



***UNSINKABLE WOMEN:
STORIES AND SONGS FROM THE TITANIC***

CURRICULUM GUIDE

Prepared by the Civic Center of Greater Des Moines

UNSINKABLE WOMEN:

STORIES AND SONGS FROM THE TITANIC

Dear Teachers,

Thank you for joining us for the Applause Series presentation of *Unsinkable Women: Stories and Songs from the Titanic*. Few tragedies in history have captured our collective imaginations as that of the *Titanic*. 100 years later, the story of an “unsinkable” ship going down on its maiden voyage lives with us as a story of romance, hope, and the unfortunate price of human arrogance. This special one-woman play, written and performed by Deborah Jean Templin, honors the remarkable women of the *Titanic*. Through her performance, Deborah Jean shines a light on the women’s individual stories, reminding us that — beneath the myth and fantasy of the *Titanic* — at its heart is a story about the people whose lives were forever altered by its sinking.

As you prepare your students for this experience, we hope that this study guide helps you connect the performance to your classroom curriculum in ways that you find valuable. In the following pages, you will find contextual information about the performance and related subjects, as well as a variety of discussion questions and activities. Some pages are appropriate to reproduce for your students; others are designed more specifically with you, their teacher, in mind. As such, we hope that you are able to “pick and choose” material and ideas from the study guide to meet your class’s unique needs.



Deborah Jean Templin as Madeleine Astor, the young bride of John Jacob Astor, one of the wealthiest men in America.

See you at the theater,

Civic Center Education Team

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This study guide was compiled and written by Deborah Jean Templin and Karoline Myers; edited by Michelle McDonald and Eric Olmscheid. Adapted from *Unsinkable Women* Study Guide © 2011 D.J. Templin, as edited by David Altman and Beth A. Vogel.

GUIDE CONTENTS

Going to the Theater and Theater Etiquette
Page 3

About the Performance
Pages 4

About the Artist
Page 5

Vocabulary
Page 6

About the *Titanic*
Pages 7-10

***Titanic* Timeline**
Pages 11-12

Music and Entertainment of the *Titanic* Era
Page 13

Technology of the *Titanic* Era
Page 14

Pre-Show Exploration Activities
Pages 15-16

Post-Show Discussion and Assessment Activities
Pages 17-19

Resources and Sources
Page 20

GOING TO THE THEATER . . .



YOUR ROLE AS AN AUDIENCE MEMBER

Attending a live performance is a unique and exciting opportunity. Unlike the passive experience of watching a movie, audience members play an important role in every live performance. As they act, sing, dance, or play instruments, the performers on stage are very aware of the audience's mood and level of engagement. Each performance calls for a different response from audience members. Lively bands, musicians, and dancers may desire the audience to focus silently on the stage and applaud only during natural breaks in the performance. Audience members can often take cues from performers on how to respond to the performance appropriately. For example, performers will often pause or bow for applause at a specific time.

As you experience the performance, consider the following questions:

- * What kind of live performance is this (a play, a dance, a concert, etc.)?
- * What is the mood of the performance? Is the subject matter serious or lighthearted?
- * What is the mood of the performers? Are they happy and smiling or somber and reserved?
- * Are the performers encouraging the audience to clap to the music or move to the beat?
- * Are there natural breaks in the performance where applause seems appropriate?

A SPECIAL EXPERIENCE

Seeing a live performance is a very special experience. Although it is not required, many people enjoy dressing up when they attend the theater.

THEATER ETIQUETTE

Here is a checklist of general guidelines to follow when you visit the Civic Center:

- * Leave all food, drinks, and chewing gum at school or on the bus.
- * Cameras, recording devices, and personal listening devices are not permitted in the theater.
- * Turn off and put away all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices before the performance begins.
- * Do not text during the performance.
- * Respect the theater. Remember to keep your feet off of the seats and avoid bouncing up and down.
- * When the house lights dim, the performance is about to begin. Please stop talking at this time.
- * **Talk before and after the performance only.** Remember, the theater is designed to amplify sound, so the other audience members and the performers on stage can hear your voice!
- * Use the restroom before the performance or wait until the end. If you must leave the theater during the show, make sure the first set of doors closes before you open the second — this will keep unwanted light from spilling into the theater.
- * Appropriate responses such as laughing and applauding are appreciated. Pay attention to the artists on stage — they will let you know what is appropriate.
- * Open your eyes, ears, mind, and heart to the entire experience. Enjoy yourself!

GOING TO THE THEATER information is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts study guide materials.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE



When people survive an extreme situation and triumph over adversity, their lives are altered forever. On April 15, 1912, the *RMS Titanic* sank in the frigid waters of the North Atlantic. According to the British Wreck commissioner's final report, of the 2,201 passengers and crew onboard, only 711 survived. Many of the survivors were women. *Unsinkable Women*, a one-person show written and performed by Deborah Jean Templin, brings to life a historically accurate portrayal of seven brave women, including the unsinkable Molly Brown.

When asked why she pursued this project, Ms. Templin replied, "I wanted to move away from romance and fantasy and reveal something of the realities of the *Titanic* itself and its world. But most importantly, the stories of these women show how tragedy can liberate a deeper sense of self and release extraordinary personal powers. For these ladies – and I hope for us – that is the legacy of the *Titanic*."

THE CHARACTERS

The Girl on the Bicycle: She is a composite character of an educated working class girl. She is a young female English teacher of the period who is well aware of her place in society compared to that of her male counterparts.

Eleanor Widener: While Eleanor survived, her son Harry drowned in the *Titanic* disaster clutching his favorite book. Eleanor Widener donated a library to Harvard University in his memory.

Daisy Spedden: A resident of Tuxedo Park, New York, Daisy and her husband traveled a great deal. The Spedden family was one of the first families to board a lifeboat, with their son carrying his plush bear, Polar. Mrs. Spedden later wrote a book for her son entitled *Polar the Titanic Bear* that is still read by children today.

Violet Jessop: Ms. Jessop was a transatlantic stewardess for 41 years. Incredibly, she survived the sinking of both the *Titanic* and the *Britannic*.

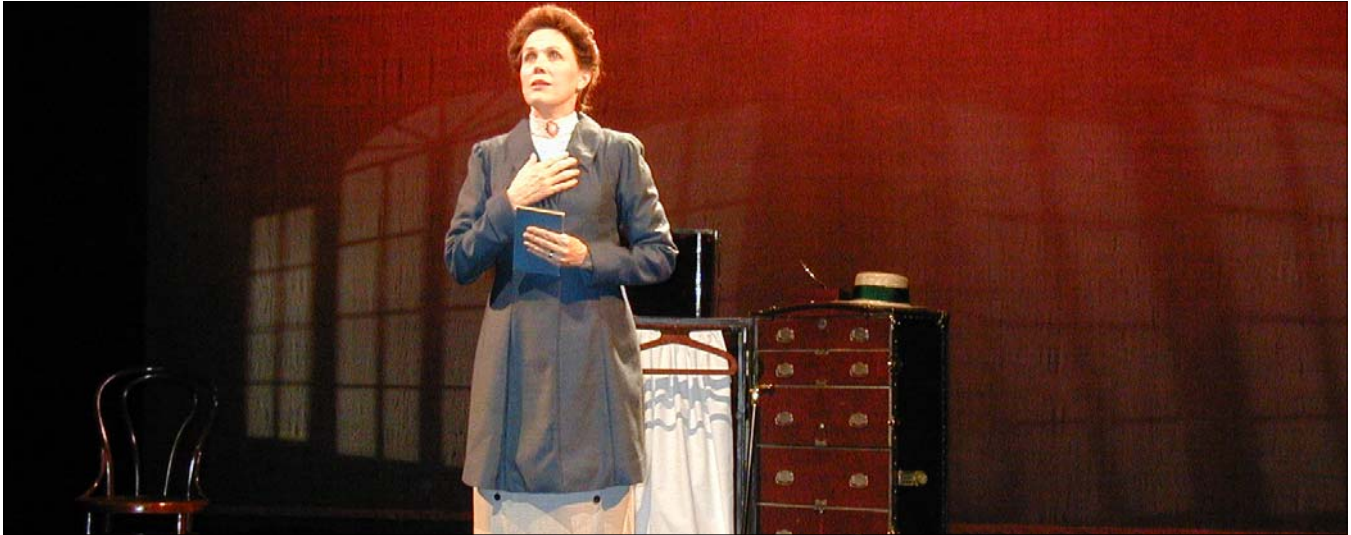
ABOVE: Deborah Jean Templin as Violet Jessop, a stewardess on the *Titanic*.

