

Formal Speech Format

Topic: The Titanic

General Purpose: To Inform

Specific Purpose: To inform my audience about one of the most famous tragedies in history, the Titanic.

Thesis: From the disaster to the movie, the sinking of the Titanic remains one of the most famous tragedies in history.

I. Introduction

- A. Attention Getter: An American writer named Morgan Robertson once wrote a book called *The Wreck of the Titan*. The book was about an “unsinkable” ship called the Titan that set sail from England to New York with many rich and famous passengers on board. On its journey, the Titan hit an iceberg in the North Atlantic and sunk. Many lives were lost because there were not enough lifeboats. So, what is so strange about this? Well, *The Wreck of the Titan* was written 14 years before the Titanic sank.
- B. Reason to Listen: The sinking of the Titanic was one of the largest non-war related disasters in history, and it is important to be knowledgeable about the past.
- C. Thesis Statement: From the disaster to the movie, the sinking of the Titanic remains one of the most famous tragedies in history.
- D. Credibility Statement:
1. I have been fascinated by the history of the Titanic for as long as I can remember.
 2. I have read and studied my collection of books about the Titanic many times, and have done research on the Internet.
- E. Preview of Main Points:
1. First, I will discuss the Titanic itself.

2. Second, I will discuss the sinking of the ship.
 3. Finally, I will discuss the movie that was made about the Titanic.
- II. From the disaster to the movie, the sinking of the Titanic remains one of the most famous tragedies in history.
- A. The Titanic was thought to be the largest, safest, most luxurious ship ever built.
1. At the time of her launch, she was the biggest existing ship and the largest moveable object ever built.
 - a. According to Geoff Tibbals, in his 1997 book *The Titanic: The extraordinary story of the “unsinkable” ship*, the Titanic was 882 feet long and weighed about 46,000 tons.
 - b. This was 100 feet longer and 15,000 tons heavier than the world’s current largest ships.
 - c. Thresh stated in *Titanic: The truth behind the disaster*, published in 1992 that the Titanic accommodated around 2,345 passengers and 860 crew-members.
 2. The beautiful accommodations of the Titanic were decorated and furnished with only the finest items.
 - a. According to a quotation from *Shipbuilders* magazine that is included in Peter Thresh’s 1992 book *Titanic*, “Everything has been done in regard to the furniture and fittings to make the first class accommodation more than equal to that provided in the finest hotels on shore” (p. 18).
 - b. Fine parlor suites located on the ship consisted of a sitting room, two bedrooms, two wardrobe rooms, a private bath, and a lavatory.
 - c. The first class dining room was the largest on any liner; it could serve 500 passengers at one sitting.
 - d. Other first class accommodations included a squash court, swimming pool, library, barber’s shop, Turkish baths, and a photographer’s dark room.
 3. The Titanic was widely believed to be the safest ship ever built.

- a. Tibbals, as previously cited, described the Titanic as having an outer layer that shielded an inner layer – a ‘double bottom’ – that was created to keep water out of the ship if the outer layer was pierced.
- b. The bottom of the ship was divided into 16 watertight compartments equipped with automatic watertight doors.
- c. The doors could be closed immediately if water were to enter into the compartments.
- d. Because of these safety features, the Titanic was deemed unsinkable.

Transition: Now that I’ve discussed the Titanic itself, I will now discuss the tragedy that occurred on its maiden voyage.

- B. The Titanic hit disaster head-on when it ran into an iceberg four days after its departure.
 1. The beginning of the maiden voyage was mostly uneventful.
 - a. Tibbals (1997) stated that the ship departed from Queenstown in Ireland at 1:30 pm on April 10th, 1912, destined for New York.
 - b. The weather was perfect for sailing – there was blue sky, light winds, and a calm ocean.
 - d. According to Walter Lord in *A Night to Remember* from 1955, the Atlantic Ocean was like polished plate glass on the night of April 14.
 2. The journey took a horrible turn when the ship struck an iceberg and began to sink.
 - a. In the book *Titanic: An illustrated history* from 1992, Lynch explains that the collision occurred at 11:40 pm on Sunday, April 14.
 - b. According to Robert Ballard’s 1988 book *Exploring the Titanic*, the largest part of the iceberg was under water.
 - c. Some of the ship’s watertight compartments had been punctured and the first five compartments rapidly filled with water.

- d. Tibbals (1997) wrote that distress rockets were fired and distress signals were sent out, but there were no ships close enough to arrive in time.
3. As the ship went down, some were rescued but the majority of passengers had no place to go.
 - a. Thresh (1992) stated that there were only 20 lifeboats on the ship.
 - b. This was only enough for about half of the 2,200 people that were on board.
 - c. The lifeboats were filled quickly with women and children loaded first.
 4. The ship eventually disappeared from sight.
 - a. Tibbals (1997) explains that at 2:20 am on Monday, the ship broke in half and slowly slipped under the water.
 - b. At 4:10 am, the Carpathia answered Titanic's distress call and arrived to rescue those floating in the lifeboats.
 - c. Lynch (1992) reported that in the end, 1,522 lives were lost.

Transition: Now that we have learned about the history of the Titanic, I will discuss the movie that was made about it.

- C. A movie depicting the Titanic and a group of fictional characters was made.
 1. The movie was written, produced, and directed by James Cameron.
 - a. According to Marsh in *James Cameron's Titanic* from 1997, Cameron set out to write a film that would bring the event of the Titanic to life.
 - b. Cameron conducted six months of research to compile a highly detailed time line so that the film would be realistic.
 - c. Cameron spent more time on the Titanic than the ships' original passengers because he made 12 trips to the wreck site that lasted between ten and twelve hours each.
 2. Making *Titanic* was extremely expensive and involved much hard work.
 - a. According to a 1998 article from the *Historical Journal of Films*,

Radio, and Television, Kramer stated that the film had a 250 million dollar budget.

- b. A full-sized replica of the ship was constructed in Baja California, Mexico in a 17 million gallon oceanfront tank.
 - c. Cameron assembled an expedition to dive to the wreck on the ocean floor to film footage that was later used in the opening scenes of the movie.
 - d. Marsh (1997) further explained that the smallest details were attended to, including imprinting the thousands of pieces china, crystal, and silver cutlery used in the dining room scenes with White Star's emblem and pattern.
3. The movie was extremely successful.
- a. Kramer (1998) reported that *Titanic* made approximately 600 million dollars in the United States, making it the #1 movie of all time.
 - b. It made approximately 1.8 billion dollars world-wide and is also the #1 movie of all time world-wide.
 - c. *Titanic* was nominated for a record eight Golden Globe Awards only a few weeks after its release, and won four.
 - d. It was also nominated for a record fourteen Academy Awards, and it won eleven.

III. Conclusion

A. Review of Main Points:

1. Today I first discussed the Titanic itself.
2. Second, I discussed the sinking of the ship.
3. Finally, I discussed the movie that was made about the Titanic.

B. Restate Thesis: From the disaster to the movie, the sinking of the Titanic remains one of the most famous tragedies in history.

C. Closure: In conclusion, remember *The Wreck of the Titan*, the story written fourteen years before the Titanic sank. It now seems as if it was an eerie prophecy, or a case of life

imitating art. Whatever the case, the loss of lives on the Titanic was tremendous, and it is something that should never be forgotten.

References

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