts 1, 2 & 3 - Three Survivors

For each of the three passengers – text box of information, photograph and picture of cabin for that class of passenger.

'Under the Spotlight' key question sheet.

Part 4

Activity for pupils to write a factual biography for one of the chosen passengers

Part 5

Activity for pupils to write a fictional story or play for one of the chosen passengers

Part 6

Objects of interest' – 3 objects (one from each passenger class)
Question sheet on objects



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Introduction

Titanic was the largest passenger steamship in the world when she set off on her maiden voyage from Southampton, England to New York City on 10 April 1912. Four days into the crossing, at 23:40 on 14 April 1912, she struck an iceberg and sank at 2:20 the following morning.

Life on board a White Star liner

In 1871 the average voyage across the Atlantic took nine days and the need for fresh food, particularly milk and eggs, meant that ships took cows and chickens to sea. Males and females were segregated below deck. Passengers slept in partly enclosed berths and their meals were served from stoves in each sleeping area. The only recreational space and mixing of the sexes was on a small section of open deck.

By 1911 crossing the Atlantic had been reduced to six days. Olympic and Titanic could carry 1,000 third class passengers and the problem of providing fresh food had been overcome by refrigeration. No longer were the sexes segregated below decks. Passengers slept in cabins and uniformed stewards served meals at table in a dining room. Recreation space included a smoking room, a general room with piano and large sections of open deck with benches.

The greatest improvements for passengers were in First Class. In Olympic and Titanic, White Star provided passengers with a gymnasium, plunge pool, electric lifts, restaurant and cafe, photographer's dark room, barber's shop, Turkish bath, library and orchestra to entertain diners during meals.

Titanic was owned by the White Star Line and constructed at the Harland and Wolff shipyard in Belfast. Of the 2223 people aboard Titanic only 706, less than a third, survived. The majority of deaths were caused by hypothermia in the -2°C water where death could be expected in less than 15 minutes. One of the reasons for the high death rate when the ship sank was that, although complying with the regulations of the time, the ship carried lifeboats for only 1178 people.

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Breakdown of passenger numbers and survivors

Category	Number aboard	Number of survivors	Percentage survived	Number lost	Percentage lost
First class	329	199	60.5%	130	39.5%
Second class	285	119	41.7%	166	58.3%
Third class	710	174	24.5%	536	75.5%
Crew	991	214	23.8%	685	76.2%
Total	2,223	706	31.8%	1,517	68.2%

Men and members of the 2nd and 3rd class were less likely to survive.

Less than a quarter of third class passengers survived.

Six of the seven children in first class survived.

All of the children in second class survived, whereas less than half were saved in third class.

96% of the women in first class survived.

86% of the women survived in second class and less than half survived in third class.

Overall, only 20% of the men survived, compared to nearly 75% of the women.

Three Survivors

Three of the women who survived were Lady Duff-Gordon (Lucy Christiana), Elsie Doling and Rosa Abbot. They were different ages, different social classes and had different reasons for travelling on Titanic but they all lived through the night of 14th April 1912.



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Suggested Learning Intentions

World Around Us

Children will

- * Use historical objects to find out more about the past (Change over Time)
- * Recognise that local/global events in the past have helped shape who we are and how we live today (Interdependence)
- * Learn how advances in technology have changed the way we travel (Movement & Energy)

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding

Children will

- * Know about aspects of their cultural heritage
- * Understand that the consequences of different decisions have different effects on our lives

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities

Children will

- * Compare and contrast how things have changed over time
- * Make links between cause and effect
- * Use a variety of strategies when working with others to make a presentation
- * Listen actively and share opinions

Cross- Curricular Skills - Communication / Using ICT

Children will

- * Express thoughts and feelings of a character
- * Make relevant contributions to discussion
- * Write a factual report
- * Write a fictional play or story
- * Research, select and edit information from a range of digital sources

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Titanic - Three Survivors Part 1



Survivor 1 Lady Duff- Gordon
(Lucy Christiana)
First Class Passenger

Lady Lucy Christiana Duff-Gordon was 48 when she travelled in First Class on board Titanic with her husband Sir Cosmo Duff-Gordon and her secretary Miss Laura Francatelli. Born Lucy Sutherland, she was first married, at age 18, to James Stuart Wallace by whom she had a child. They were divorced in 1888 and she was left virtually penniless. She supported herself by establishing a dressmaking business in London. Her business was a success and by 1900 the firm had become one of the great fashion houses of London. In 1900 she married Sir Cosmo Duff-Gordon and they were travelling to New York on business when they boarded Titanic at Cherbourg. Lady Duff-Gordon and her husband and secretary were rescued in lifeboat 1.



Titanic Under the Spotlight

Look at the picture of a typical White Star Line First Class Cabin

- * Describe the furniture in the cabin.
- * How would you know this is a First Class Cabin?
- * Why do you think First Class passengers had more than one room to themselves?

Look at the picture of Lady Duff-Gordon and read the text box.

- * Was Lady Duff-Gordon always wealthy? Do you think this would affect the decisions she made after her divorce?
- * Look at the clothes Lady Duff-Gordon is wearing in the photograph. What do they tell you about her?
- * How do you think Lady Duff-Gordon might have felt when she boarded Titanic in Cherbourg?
- * It is April 19th 1912, you are Lady Duff-Gordon and have just sat down to write a letter to your family in London recording the events of April 14th and 15th. What will you say in the letter?

