

## 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*!

**serious**

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

**drama**

**starboard**

**rocks**

**submerged**

**vacation**

**survivors**

**horrific**

(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.

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 ships 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.

**how**

**who**

**for**

**the**

**its**

**a**

**in**

**of**

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?