Nora: Nora represents the entertainers aboard the *Titanic*. She is making the crossing to work in American Vaudeville theater and travelling in steerage where she meets many third class passengers. She performs two period songs, which reveal a great deal about the roles of gender, ethnicity, and race in early 20th Century social conventions.

Margaret (Molly) Tobin Brown: Mrs. Brown is one of the most famous survivors. She was from Colorado and was married to J.J. Brown, a wealthy mine owner. She was a crusader for the rights of women, children, mine workers, and others who struggled for survival in the early 20th Century.

Madeleine Force Astor: The young bride of John Jacob Astor lost her husband the night of the *Titanic* sinking. She was seven months pregnant. Her prenuptial agreement stated she would lose millions if she married again. She turned her back on the Astor family fortune and married twice more before her death at the age of 47.

ABOUT THE ARTIST, DEBORAH JEAN TEMPLIN



Unsinkable Women: Stories and Songs from the Titanic is written and performed by Deborah Jean Templin. Read more about the artist prior to seeing the performance.

A LIFETIME WRITER

Deborah Jean Templin began writing skits and plays at the age of nine through the 4H program in her home state of Minnesota. She hasn't stopped writing since. She has written nine plays in all, which have been performed from San Francisco to New York City, Laramie to Jacksonville.



ACTING CAREER

Her professional acting honors include Philadelphia's Barrymore Award for Best Actress in a Musical and the Richard Burton Award in Acting. Deborah Jean has appeared with Edie Adams in the musical *Baby*, with Jose Greco in the tour of the off-Broadway hit *The Passion of Dracula* and played Grace Farrell opposite Harve Presnell in a 45-city national tour of *Annie*. She was a member of the *Mamma Mia!* national touring company. She has performed Ida Straus in *Titanic* at the Chicago Lyric Opera House and Dolly Levi at the Walnut Street in Philadelphia.

Her film credits include Penny Marshall's *Awakenings*, *Scent of a Woman* and *You've Got Mail*. On television, Ms. Templin has been seen on *The Good Wife*, *Law and Order*, and *All My Children*.

She is a proud member of three theatrical unions: Actors Equity Association, Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

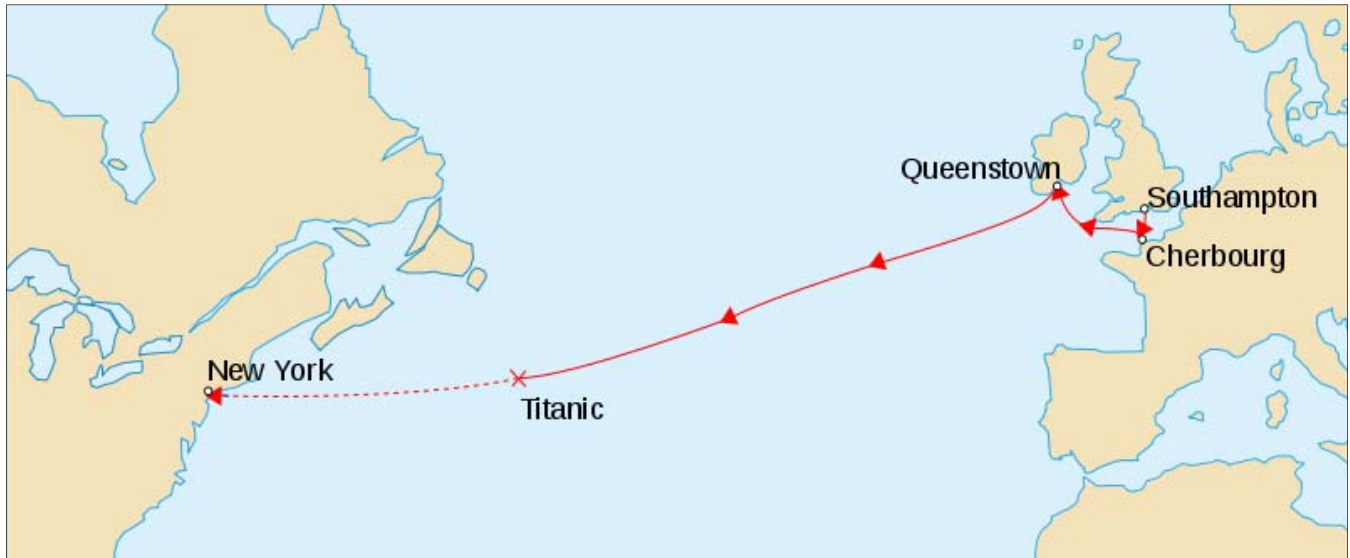
ABOVE: Deborah Jean Templin as Eleanor Wilder in *Unsinkable Women*.

UNSINKABLE WOMEN

Ms. Templin researched and wrote *Unsinkable Women* while appearing in the national tour of the Tony Award winning musical *Titanic*. Playing seven different roles in that show, as a swing, she became fascinated with the women whose shoes she walked in and their stories of survival.

Wanting to discover more about the women she was portraying, she set out to research their lives, visiting places such as the Astor Cottage in Newport, the Widener Library at Harvard and Molly Brown's home in Denver as well as the nation's public libraries. Each morning she would write three pages about a character or set of characters. Eventually these notes were developed into monologues with a particular point of view. Costumes, wigs and props were added. Using the building blocks of the monologues she has adapted the production for schools and created a special concert version.

VOCABULARY



era: a distinctive period of time. The era of the *Titanic* was marked by rapidly changing technology and a belief in continued progress.

iceberg: a large floating mass of ice that has broken off from a glacier and been carried out to sea. *Titanic's* collision with an iceberg in the North Atlantic tore a nearly 300-foot wide gash in its hull, leading the ship to sink.



Iceberg with which the *Titanic* is believed to have collided. Image courtesy of titanic-nautical.com.

lifeboat: a small boat constructed and placed on a ship to be used to save the people aboard if the ship begins to sink. The makers of the *Titanic* were so sure that the ship was unsinkable that there were only enough lifeboats on board for one third of the passengers.

