

It was like the Titanic!

A luxury winter cruise in the Mediterranean turned into a horrific **scramble** for survival for 4,000 people as the giant 114,500-tonne ocean liner *Costa Concordia* hit rocks off the coast of Italy on Friday evening. Survivors said, "It was like the *Titanic*".

The drama began when the cruise ship hit some rocks, which **tore a 300ft gash along the lower side of it**. The cruise ship was near the tiny Tuscan island of Giglio, off the west coast of Italy, north of Rome.

Holidaymakers, who were enjoying the last day of their vacation, suddenly faced the horrifying **ordeal** of abandoning ship. Panic soon **spread** as they realised how serious the situation on board actually was. The ship soon **lurched to starboard** throwing passengers all over the place. There were desperate scenes on board as people fought to survive. The ship soon **flipped** on its side half submerged in the sea.

Many stories are now emerging of the drama. At first passengers were told it was an electrical fault. Passengers rapidly realised it wasn't. The crew gave conflicting orders, telling some passengers that everything was alright and to return to their cabins.

Some lifeboats were not launched for 45 minutes, by which time the ship was **listing** so severely it was impossible to launch them. People were scrambling to get in them. Chaos ruled as the lifeboats eventually managed to get away, some being lowered too quickly, **striking** passengers and other lifeboats already in the water.

Local boats went to the rescue. Many survivors told how the chaos **resembled** a scene from the 1997 film *Titanic*, as men and women dressed in elegant evening dress clambered in dark corridors clinging to walls as they tried to make their way to the ship's outer deck. People were **slammed** against walls. Once they reached the outer decks they put on their lifejackets. Passengers complained there was no instruction on how to evacuate the ship.

So far three people are known to have died after diving into the chilly waters of the Tyrrhenian Sea. Another three were critically ill. Today it was reported another three have been miraculously rescued. This included a South Korean couple on their honeymoon! Another 40 are still missing. Divers continue to look for survivors. The Captain has been arrested on the suspicion of multiple homicides.

GAP FILL: READING:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

It was like the Titanic!
A luxury winter cruise in the Mediterranean turned into a (1)_____scramble for survival for 4,000 people as the giant 114,500-tonne ocean liner *Costa Concordia* hit (2)_____off the coast of Italy on Friday evening. (3)_____said, "It was like the *Titanic*". The (4) _____ began when the cruise ship hit some rocks, which tore a 300ft gash along the lower side of it. The cruise ship was near the tiny Tuscan island of Giglio, off the west coast of Italy, north of Rome. Holidaymakers, who were enjoying the last day of their (5)_____, suddenly faced the horrifying ordeal of abandoning ship. Panic soon spread as they realised how (6)_____ the situation on board actually was. The ship soon lurched to (7)_____throwing passengers all over the place. There were desperate scenes on board as people fought to survive. The ship soon flipped on its side half (8)_____in the sea.

serious

drama

starboard

rocks

submerged

vacation

survivors

horrific

Many stories are now emerging of the drama. At first passengers were told it was an electrical fault. Passengers (1)_____realised it wasn't. The crew gave conflicting orders, telling some passengers that everything was alright and to return to their (2)_____. Some lifeboats were not launched for 45 minutes, by which time the ship was listing so severely it was impossible to (3)_____ them. People were scrambling to get in them. (4)_____ ruled as the lifeboats eventually managed to get away, some being lowered too quickly, striking passengers and other lifeboats already in the water. Local boats went to the rescue. Many survivors told how the chaos resembled a scene from the 1997 film *Titanic*, as men and women dressed in elegant evening dress (5)_____in dark corridors (6)_____to walls as they tried to make their way to the ship's outer deck. People were (7)_____ against walls. Once they reached the outer decks they put on their (8)_____. Passengers complained there was no instruction on how to evacuate the ship.

Cabins

slammed

chaos

clinging

rapidly

launch

lifejackets

clambered

GAP FILL: LISTENING

Listen to your teacher reading and fill in the spaces.

It was like the Titanic!

