



Titanic

Scenario

When something tragic happens people are often quick to guess at the cause. This can be very dangerous. If we are to protect ourselves from further harm we must be very certain of the cause. It is vital that we are skilled at causal explanation. In 1912 Captain Smith was on the bridge of the largest man made moving object on the planet. The R.M.S. Titanic was near the leading edge of technological development and was thought to be virtually unsinkable. We all know it hit an iceberg and sank, but knowing what happened will not protect us from another disaster. Knowing why it happened is the key. Using skilful causal explanation and the original documents from 1912 can you work out why the Titanic hit the iceberg?



Exploratory Environment

Dear Parents

We are about to start a new social science Quest called 'Titanic.' This problem-based learning unit of work has been developed here at Birkdale Intermediate with the assistance of Dr Robert Swartz, Director of the National Centre for the Teaching of Thinking, Boston. Our students work in pairs to answer the question posed in the scenario.

They search a multimedia resource called a Quest, read the original documents and look at photographs from 1912. Most of the documents are reproductions in facsimile from the Public Records Office in London. The Quest is used to teach the Environments section of the National Social Science Curriculum. Our students look in depth at 'events have causes and effects.'

The students are being asked to investigate why the Titanic hit an iceberg.

Ways in which you could support your child during this study:

- Visit your local library for books on the 'Titanic.'
- Call into our library before or after school and have your child show you the interesting 'Titanic' memorabilia in our glass display case.
- Watch a 'Titanic' movie:

'Titanic' (1997) starring Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio.

'Titanic' (1996) starring Catherine Zeta- Jones.

'The Unsinkable Molly Brown' (1964) starring Debbie Reynolds.

'A Night to Remember' (1958) - starring David McCallum.

WARNING - please check the rating if your children are also viewing the movie as many are rated M. It's a good idea to check out the 'myths' surrounding the Titanic at <http://www.titanichistoricalsociety.org/articles/titanicmyths.asp> as Hollywood usually puts a good story above historical accuracy.

- Check the TV Guides for 'Titanic' programmes on the 'Discovery,' 'National Geographic' or 'History' Channels.
- Search the Internet, there are a number of good sites.

<http://www.titanic.com/>
<http://www.titanichistoricalsociety.org/index.asp>
<http://www.titanic-model.com/>
<http://www.encyclopedia-titanica.org/>
<http://www.titanicbranson.com/>

- Check the 'Ports of Auckland' web site at <http://www.poa.co.nz/cruises/cruises.htm> for the arrival and departure times of the large cruise ships that visit our city from time to time. A family visit to see one and compare it to the size of the Titanic would make an interesting outing.



Our Flag Design

Quest Awards and Presentations



Online Learning Award

Recognizing creative teachers for their pioneering use of telecommunication networks to provide innovative learning opportunities for school-age students.



Presented at the National Education Computing Conference, New Orleans, United States of America.



Presenting at the 13th International Conference on Thinking June 2007, Norrkoping, Sweden.



Presented at the National Centre for Teaching Thinking's Summer Institute held at Tufts University, Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America.

Yours sincerely

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Principal