Morse Code: a code used for transmitting messages that consists of different combinations of “dots” (a short tone) and “dashes” (a tone three times as long as a “dot” tone) to represent different letters of the alphabet.

ocean liner: an oceangoing passenger ship. In the early 20th Century, ocean liners were the most common form of passenger travel between Europe and North America. At the time, *Titanic* was considered the most magnificent ocean liner ever built.

steerage: accommodations given to passengers traveling at the cheapest rate. On the *Titanic*, third-class was considered steerage. Most were immigrants on their way to America to begin a new life for their families.



Third-class passengers on their *Titanic* deck. Major ships, like the *Titanic*, had different decks for the different types of passengers. Image courtesy of TitanicPhotographs.com.

telegraph: an apparatus for transmitting signals to a different place. *Titanic* featured a wireless telegraph known as a Marconigram that transmitted its messages via radio waves.



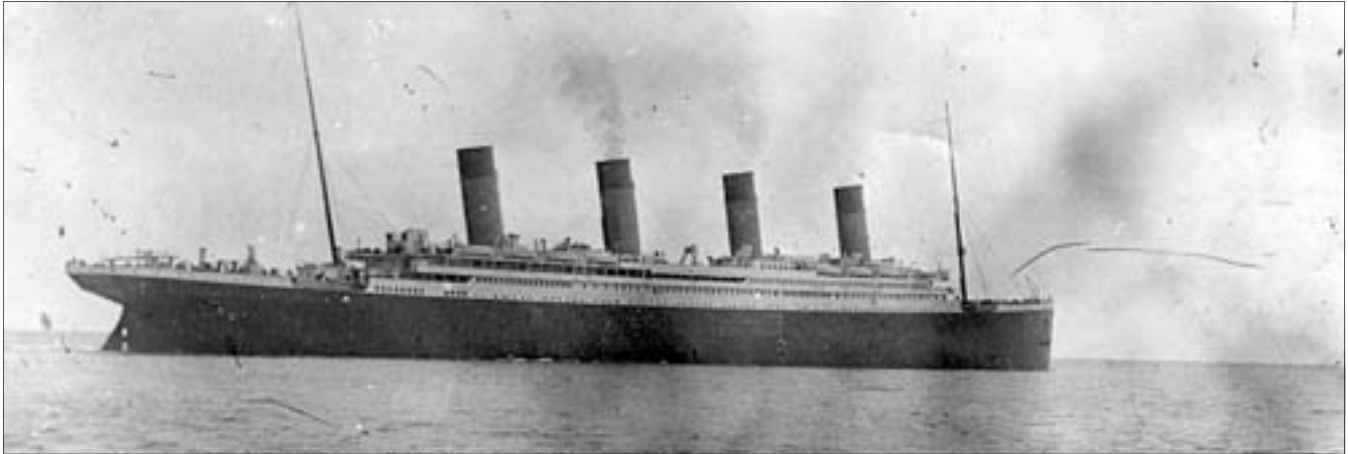
Marconi magnetic detector that received spark telegraphic signals in ships and shore stations. Image courtesy of mhs.ox.ac.uk.

transatlantic: crossing the Atlantic Ocean. The *Titanic* was a transatlantic liner. See map above for the *Titanic's* intended route on its maiden voyage.

Vaudeville: popular 20th Century entertainment consisting of a number of individual acts such as music, comedians, magicians, ventriloquists, and dancers.

White Star Line: British shipping company which specialized in building and operating passenger ships, including the *Titanic*.

ABOUT THE *TITANIC*, pg. 1 of 4



The *Titanic* set sail in April of 1912, only to sink four days later after colliding with an iceberg in the North Atlantic. Only one third of its passengers survived. Read on to learn more about the magnificent ship, its passengers, and the tragedy.

BUILDING THE *TITANIC*

The *Titanic* was meant to be one of the most magnificent ocean liners of all time. Built by the White Star Line, construction began in 1909 in Harland and Wolff yard located in Northern Ireland and continued nonstop until the spring of 1911.

In May of that year, nearly 100,000 people came to watch the *Titanic*'s hull (the largest movable manmade object in the world at the time) be launched into the water. Once docked, thousands of workers spent the next year building the ship's decks, constructing its lavish interiors, and installing the 29 giant boilers that would power the ship's two main steam engines.

RIGHT: *Titanic*'s fully equipped gym. *Titanic*'s other amenities included a heated swimming pool, two barber shops, four restaurants, and two libraries. Image courtesy of TitanicPhotographs.com.

The design of the *Titanic* was considered to be state of the art. The ship featured a double bottom and 15 watertight bulkheads equipped with watertight doors. These doors could be operated individually or simultaneously by a switch on the bridge. It was these watertight doors that inspired Shipbuilder magazine to call the ship "practically unsinkable."

SETTING SAIL

On April 10, 1912, hundreds of people crowded onto a dock in Southampton, England to see the *Titanic* set off on her maiden voyage. At the time, *Titanic* was the largest ship in the world – the length of four city blocks. Many called her "the wonder ship". After stops in Cherbourg, France and Queenstown (now known as Cobh), Ireland, the ship set sail for New York with an estimated 2,200 passengers and crew on board.

(About the *Titanic*, cont. pg. 8)



ABOVE: The *Titanic* steams out of the harbor on its maiden voyage. Image courtesy of TitanicPhotographs.com.

THE WONDER SHIP

From the bottom of her keel to the top of her stacks, *Titanic* was 175 feet high. There were a total of nine decks, or levels.

Titanic's engines used more than 800 tons of coal each day. The ship could reach a speed of 24 knots, or about 27 miles per hour.

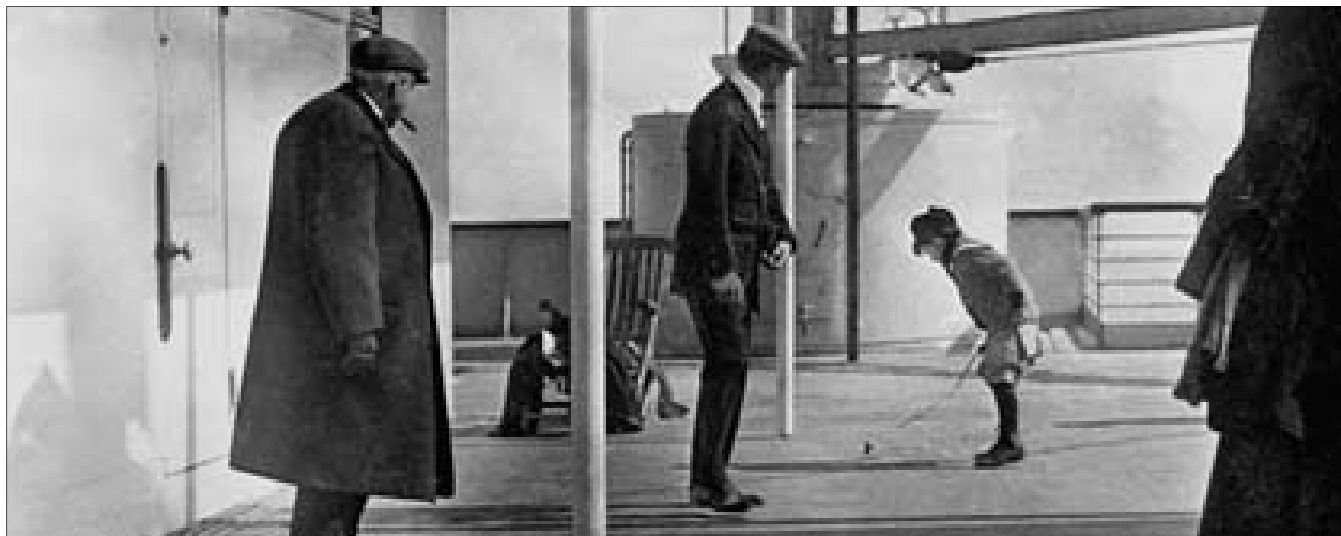
There were electric lights in all the ships' rooms. *Titanic* used more than 10,000 light bulbs.