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Titanic - Three Survivors

Part 2



Survivor 2 Elsie Doling
Second Class Passenger

Elsie Doling from Southampton was 18 years old when she was a Second Class passenger on board Titanic. She travelled with her sister-in-law Ada Doling on the journey to New York to visit Ada's mother. They were pictured walking on the Promenade Deck when Titanic called to Queenstown. Both survived the sinking and tried to send a Marconigram to Southampton saying 'Ada Elsie safe'. The heavy workload of the Marconi operators meant that it was not transmitted. Elsie Doling died in 1972.



Titanic Under the Spotlight

Look at the picture of a typical White Star Line Second Class Cabin

- * Describe the furniture in the cabin.
- * How would you know this is not a First Class Cabin?
- * Now research how the Second Class passengers might have spent their time on board Titanic?
- * Do you think Second Class passengers were rich or poor?

Look at the picture of Elsie Doling and read the text box.

The writing on the front of the photograph says, 'A survivor from the ill-fated SS 'Titanic' April 15/12'

- * Elsie Doling was pictured on the Promenade Deck early on the voyage. What do you think she would have felt about the journey ahead?
- * A marconigram was a wireless message which could be sent across the Atlantic. Why do you think the message was so short? How would Elsie's relatives know she was safe when the message was never transmitted?
- * What age was Elsie when she died?
- * In 1912 Titanic docked in Queenstown. This name has now been changed. Find out what it is called today and locate it on Google earth, a map or atlas.

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Survivor 3 Rosa Abbot
Third Class Passenger

Part 3

Rosa Abbott, who had separated from her husband in America, moved back to England with her children in August 1911 to be with her mother. However she soon decided they should return to America. On 10th April 1912 Rosa Abbott and her two boys embarked on Titanic from Southampton as third class passengers. When Titanic was sinking, all three were swept off the deck into the water. Rosa eventually managed to be rescued in Collapsible Lifeboat 'A' but both her sons were lost.

Rosa Abbott was the only female passenger to have been rescued from the water. She required medical attention on board Carpathia due to the effects the cold water had on her legs. She was taken to St. Vincent's Hospital upon arrival in New York. Rosa Abbott returned to England with her second husband in 1928.



Titanic Under the Spotlight

Look at the picture of a typical White Star Line Third Class Cabin

- * Describe the furniture in the cabin.
- * How would you know this is not a First or Second Class Cabin?
- * Research how the Third Class passengers might have spent their time on board Titanic?
- * Do you think Third Class passengers were rich or poor?

The writing on the front of the photograph says, 'Yours truly Rosa Abbott Dec 2nd 1912.' On the reverse, she has inscribed in ink, 'To dear Mrs. Lessman, in remembrance of the S.S. Titanic. April 15th 1912 Rosa Abbott, Survivor.' Mrs. George Lessman was a passenger on board the Carpathia when Rosa Abbott was brought on board the rescue ship.

- * Why do you think Rosa Abbot sent this picture to Mrs Lessman?
- * What do you think Rosa Abbot would have remembered most about the night Titanic sank?
- * Find out the temperature of the sea the night of the collision?
- * How many collapsible lifeboats were on board Titanic? How many people could have been saved if all the lifeboats had been filled?

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Part 4

Biography

Focus on one of the three survivors of the sinking of Titanic. Review what you already know about them. Find out any further information from websites, such as www.encyclopedia-titanica.org

Write a biography of the life of this survivor. Try to include the following factual details, if possible

- * Name
- * Home address
- * Date of Birth
- * Age in 1912
- * Price of ticket & passenger class
- * Names of travelling companions (did they all survive?)
- * Details of rescue
- * Final destination
- * Life after Titanic

Alternatively, research a survivor of your own choice, e.g. Violet Jessop, 2nd Officer Commander Charles Lightoller or Bruce Ismay.

Fiction

There are many stories and films based on the Titanic story. Use all the information you have gathered about your Titanic survivor to make up a fictional story or play about their experiences. You may also want to include other characters from your research e.g. fellow survivors from the same lifeboat.

Remember to

- * Plan out your story/ play first - you may wish to use a story board
- * Decide who is the main character and how many other characters will be involved
- * Decide where your story will start and finish. You could pick one key event to focus on, rather than every event
- * Consider whether appropriate music can be added to the story
- * Read out your story or act out your play to the rest of the class

Objects of Interest

The following objects would have been used on Titanic



A Silver Serving Dish



A Wooden Chair



An Enamel Jug

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Objects of Interest

Examine the picture of each object and discuss the following questions

- * What is the function of this object?
- * Is it made from an expensive material?
- * Is it well decorated?
- * Would it have been expensive to make?
- * Is there anything you can see which would link this object to Titanic or the White Star Line Shipping Company?
- * Is the object damaged or worn? If not, why not?
- * How might this object have been used?
- * Who might have used it?
- * Where might it have been used on Titanic?
- * Do you think many of these objects were made? If not, why not?
- * Why do you think so many items were made specifically for the White Star Line Shipping Company?

An original letter from a first class passenger (Adolphe Saalfeld) on board Titanic recently fetched £55,000 at auction. Discuss why objects from Titanic are worth so much today and whether or not a museum should spend money on such objects.