**Titantic**

Imagine yourself in the year 1912. You have heard of this majestic cruiseliner called the *Titanic*, and you knew right away that you had to get a ticket to go on this ship! Sure, there had been other cruise ships, but they all paled in comparison to the *Titanic*. Going from Southampton in England all across the ocean to New York sounded like a fantastic voyage. It was basically the Ritz hotel on water! It had a huge swimming pool, a gym, a squash court, a Turkish bath, a massage room, and so many more amenities. There was even a restaurant run by famous Italian chef Gaspare Gatti. First class rooms made you feel like a millionaire, second class rooms did much the same, and even the third class, or steerage, rooms were lavish and felt like they could have been the first class rooms on other ships. It was a ship designed for both families and singles, having something for everyone to do and enjoy themselves. Any person who was lucky enough to get a ticket for the *Titanic*’s maiden voyage would be talking about it for the rest of their lives. It would be an adventure they would never forget. For some, it ended up being an adventure they wished that they could forget.

Construction of the *Titanic* began in March of 1909 and was completed on April 2nd, 1912. Eight days later and the ship left on its maiden voyage. For the time, the ship was the biggest cruise ship ever constructed at just over 880 feet, equivalent to approximately two and a half football fields. The *Symphony of the Seas*, a new cruise ship in 2018, is set to be 1188 feet long. So in over 100 years, the size has not increased that dramatically, showing the absolute technological achievement that the *Titanic* was. The ship was powered by three engines: two steam engines and one turbine, each of which propelling a propeller. The ship’s engines pumped out a combined whopping 46,000 horsepower. In the event of an emergency, the ship’s doors will seal and become watertight. The ship also had a cargo hold for mail, both large and small, and had a painting that was worth $100,000 or approximately $2.4 million in today’s currency onboard. One area where the ship was lacking however, was in the lifeboat section. The *Titanic* had 20 lifeboats of varying sizes, which were only enough for 1/3 of the boat’s possible occupants. While this sounds terrible, it was actually more lifeboats than was legally required of ships at the time. Lifeboats were actually intended to be used as transport from a sinking ship to a rescuing ship, not to save a whole ship on just the lifeboats.

The ship had three different ticket classes: the first class, the second class, and the third class. First class were the elites, such as doctors, lawyers, and business owners. Those first class tickets would cost upwards of £870, or £78,000 by today’s standards. The second class would include writers, historians, and others of those ilk. Those tickets would cost up to £23, or £2100 today. The third class consisted of those that were the labourers and basic workers who could still afford tickets. Third class tickets would cost £7, or £600 today. The ship could handle 833 first class passengers, 614 second class, and 1006 third class passengers, as well as a crew of 900, for a total capacity of 3547.

 The *Titanic* launched off on April 10th and its journey ended four days later on April 14th. The ship was not full, as it was at about 1/2 of its capacity, with 324 first class passengers, 284 second class, and 709 third class passengers. 66% of the passengers were male and 34% were female. The *Titanic* did however have a full cast of crew with it, having 886 crew members, with 97% of the crew being male. The *Titanic*’s journey ended earlier than expected, just off the coast of Newfoundland. The *Titanic* had received warnings from other ships in the area of drifting ice, so they were aware of the risks. They were not too worried though, as dealing with ice was a normal occurrence for ships, near misses with ice were common. In the middle of the night, at 11:40pm on April 14th, a lookout spotted an iceberg and warned the captain. The crew steered the ship away from the iceberg, but it was too little, too late. The starboard, or right side, of the *Titanic* struck the iceberg, opening up many gaping holes below the water line. Five of the watertight compartments became sealed off due to flooding, and that spelled the end for the ship, as it could only handle four being sealed off. The boat began to sink front first. Those on board the ship had no idea what to do, as the crew were ill-trained and many passengers were panicking. The captain sent out distress signals to other ships nearby, but none would be able to reach the *Titanic* in time. There was only enough space on the lifeboats for 1/3 of the people on board. Swimming was not an option because the water was so cold that being in it for any length of time would cause severe hypothermia and a quick death within 15 to 30 minutes. Those on board had to decide what to do in this dire situation.

Our job in class today will be to determine what we would do if we were put into that terrible situation. One person will be the captain, and the final decision will be left up to them. However, there will be four other groups working out what to do: first class passengers, second class passengers, third class passengers, and the crew. Each group will be coming together and trying to decide amongst themselves what they feel should be done. Some of you may know what actually happened and who was saved, or attempted to be, but for this activity, suspend that knowledge and pretend you are in this crisis with panic all around trying to make a tough choice. Each group after lots of discussion will present their ideas to the captain. The captain will make their choice based off of what they heard and off of their own opinions.