The ship had a heated swimming pool, a gym, two libraries, and two barber shops.

To feed the crew and passengers, *Titanic* needed 75,000 pounds of meat; 11,000 pounds of fish; and 40,000 eggs. The ship also carried 40 tons of potatoes; 3,500 pounds of onions; 36,000 apples; and 1,000 loaves of bread.

Each day, the passengers and crew used 14,000 gallons of drinking water.

ABOUT THE *TITANIC*, pg. 2 of 4



ABOVE: Six-year-old Robert Douglas Steadman spins a top on deck while his father, Frederick, watches. Both father and son would survive the sinking. Image courtesy of TitanicPhotographs.com.

THE PEOPLE

Titanic's passengers came from all over the world, hailing from Ireland, France, Sweden, Norway, Poland, Russia, Spain, Greece, China, Arabia, England and the United States.

First Class

Due to it being *Titanic's* first voyage, its first-class passengers were high-ranking individuals from the White Star Line, wealthy industrialists, dignitaries, and celebrities. Notable first-class passengers included well known Americans Mrs. J.J. ("The Unsinkable Molly") Brown, Mr. and Mrs. John Jacob Astor, and Mr. and Mrs. Isador Straus, co-founders of Macy's Department Store. The net worth of the ship's prominent passengers was \$500 million.



Second Class

Titanic's second-class passengers consisted mainly of professionals and families on holiday. Many of these people customarily booked first-class but were forced to downgrade due to a lack of coal supplies for the ships they had originally booked passage on.

Third Class

The largest group of passengers was in third-class. *Titanic's* third-class or "steerage" passengers were primarily Irish and Italian immigrants planning to start a new life in America. Many families on board had six or more children. Some had paid less than \$20 to make the crossing. It was third-class that was the major source of profit for shipping lines like White Star, and *Titanic* offered accommodations superior to those found in third-class on any ship up to that time.

(About the *Titanic*, cont. pg. 9)

LEFT: A couple strolls along one of *Titanic's* decks. Overhead, deck chairs are stacked against the railing of the second-class promenade. Image courtesy of TitanicPhotographs.com.



ABOVE: Captain Edward J. Smith was the White Star line's choice to captain maiden voyages. This was to have been his final voyage before retiring. Image courtesy of prlog.org.

Average Ticket Costs:

First class: \$430
Second class: \$65
Third class: \$35 (\$345 today)

Approx. Passengers: 2,220

First class: 337
Second class: 271
Third class: 712
Crew: 908

ABOUT THE *TITANIC*, pg. 3 of 4



DISASTER STRIKES

On April 14, 1912, four days after departure, disaster struck. Throughout the day, the ship had received nine messages on the wireless that warned of icebergs. A number of these were not delivered to the bridge. Those that were delivered were ignored.

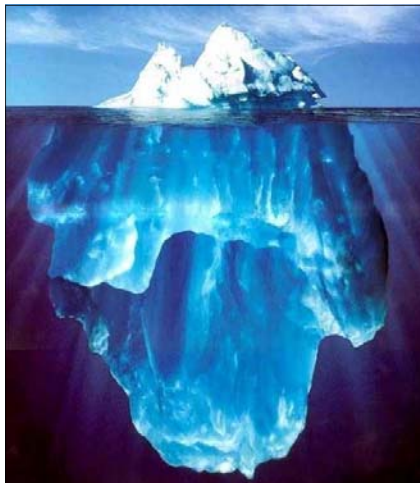
At about 11:30 that night, a lookout saw an iceberg dead ahead of the ship, rang that warning bell and telephoned the bridge. The engines were quickly reversed and the ship was turned sharply. Instead of making direct impact, the iceberg grazed the side of the ship, slashing a 300-foot gash below the waterline.

Did you know?

After the ship hit the iceberg, third-class passengers were seen on the lower decks playing with large chunks of ice. At that point in the evening, the ship was still thought to be “unsinkable” and few passengers were worried.

Although the individual bulkheads were watertight, water could spill from one compartment into another. By the time the captain toured the damaged area, five compartments were already filling with seawater, and the bow of the ship was alarmingly down. At that point, the captain, who had already instructed the wireless operator to call for help, ordered the lifeboats to be loaded. The *Titanic* was doomed.

(About the *Titanic*, cont. pg. 10)



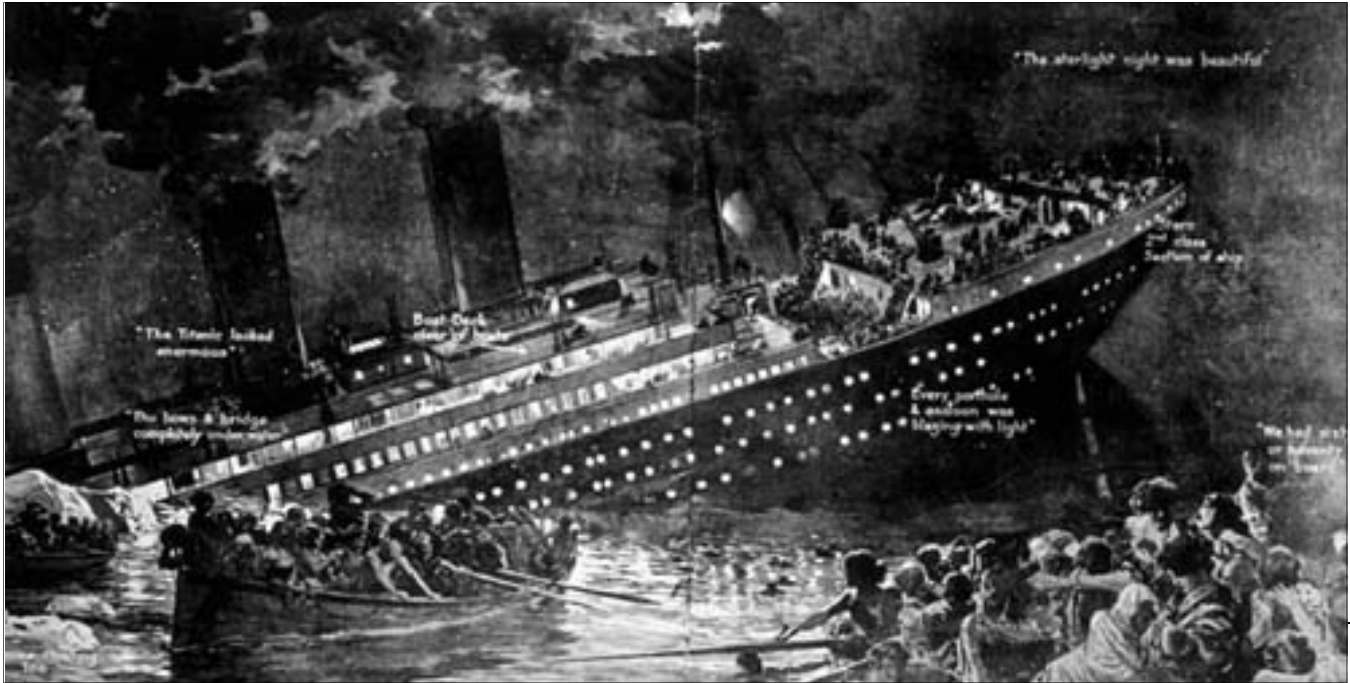
A North Atlantic iceberg. Image courtesy of wcscott.net.

