

Deepening Understanding
YR 6 Historical Fiction
The Titanic by Vicky Birch



The noise was something I will never forget. That unearthly screech will ring in my ears forevermore. It was then that I instantly became aware - something awful was happening.

Instantaneously, Jasper and I frantically jumped out of bed, flung on our dressing gowns and dashed outside onto the terrace to see what all the commotion was about. The sight we were greeted with was mesmerising; there before us towered a gloriously giant iceberg, crisp and glimmering in the moonlight. I know it seems bizarre but to this day I still consider that to be the most magnificent sight I've ever seen. Time seemed to stand still as the astonishing ice-kingdom glided by, almost serenely, and there was a calm air of tranquillity as if nothing had happened.

As I stared in awe - captivated by the icy white glow before me - I was suddenly brought back to reality upon noticing the deafening cries and screams of others on board. I leant over the railing to get a better look, desperately trying to decipher the bellows and caterwauls from nearby passengers.

"IT'S HIT!" cried the child in the room next to us, as his mother cradled him in her arms willing him to remain calm.

Could it be true, I wondered? Could that ghastly noise really have been an iceberg slicing along the side of our boat? It seemed like such an absurd suggestion. This was The Titanic after all - the unsinkable ship! Catastrophically, it was true...this nightmare was a reality.

We frantically foraged around the upper deck, searching almost to the point of exhaustion in an attempt to try and locate a lifeboat...but we stood no chance: we were too late. Looking down at Jasper's despondent face, which appeared as if he had already resigned himself to his fate, I realised I had to remain strong for him. I wouldn't let him see that I was full of dread. It was in that instant that I made the decision to jump. Although it sounds ridiculous, it was as if I just knew it was the right thing to do. I grabbed Jasper's hand. It was only when he winced that I realised how tightly I was clutching onto him in my total state of panic.

"This is it," I whispered as I stared directly into his teary, terrified eyes. "It's our only hope." Jasper drew a deep breath and nodded as he reluctantly crept towards the edge of the ship. "I can't Jenny, I just can't!" he exclaimed as he turned and reached for the railing. His tiny hands clutched onto the sides of the railing whilst he fought with all his strength, desperate not to let even a finger slip and loosen his grip around the metal. However, now was no time for hesitation: we had to jump. "Three..." Our toes hung over the edge. "Two..." My heartbeat vaulted in my chest. "One..." A sudden intake of breath. "JUMP!"

Down and down we fell, for what seemed like an eternity, before we crashed into the ice-cold water below us.

To those far off in the distance, our boat must have looked miniscule and insignificant, slowly slipping away into the depths



of the abyss but in reality there was no greater scene than this. Not that it was likely there was anyone in the distance. Amidst the chaos, I'd overheard a crew member saying that the nearest lifeboats were a deplorable four hours away. I wondered if they'd even be able to see us, let alone find us before it was too late...

Back in the water, pandemonium surrounded us as passengers hysterically thrashed around, everyone urgently trying to save themselves. I had never been a religious person, yet somehow in that moment the idea of an omnipotent God seemed so comforting when faced with such peril. I glanced up at the ship, which now towered menacingly above us; its bow rose into the air with the same majesty as the ice-kingdom that had so tragically brought about its doom. As water had poured inside the perforated steel hull, it became too great of a force for the ship to compete with. With a thunderous crescendo the bow raised up, before plummeting itself into the water sucking under anything within its immediate radius. The ship was gone.

All too soon, the once resounding cries from those in the water were no more. In contrast, a painful absence of sound swept across the water.

I had almost given up hope as we had been floating in the painfully cold water for hours. I could no longer feel any part of my body and I could see that my hair was beginning to freeze and turn to ice. I felt dizzy and euphoric - a strange, bewildering sensation - but I suppose in the midst of all the chaos my mind took me somewhere where I felt happy. All of a sudden, far away in the distance, I saw a flash of light scanning across the water. "We're coming for you! Is there anyone alive?" echoed the eight most reassuring words I had ever heard. Yes, I thought. Yes... We are alive and we are going to be saved.

