

TITANIC

READING



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The Titanic

On the night of April 14, 1912, the R.M.S. *Titanic* chugged through the icy waters of the North Atlantic Ocean, its over 2,200 passengers unaware of the looming danger.

Less than a week earlier, the luxury steamship—at the time the largest man-made moving object in the world—left Southampton, England, for New York City. Travelers had expected a posh and comfortable ride. The *Titanic*'s beautifully decorated first-class section featured fine restaurants, a swimming pool, and tennis courts.

But the *Titanic*'s design also had major problems. Many of the bolts that held the ship together were weak. The bottom of the boat was also not built to withstand major flooding. And the steamship carried just 20 lifeboats—only enough to hold about half of the passengers.

Four days after setting sail, the *Titanic* struck an iceberg that tore a 300-foot hole into the ship's hull. As it flooded, riders began an evacuation into the lifeboats. Only about 700 survived. The ship, which took three years to build, would sink in less than three hours. Though scientists and historians believe that the design problems were the major factors that caused the disaster, they continue to study the famous ship for answers.



1. Where was the *Titanic* going?

2. How many lifeboats were there onboard?

3. How many people survived?

4. What made a 300 foot hole in the ship?

5. Why wasn't The *Titanic* designed very well?