ABOVE: Painting by artist Ken Marshall, depicting the collision with the iceberg. Many believe that if the *Titanic* would have hit the iceberg head on rather than from the side that it wouldn't have sunk. Image courtesy of kenmarshall.com.

SPOTLIGHT ON: *ICEBERGS*

Icebergs are formed when large masses of ice break off from a glacier, or ice sheet. This breaking off is called “calving.” Icebergs can be as large as a mile across and reach up to hundreds of feet above the water. About 70 to 80 percent of an iceberg's mass is actually below the waterline (if they floated in freshwater they would ride even lower in the water.) The hidden part of an iceberg can extend out from side to side under the water, making icebergs very dangerous for ships passing by. In 1914, in the aftermath of the *Titanic* disaster, the International Ice Patrol was established to track hundreds of icebergs in the North Atlantic using computerized radar and weather information systems.

ABOUT THE *TITANIC*, pg. 4 of 4



THE TRAGEDY

The evacuation process on the *Titanic* was extremely disorganized. The *Titanic* carried only 16 lifeboats, as well as four “collapsible” lifeboats. Together those lifeboats could fit only 1,178 people – about one third of the *Titanic*’s total capacity. (At the time, *Titanic*’s supply of lifeboats actually exceeded the British Board of Trade’s regulations.)

Many of the lifeboats were lowered well under capacity as the crew was cautious about the strength of the davits (supports for raising and lowering boats). For instance, the first lifeboat could accommodate 65 people and was launched holding only 28.

Women and children boarded the lifeboats first; only when there were no women or children nearby were men permitted to board. Many of the victims, however, were women and children, the result of disorderly procedures that failed to get them to the lifeboats in the first place.

Hundreds of stories of both cowardice and bravery occurred as *Titanic* sank beneath the water. Men saw off wives and children; families were separated in the confusion; and individuals gave up their spots to remain with their loved ones or to allow more vulnerable passengers to escape.

Less than three hours after striking the iceberg, at 2:20 a.m. on the morning of April 15, 1912, the *Titanic* was nearly perpendicular in the water. With many of her lights still aglow, the ship plunged beneath the icy waters.

After dodging ice floes all night having receiving the *Titanic*’s distress signal at midnight, a ship called the *Carpathia* began to round up all the lifeboats the next morning. They contained only 711 survivors. The loss of 1,500 people made the sinking of the *Titanic* the largest maritime disaster in history up to that time.

ABOVE: An artist’s impression of the *Titanic* as it sank, printed in *The Sphere* shortly after the tragedy. Image courtesy of titanicphotography.com.

LOST AND SAVED

First Class Passengers

Men: 115 Lost, 58 Saved
Women: 5 Lost, 139 Saved
Children: 1 Lost, 4 Saved

Second Class Passengers

Men: 147 Lost, 13 Saved
Women: 15 Lost, 78 Saved
Children: 0 Lost, 24 Saved

Third Class Passengers

Men: 399 Lost, 55 Saved
Women: 81 Lost, 98 Saved
Children: 53 Lost, 23 Saved

Crew Members

Men: 686 Lost, 189 Saved
Women: 2 Lost, 21 Saved

**Numbers are approximate. Due to the chaos in the tragedy, there are conflicting reports of the total number of passengers on board and how many from each class survived and were lost.*

TITANIC TIMELINE, pg. 1 of 2

APRIL 10, 1912: SAILING DAY

7:30 AM

Captain Edward J. Smith boards *Titanic* with full crew. Officers spent the previous night on board. Smith receives the sailing report from Chief Officer Wilde.

8:00 AM

Entire crew mustered, followed by brief lifeboat drill using only two boats.



A crew member leans against the rail. Behind him is lifeboat number seven. It would be the first launched as the ship sank. Image courtesy of TitanicPhotographs.com.

9:30 AM

Second-and-third-class boat-trains arrive and passengers board ship.

11:30 AM

First-class passengers board and are escorted to cabins.

12:00 PM

Titanic casts off and is towed from dock by tugs. The water displaced by *Titanic*'s movement during downstream passage into the river causes all six of the S.S. *New York*'s mooring-lines to break and her stern to swing toward the *Titanic*. Quick action averts a collision by only four feet. Departure is delayed for an hour. This incident indicates unfamiliarity with ships of this size by those handling them.



Passengers lean from the promenade deck to watch the *Titanic* narrowly avoid colliding with the *New York*. Image courtesy of TitanicPhotographs.com.

1:00 PM

Titanic resumes the 24-mile trip downstream to the English Channel en route to Cherbourg, France.

4:00 PM

Boat-train from Paris arrives at Cherbourg. Late arrival is announced.

5:30 PM

Cherbourg passengers finally board tenders and wait to be ferried out to *Titanic*.

6:30 PM

Titanic rides at anchor in Cherbourg harbor, all lights ablaze. Twenty-two cross-Channel passengers disembark, and some cargo is unloaded.

8:00 PM

274 Cherbourg passengers are aboard and tenders return to shore.

8:10 PM

Anchor raised and *Titanic* leaves for Queenstown, Ireland, taking her through the English Channel and around England's south coast.

APRIL 11, 1912

Captain Smith takes *Titanic* through some practice turns en route to Queenstown to test maneuverability.

11:30 AM

Titanic rides at anchor in Queenstown harbor, about two miles from land. 113 third-class and seven second-class passengers board from tenders with 1385 bags of mail. Seven passengers disembark.

1:30 PM

The starboard anchor is raised for the last time and *Titanic* departs on her first trans-Atlantic crossing to New York.



It took several minutes for the anchor to come to the surface. *Titanic* used six cables, 15 fathoms each, of wrought iron chain for its anchor. Image courtesy of TitanicPhotographs.com.

APRIL 12, 1912

Titanic covers 386 miles in fine, calm, clear weather.

APRIL 13, 1912

Titanic covers 519 miles. Fine weather continues. Various ice warnings received, which is not uncommon for April crossings.

10:30 PM

Heavy ice pack warning signaled by passing S.S. *Rappahannock*, which has sustained damage coming through the ice field.

(Titanic Timeline, cont. pg. 12)

TITANIC TIMELINE, pg. 2 of 2

APRIL 14, 1912

9:00 AM

Titanic picks up wireless message from *RMS Caronia* warning of field ice and icebergs in 42°N, from 49° to 51°W.

11:40 PM

The crow's nest bell suddenly sounds three times followed by the ringing of the bridge telephone. Sixth Officer Moody answers, hearing Lookout Frederick Fleet's urgent warning "Iceberg, right ahead!" First Officer Murdoch orders the engines stopped and then full astern. He also orders the helmsman, Quartermaster Hitches, to turn the helm hard starboard (right). The ship finally starts to turn, but is too late; a spur of ice beneath the surface scrapes the starboard side of the ship for a distance for about 284 feet. This causes a series of gashes and buckled hull plates that fully affect the first four water-tight compartments and partially affects a fifth. The ship is now open to the sea for 12 square feet. Captain Smith comes to the bridge and orders Fourth Officer Boxhall to conduct an inspection of the ship. When he returns to the bridge, Mr. Boxhall reports that he found no damage at all. Within minutes, however, reports start to come in: 8 feet of water in Boiler Room 6; flooding in the Mailroom and the Squash Court.