A _____ in the Mediterranean turned into a horrific scramble for survival for 4,000 people as the giant 114,500-tonne ocean liner *Costa Concordia* hit rocks off the coast of Italy on Friday evening. Survivors said, "It _____". The drama began when the cruise ship hit some rocks, which tore a 300ft gash _____ of it. The cruise ship was near the tiny Tuscan island of Giglio, off the _____, north of Rome. Holidaymakers, who were enjoying the last day of their vacation, suddenly faced the horrifying ordeal of abandoning ship. _____ they realised how serious the situation on board actually was. The ship soon lurched to Starboard throwing passengers all over the place. There were desperate scenes on board as people fought to survive. The ship soon _____ half submerged in the sea.

Many stories are now _____. At first passengers were told it was an electrical fault. Passengers rapidly realised it wasn't. The crew gave conflicting orders, telling some passengers that everything was alright and to return to their cabins. Some lifeboats were not launched for 45 minutes, by which time the ship was _____ it was impossible to launch them. People were scrambling to get in them. Chaos ruled as the lifeboats _____, some being lowered too quickly, striking passengers and other lifeboats already in the water. Local boats went to the rescue. Many survivors told how the chaos resembled a scene from the 1997 film *Titanic*, as men and women dressed in _____ clambered in dark corridors clinging to walls as they tried to make their way to the ship's outer deck. People were _____. Once they reached the outer decks they put on their lifejackets. Passengers complained there was no instruction on how _____.

GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

It was like the Titanic!

(1) ____ luxury winter cruise in the Mediterranean turned into a horrific scramble (2) ____ survival for 4,000 people as the giant 114,500-tonne ocean liner *Costa Concordia* hit rocks off the coast of Italy on Friday evening. Survivors said, "It was like (3) ____ *Titanic*". The drama began when the cruise ship hit some rocks, which tore a 300ft gash along the lower side of it. The cruise ship was near the tiny Tuscan island of Giglio, off the west coast of Italy, north of Rome. Holidaymakers, (4) ____ were enjoying the last day of their vacation, suddenly faced the horrifying ordeal (5) ____ abandoning ship. Panic soon spread as they realised (6) ____ serious the situation on board actually was. The ship soon lurched to Starboard throwing passengers all over the place. There were desperate scenes on board as people fought to survive. The ship soon flipped on (7) ____ side half submerged (8) ____ the sea.

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Many stories are now emerging of the drama. At first passengers were told it was an electrical fault. Passengers rapidly realised it wasn't. The crew gave conflicting orders, telling some passengers (1) _____ everything was alright and to return to (2) _____ cabins. Some lifeboats were not launched for 45 minutes, by (3) _____ time the ship was listing so severely it was impossible to launch them. People were scrambling to get in them. Chaos ruled as the lifeboats eventually managed to get away, (4) _____ being lowered too quickly, striking passengers and other lifeboats already in the water. Local boats went to the rescue. (5) _____ survivors told how the chaos resembled a scene (6) _____ the 1997 film *Titanic*, as men and women dressed in elegant evening dress clambered in dark corridors clinging to walls as they tried to make their way to the ship's outer deck. People were slammed against walls. Once they reached the outer decks (7) _____ put on their lifejackets. Passengers complained (8) _____ was no instruction on how to evacuate the ship.

they
some
there
that
from
which
their
many

DISCUSSION

1. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
2. What do you think of the disaster?
3. How would you have reacted had you been on board?
4. Have you ever been on a cruise ship?
5. Are you planning on going on holiday on a cruise ship?
6. Are cruise ships safe?
7. What do you think about what you read?
8. Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?
9. Are cruise ships too big?
10. What is the appeal of a cruise ship?
11. Would you want to travel on one of the sister ships of the *Costa Concordia*?
12. Why did the ship stray off course?
13. Surely in this day and age modern technology should have alerted the crew about the rock it hit before it did?
14. Is modern technology to blame for this disaster?
15. Do you think the survivors will be going on any other cruises after this one?
16. Did you like this discussion?