

alive	instruction	power	first sign of trouble
choice	land (v)	reply (v)	freezing cold
contact (v)	miracle	rescue (v)	lose contact
crash (v)	moment	responsible	make a decision
emergency	offer (v)	runway	remain calm
immediately	option	survive	take off (v)
inform	passenger	unable	turn back
instruct			

C Read the article. We know the pilot was the hero, but who worked behind the scenes? What were the difficulties?

EMERGENCY!

On January 15, 2009, air traffic controller* Patrick Harten arrived at work as usual at 12:30 p.m. As part of his job, he was responsible for all the airplanes leaving LaGuardia Airport in New York.

At 3:25 p.m., U.S. Airways Flight 1549 took off and Harten instructed the pilot to climb to 15,000 feet. Soon after, the pilot, Captain Sullenberger, informed Harten that he was in trouble. The plane had hit a flock* of birds and lost power. The pilot needed to return to LaGuardia Airport immediately to make an emergency landing.

As Harten later explained, "When a pilot tells a controller he needs to make an emergency landing, the controller must act quickly" Harten made a quick decision to offer Captain Sullenberger Runway 13, which was the closest runway.

Harten gave the pilot instructions to turn back. He also immediately contacted LaGuardia and told them to prepare for an emergency landing.

Seconds later Captain Sullenberger said, "We're unable." Harten quickly gave the pilot another option: Land on Runway 31. The Captain replied in one tragic word, "Unable."

Harten quickly asked the pilot where he could land safely. The pilot told him that he could not turn back to LaGuardia. He asked if he could land at Teterboro Airport in New Jersey.

Harten immediately contacted the controllers there. The airport workers hurried to prepare Runway 1 for an emergency landing. Harten instructed the pilot to land on Runway 1.

Captain: We can't do it.

Harten: Which runway would you like at Teterboro?

Captain: We're gonna be in the Hudson.

Harten knew that people don't survive landings in the Hudson River. "I believed at that moment, I was going to be the last person to talk to anyone on that plane alive," Harten later said.

Then Harten lost contact with Flight 1549. Only two minutes had passed since the first sign of trouble. Harten was in shock – he was sure the plane had crashed.

The plane crash-landed in the freezing cold water of the Hudson River and started filling with water. But the passengers were able to get out of the plane and stand on the wings. Police and fireboats hurried to the plane and rescued all the passengers. It was a miracle. Everybody was alive.

Harten later described how he felt at the time: "During the emergency itself, I was hyper-focused". I had no choice but to think and act quickly, and remain calm. But when it was over, it hit me hard. Truth was I felt like I'd been hit by a bus."

*air traffic controller / معش الطياران / פקח טיסה
*flock / סבוב / להקה
*hyper-focused / מרוכז למדי / מרוכז



Student's Book, page 16, exercise D1

Get the Facts

Complete the sentences in the flow chart to show what happened to Flight 1549.



2 Complete the sentences in your notebook.

- Harten was responsible for ...
- Harten thought he was going to be the last person to talk to anyone on the plane because ...

3 Choose the two correct answers.

During the emergency, Harten had to ...

- think quickly and remain calm
- tell the pilot to land in the Hudson
- prepare the runway for the emergency landing
- try to find a runway for the plane to land on
- help rescue the passengers

E Solving Problems – We face a lot of different kinds of problems in our lives. To solve a problem, we first try to understand what the problem is and what caused it. Then we think of ways to solve it. Finally, we decide which solution we think is best.

- When did Harten realize that there was a problem?

- How serious was the problem?

- How long did he have to think about it?

- Do you think Harten did a good job? Explain.

- This was an emergency. What's different about solving problems in an emergency?

F Keep Thinking

- Why do you think the writer wrote "as usual" in the first sentence?

- The pilot said: "We're unable", "Unable" and "We can't do it". These are very short sentences. Why do you think the pilot only said a few words?

- Do you think "EMERGENCY!" is a good title for this article? Explain.

- Think of other people who work behind the scenes. Which of them have the power of life and death?