Iceberg with which the *Titanic* is believed to have collided, estimated to be 50 to 100 feet high and 200 to 400 feet long. Image courtesy of titanic-nautical.com.

APRIL 15, 1912



Telegraph operator John Phillips, left, remained at his post summoning rescuers for those who, unlike himself, were leaving the ship in lifeboats. Image courtesy of titanicphotographs.com.

12:00 AM

Captain Smith orders wireless operator John Phillips and Harold Bride to send a distress signal. The *Carpathia* is the closest at 58 miles. At full speed it will take four hours to arrive.

12:05 AM:

The crew begins to uncover and swing out the lifeboats.

12:45 AM:

The first lifeboat is launched. Although it has capacity for 65 persons it carries only 28. The officers loading the boats are cautious, mistrusting the test strength of the davits.

1:15 AM

The ship lists heavily and passengers are more willing to enter lifeboats. Officers are less cautious, loading the boats more fully.

1:40 AM

The first collapsible lifeboat leaves the ship, carrying White Star Managing Director, J. Bruce Ismay, who will be vilified for leaving the ship while some 1,500 others died.

2:05 AM

The last lifeboat is launched. Two more collapsible boats remain on board but they are unable to be launched. With all the boats gone, desperate passengers and crew begin jumping into the icy water.



Margaret Brown is regarded as a hero for insisting that her lifeboat return to look for survivors. Image courtesy of missouriwomen.org.

2:17 AM

The radio officers Phillips and Bride remain at their post sending distress signals. They have dispensed with "CQD" for the new distress call "SOS." The last "SOS" is sent at 2:17 am. The *Titanic* is the first vessel to use this signal. At about this time the forward funnel of the ship collapses, crushing many struggling in the water.

2:18 AM

The lights go out. *Titanic* slants down into the water and as its stern straightens to the sky, more than half of the bow and midsection of the ship breaks off and slides down into the sea.

2:20 AM

The stern section, now filling with water, tilts into a position that is nearly perpendicular to the ocean's surface and steadily sinks. The *Titanic* disappears into the Atlantic.

4:10 - 8:30 AM

The *Carpathia* arrives and collects the lifeboats carrying a total of 711 survivors.

MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT OF THE *TITANIC* ERA



ABOVE: Deborah Jean Templin as Nora, who represents the entertainers of *Titanic*.

Unsinkable Women incorporates several songs from the *Titanic* era that were performed aboard the ship. The songs are used in the overture, as transitions between characters, to underscore many of the monologues, and some are sung by the characters themselves. Read on to learn more about the different types of music of the *Titanic* era and the role that music and entertainment played in the early 1900s.

STORY SONGS

In *Unsinkable Women* the character of Nora says, "The White Star songbook had 352 tunes that had to be learned by heart and known by number." Wallace Hartley, bandmaster of the White Star Orchestra, would say the number of the piece and they would play that "number." This was the first instance of the term "number" being used for musical tunes, which is still used today. Singing was part of everyday life in 1912. People would gather around the piano at home or in restaurants and sing.

PRIMARY SONG FORMS OF THE ERA

Every song performed in *Unsinkable Women* is in an ABAB or verse-chorus format. This binary form was one of the primary song forms of the day.

The other well-known song form would be AAA, otherwise known as a Strophic song. *Oh Danny Boy*, was written in this format. Strophic form (verse-repeating or chorus form) is the simplest and most durable of musical forms, elaborating a piece of music by repetition of a single formal section. This may be analyzed as "A A A..."

VAUDEVILLE

One of the most popular forms of entertainment from the 1880s to the 1920s was vaudeville. Vaudeville was a variety show whose acts included comedians, singers, plate-spinners, ventriloquists, dancers, musicians, acrobats, and animal trainers. From small town stages to the largest theaters of New York, vaudeville was an essential part of every community.

SONGS IN THE SHOW

Long Time Ago

My Hero

*I'm Falling in Love With
Some One*

Our Miss Gibbs

Somewhere a Voice is Calling

Come Josephine

*Toyland**

*Ocean Roll**

The Ship I Love

Danny Boy

*Silver Heels**

*I Just Can't Make my
Eyes Behave**

Alexander's Ragtime Band

*En Printemps**

Dream of Autumn

Meet Me To-Night in Dreamland

Thine Alone

Our Miss Gibbs

*Smiles**

*Songs sung by the characters.

TECHNOLOGY OF THE *TITANIC* ERA



In Europe and America, the 19th century witnessed a burst of technological and scientific progress unparalleled in history. Ways of life were transformed by human invention and ingenuity to such a degree that it seemed there were no limits to what could be accomplished through science and technology. Many people believed it was possible to achieve Utopia, perfect society, here on earth.

It has been said that the *Titanic* disaster struck a great blow to the optimistic belief in the ceaseless march of progress towards a perfect world. The story of an “unsinkable” ship that went down during its maiden voyage has something to say to us about human arrogance, pride, and our faith in the idea of progress.

NOTABLE INVENTIONS FROM 1900—1912

Zeppelin • Escalator • Crayons
Safety Razor • Vacuum Cleaner
Air Conditioner • Neon Light
Airplane • Windshield Wipers
Cornflakes • Color Photography
Helicopter • Cellophane

TELEGRAPH, MORSE CODE & RADIO

The telegraph, Morse code, and radio were new technologies that played an important role on the *Titanic*.

The telegraph was the first electric device for communicating over long distances. By breaking and completing an electric circuit (by pressing and releasing the telegraph key) a series of clicks or beeps can be transmitted. Originally, telegraphs were linked by miles and miles of wire. By 1907, Guglielmo Marconi had developed a radio telegraph system. Telegraphs were used on that system to send wireless messages.

Photo of the Marconi (or wireless) room on the *Titanic*'s sister ship, the *Olympic*. Very few photos of the *Titanic*'s Marconi room survive but this is very similar. Image courtesy of titanicphotographs.com.

On the *Titanic*, a telegraph was referred to as a Marconigram. Samuel F.B. Morse was largely responsible for the invention of the telegraph. Morse also developed a code (Morse code) to enable people to communicate their language over the telegraph. The code consists of different combinations of “dots” (a short tone) and “dashes” (a tone three times as long as a “dot” tone.) These are referred to as “dit” and “dah.” A well-known Morse code message is S-O-S, which is made up of the first three letters of the phrase Save Our Ship!

MORSE CODE

A . _	B _ . . .	C _ . . .	D _ . .	E .	F
G _ . . .	H	I . .	J	K _ . .	L
M _ _	N _ .	O _ _ _	P	Q _ . . .	R . . .
S . . .	T _	U . . .	V	W . . .	X _ . . .
Y _ . . .	Z _	Morse code for the letter ‘S’ is three dots (...) and the letter ‘O’ is three dashes (- - -). So, in Morse code, ‘S-O-S’ is “dot-dot-dot / dash-dash.-dash / dot-dot-dot” (... / - - - / ...).			

PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

1) ONE-PERSON PLAY

Goal: To explore how writing and drama can deepen understanding of an event.

Explanation: In this activity, students will develop the outline of a one-person play inspired by a real event.

Activity:

1. Divide the class into pairs.
2. Provide the class with copies of current newspapers or books about a historical event.
3. Invite students to pick a story that interests them and to develop the outline of a one-person play inspired by that event.
4. Provide them with the following prompts:
 - What incident in the news makes you ask questions?
 - What happens in your play? What is the story?
 - Where does the story take place?
 - Who is telling the story?
 - How does the story begin? Is there a pivotal event? How does it end?
 - What would the person telling the story want the audience to know?
5. Have students write down an outline for their play and then share with another group.

Follow-up Questions:

1. Why were you drawn to the story you chose?
2. Who did you choose to have tell the story in your one person play? Why?
3. What was challenging about this exercise?
4. How do you feel developing a play from a character's perspective helped you to understand the historical event?
5. Why do you think Deborah Jean Templin decided to write a one person play about the women of the *Titanic*?

2) WONDERS OF TECHNOLOGY: BEFORE AND AFTER

Goal: To explore human beings' relationship with new and evolving technologies.

Explanation: The sinking of the *Titanic* struck a deep blow to people's belief in the power of technology. The unsinkable ship was, in fact, sinkable. In this activity, students will write a two-part monologue about a new "wonder of technology" covering both its rise and its fall.

Activity:

1. Provide students with the following scenario.

A "wonder of technology" has just been introduced to the world. The new product will make life easier. People will begin to depend upon this advance in technology and eventually, many will not believe how they ever managed without this fantastic invention. Life is wonderful! Time passes. By now, everyone uses this invention. Suddenly, something goes wrong with this "wonder of technology" and it is gone. People are faced with doing things the old way.
2. Ask students to write a two-part monologue describing the **BEFORE** and **AFTER** of the scenario presented above.
3. In part one, **BEFORE**, they are very excited about the new invention, are telling all of their friends about how wonderful it is, and are thrilled about what this product will do for them and everyone they know.
4. In part two, **AFTER**, the "wonder of technology" is gone. They are now talking to their friends about how it has effected them and everyone else in society.
5. In order to develop strong monologues, remind students to pick a specific time and place, character, and technology. The more specific the better.

Follow-up Questions:

1. What are the advantages of new technologies? What are the disadvantages?
2. Can you think of examples of when people were surprised when a new technology did not work as planned?

PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

3) ENTRANCE TO THE LIFEBOATS

Goal: To understand the criteria used to select the people who were permitted into lifeboats on the *Titanic*.

Explanation: In this activity, students will role-play a scenario in which the *Titanic* stewards and stewardesses must decide who would gain entrance to the lifeboats.

Activity:

1. Explain to students that they will be taking the roles of people on the *Titanic* in the hours before it sinks.

This is what they are experiencing:

You thought the Titanic was unsinkable, but the ship has struck an iceberg and is sinking. There are only 20 lifeboats. More than 60 lifeboats would be required for everyone on the Titanic to have a place. Chaos reigns and decisions must be made as to who shall be permitted into the lifeboats. Some people are very calm and others panic.

2. Assign or allow students to select from the following roles:

- A pregnant woman
- The wealthiest man in America
- A poor female immigrant
- A wealthy family
- A female music hall performer
- A ship's stewardess/steward (grants entrance into the life boats)
- A young engaged woman
- Fourteen year old crew members
- Designer of the ship
- A popular minister
- A stowaway male immigrant

3. At the front of the room, set up chairs for only one third of the members of the class.

4. Give the stewardess(es) and steward(s) the job of deciding who to permit into the lifeboats. Allow each person to briefly make their case about why they should be allowed in the lifeboats. Students may also choose to give up their spot for another passenger.

Follow-up questions:

1. What criteria were used to select the people who were permitted into the lifeboats?
2. How do the choices made during the role-playing compare to the choices made in 1912?
3. What was challenging about this activity?

TIP

Depending on the age of your students, this activity may be upsetting for students not permitted into the lifeboats. Remember to reassure students that this is only an exercise to help them understand the difficult situation and decisions that had to be made on the *Titanic*.

VARIATIONS

1. Have students write a newspaper article about the sinking of the *Titanic*.
2. Have students write a letter in the voice of their assigned or selected character to a family member dated April 17, 1912 (two days after *Titanic*'s sinking).

4) GEOGRAPHY— MAIDEN VOYAGE MAP

Goal: To use maps to understand the *Titanic*'s transatlantic voyage

Explanation: In this activity, students will create a map that represents *Titanic*'s voyage.

Activity:

1. Invite students to create a map of the voyage of the *Titanic*. Include the following:
 - The place in Northern Ireland where it was built
 - The dock in England where the voyage began
 - Her stopovers in Ireland and France
 - Her expected port of arrival in New York City

Extension:

1. Have students create a map that shows how the sinking of the *Titanic* affected people all over the world. See page 10 on the many different countries represented by *Titanic*'s passengers and crew.

POST-SHOW ASSESSMENT AND DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Motivation

1. Each one of the characters in *Unsinkable Women* was affected by the sinking of the *Titanic*. How did the experience motivate each of the characters? What did it inspire each of them to do?
2. What are some motivations that you have every day? Occasionally?
3. Think of an event that you experienced. It could have been a happy or sad event. The event could be big or small. Big events have obvious effects on all of us, but little events (such as a simple act of kindness) can change us too. How has your experience motivated you since it happened? What have you done differently since that experience?

World-Changing Events

1. The *Titanic* tragedy made people re-think their perceptions about humankind's abilities. Can you think of other major events in history that have made people stop and re-think what they thought they knew? What effect did that event have on changing the future?

Gender Roles

1. All of the characters in *Unsinkable Women* were women. What was life like for women in the early 20th Century? What did the characters do or say that led you to this conclusion?
2. Were the expectations different for the women depending on their class? If so, how?
3. How have women's roles changed since the early 20th Century?

Music

1. Music played an important role in the *Titanic* era. What songs do you remember from the performance? What do they reveal about beliefs of the early 20th Century?
2. What songs do you know by heart? Why are they important to you? What makes a song good? What makes a song great?

POST-SHOW ASSESSMENTS

1) Survivor Predictions

Goal: To further understand that class, gender, age, and other cultural factors affected who survived the *Titanic*.

Explanation: In this activity, students will predict who was most likely to survive the *Titanic*. They will then compare their predictions with the survivor statistics.

Activity:

1. Ask students to predict who they believe would be most likely to survive the *Titanic*. Have them take into account the following qualities of such people: gender, age, economic status, passenger, crewmembers.
2. Using the information on page 12, have students test their predictions. You may choose to use the worksheet on page 21 to help students organize their work.
3. Filling in the worksheet, have students figure out what percentage of first class passengers survived, second class, third class, and crew.
4. Next, ask students to break these percentages down further by the categories of men, women, and children.

Follow-Up Questions:

1. Based on your results, what type of person was most likely to survive? The least?
2. Did any of your results surprise you? How?
3. Why were certain types of people most likely to survive? (In addition to economic status, encourage students to consider additional barriers that may have impeded third class passengers' abilities to survive. For example, many immigrants did not speak English and may not have understood the crew's evacuation directions.)

POST-SHOW ASSESSMENT AND DISCUSSION

2) THE WITNESS CHAIR

Goal: To develop a deeper understanding of the lives, experiences, and viewpoints of the people of the *Titanic* through research and drama.

Explanation: Students were introduced to seven characters in *Unsinkable Women*. In this assessment activity, students will bring the people of the *Titanic* to life.

Activity:

1. Ask students to choose a character from the play or the history of the sinking of the *Titanic* that they would like to portray. (You may also choose to assign figures – picking representatives from across passenger classes as well as the crew).
2. Provide students with time to research their historical figure.
3. Arrange chairs in a semi-circle. This will help focus the attention on the character being interviewed.
4. Situate the witness chair at the open end of the semicircle.
5. While in character, each student will take turns sitting in the witness chair and answer questions asked by interviewers (class members).
6. As you facilitate, encourage students to use the words, actions and mannerisms of the character when answering the questions.

Sample Interview Questions:

- How did you prepare for the maiden voyage?
- How did you go about obtaining your ticket or job on board *Titanic*?
- What was the first moment you stepped aboard *Titanic* like?
- What were your living quarters like?
- What did you do while at sea?
- How did you feel or what did you think the moment *Titanic* struck the iceberg?
- What was the evacuation like?
- What did you do when you reached the United States?
- How do you feel about the tragedy after all these years?

Follow-up Questions:

1. What did you notice about each character's point of view?
2. Which points of view were similar?
3. Which points of view were different?

VARIATION

Write a journal or log for a character from *Unsinkable Women* or another historical figure from the *Titanic*. Be sure to write about what happened before, during, and after the *Titanic* voyage (if your character survived.)

3) WRITE A REVIEW

Goal: To write a review of the performance

Explanation: In this activity, students will reflect on the performance by writing their own review.

Activity:

1. Ask students to imagine that they are a critic for the school newspaper. They are going to write a review of *Unsinkable Women* to inform others about what they experienced.
2. In the review they should describe with detail:
 - what they saw
 - what they heard
 - how the performance made them feel
 - what the performance reminded them of
 - what their favorite part was and why
3. Remind students that they must paint a picture of the experience with their words so that others who did not see the performance can imagine it as vividly as possible.

Follow-up Question:

1. What did you include in your review? Why was it important to include?

SURVIVOR PREDICTIONS WORKSHEET

ALL PASSENGERS

	1 st Class	2 nd Class	3 rd Class	Crew	All Passengers
Survivors:					
Total:					
Percentage:					

CHILDREN SURVIVAL RATE

	1 st Class	2 nd Class	3 rd Class	All Children
Survivors:				
Total:				
Percentage:				

FEMALE SURVIVAL RATE

	1 st Class	2 nd Class	3 rd Class	Crew	All Women
Survivors:					
Total:					
Percentage:					

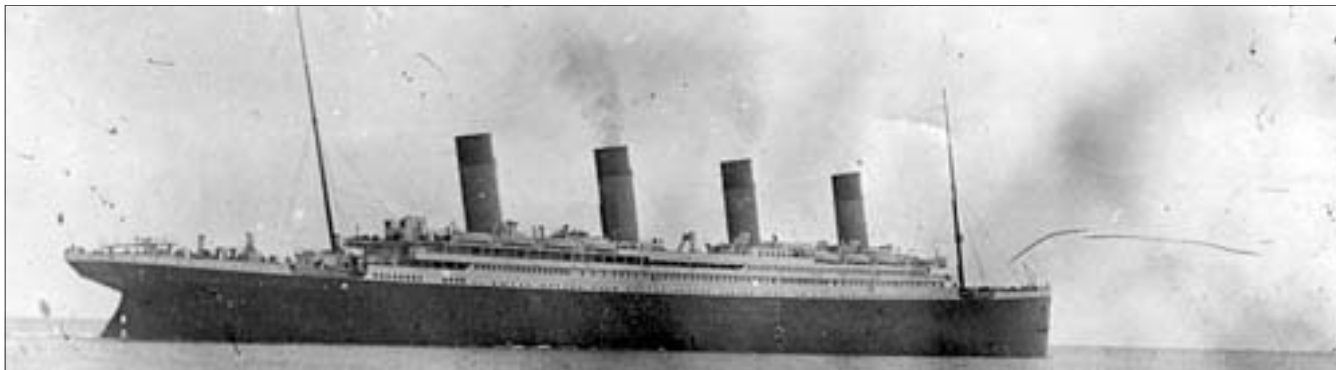
MALE SURVIVAL RATE

	1 st Class	2 nd Class	3 rd Class	Crew	All Men
Survivors:					
Total:					
Percentage:					

TITANIC PASSENGERS LOST AND SAVED

1st Class Passengers	2nd Class Passengers	3rd Class Passengers	Crew Members
Men: 115 Lost, 58 Saved Women: 5 Lost, 139 Saved Children: 1 Lost, 4 Saved	Men: 147 Lost, 13 Saved Women: 15 Lost, 78 Saved Children: 0 Lost, 24 Saved	Men: 399 Lost, 55 Saved Women: 81 Lost, 98 Saved Children: 53 Lost, 23 Saved	Men: 686 Lost, 189 Saved Women: 2 Lost, 21 Saved

RESOURCES AND SOURCES



TITANIC BOOKS

Polar the Titanic Bear by Daisy Corning Stone Spedden
(Recommended for elementary)

On Board the Titanic: What it was Like when the Great Liner Sank by Shelley Tanaka
(Recommended for grades 3-5)

Exploring the Titanic: How the Greatest Ship Ever Lost Was Found by Robert D. Ballard
(Recommended for grades 4-8)

Heroine of the Titanic: The Real Unsinkable Molly Brown by Elaine Landau (Recommended for grades 5-8)

S.O.S. Titanic by Eve Bunting
(Recommended for grades 6-9)

Titanic: An Illustrated History by Donald Lynch and Ken Marschall
(Recommended for middle and high school)

A Night to Remember by Walter Lord (Recommended for high school)

Molly Brown: Unraveling the Myth by Kristen Iversen
(Recommended for high school)

Titanic: Destination Disaster by John P. Eaton and Charles A. Haas (Recommended for high school)

CLASSROOM RESOURCES

"Expedition Titanic | Return to the Deep." www.expeditiontitanic.com/
Interactive exploration of the ocean floor wreckage.

"Return to Titanic." National Geographic Explorer! Classroom Magazine.
<http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngexplorer/0411/articles/mainarticle.html>
Overview of Titanic's journey.

"Titanic Interactive" History.com.
<http://www.history.com/interactives/titanic-interactive>
Interactive maps, photos, and games on the construction, disaster and aftermath of the Titanic.

"TitanicPhotographs.com: A Collection of Images Taken by Father Frank Browne." <http://www.titanicphotographs.com/index.asp>
Contains images taken by Father Frank Brown aboard the Titanic, which are the only existing images taken aboard the ship during its passage from Southampton to Ireland.

STUDY GUIDE SOURCES

Bellis, Mary. "20th Century—the technology, science, and inventions."
<http://inventors.about.com/od/timelines/a/twentieth.htm>

"Titanic" History.com. <http://www.history.com/topics/titanic>

Titanic & Nautical Resource Center.
<http://www.titanic-nautical.com/titanic-facts.html>

"TitanicPhotographs.com: A Collection of Images Taken by Father Frank Browne." <http://www.titanicphotographs.com/index.asp>

"Titanic Timeline." <http://www.theteachersguide.com/Titanictimeline.html>

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"Vaudeville." American Masters. PBS.
<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/episodes/vaudeville/about-vaudeville/721/>