

# Spirit of the Titanic

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### Teaching Guide

By Peter Heaney

#### RATIONALE & THEMES

The disaster which overtook *Titanic* is as compelling today as it was in April 1912 when she sank, just four days into her maiden voyage across the Atlantic.

It is a tragic story which reflects every aspect of human emotion: from pride, arrogance and prejudice to courage and selflessness.

The story follows Samuel Scott, an invisible observer with access to every place, every thing and every emotion on *Titanic* as he witnesses events from the hubris of her launch and 1<sup>st</sup> class elegance to the nemesis of her sinking and the loss of life during that Atlantic night.

The story is rich with the potential for contemporary resonances, reflecting and exploring human reactions in the face of disaster, as the characters encounter discrimination and challenge their fears in the final hours of the ship.

The themes include:

- Prejudice
- Bereavement & death
- Discrimination
- Courage
- Despair
- Friendship
- Honour & duty
- Hope

#### SUMMARY

April 4<sup>th</sup> 1910 was a day of paradoxes for young Samuel Scott. Samuel worked on a riveting squad at Harland & Wolff's shipyard helping to build the *Titanic* and it was on this day that he died in an accidental fall from a gantry. However it was also on this day that he began his existence as a spirit, wandering the decks of the great ship

One of the benefits for Samuel in his new

state of existence is the unobtrusive access that it affords him to every aspect and area of the ship. He experiences life across the full spectrum of the strictly stratified social order: from the straightened reserve of 1<sup>st</sup> class to the boisterous inhibition of 3<sup>rd</sup> class.

He is able to empathise with and understand the countless daily anxieties and characteristics of the people on board and their interactions with other passengers as their thoughts are revealed to him as speech.

His observations and experiences during the brief voyage reveal *Titanic* as a microcosm of the contemporary society and his growing sense of foreboding is confirmed in the collision with the iceberg.

With the ship doomed and efforts to secure a rescue frustrated, Samuel's role of passive observer changes dramatically when he decides to assist one young family escape from the trapped 3<sup>rd</sup> class enclosure to a rescue on the last lifeboat launched.

As the inevitability of the final hours of the ship unfolds, the chaos of the sinking mutes to silence in the icy grip of the Atlantic and as dawn breaks, Samuel discovers another transition awaits him.

Together with the 1500 passengers who were lost in the sinking he moves now to another level of existence where all his longings diffuse with the rising sun and he is reunited with the family and friends that he thought were lost forever.

#### APPROACH

To complement the story, this guide has divided the narrative into three sections reflecting the development of the core issues and events leading up to the disaster.

The story deals sensitively with the issues of loss and bereavement, offering the children a varied opportunity to empathise with both the actions and emotions of the characters and how they attempt to deal with these in the face of an overwhelming catastrophe.

The activities offer scope for developing literacy as well as SPHE skills and will suit group or whole class participation particularly.

### Unit 1: Hubris

#### The Mighty Titanic

(pp1-86)

#### SUMMARY

Samuel Scott works in a riveting gang on the *Titanic*. The work was demanding and dangerous and Samuel daydreams of sailing with the ship when she is launched.

The caution of his pal, to be careful what he wishes for, proves prophetic. When Samuel is distracted high on a gantry by a disturbing premonition, he is plunged to his death and we see his ghost return as an invisible observer to the daily routine of his former workmates and then bid farewell to Belfast aboard the ship as she sails out on her maiden voyage.

As the passengers embark at Belfast, Samuel recognises a young family from home and decides to accompany them as they adjust to their new surroundings in the 3<sup>rd</sup> class section of the ship. The husband had worked as a riveter, however, his wife's initial enthusiasm is subdued when she realises their poverty dictates that she cannot purchase even a trinket from the temporary stalls at Cork before the voyage to America begins.

Samuel, occupied by the bustle of experiences and reactions from the

passengers, finds himself drawn to the exuberance of the 3<sup>rd</sup> class section with Jim and Isobel, the young Belfast couple and their two children. While Jim is shy, Isobel reminds him of his mum and through eavesdropping her easy confidence and conversation with strangers, he is able to assemble a picture of their life in Belfast, the loneliness created by the fracture that their different religions caused to their families and their hopes for a new life in America.

As Samuel alternates his attention between the different sections of the ship and the crew, his ability to observe silently enables him to create a colourful collage of experiences and expectations.

He enjoys the sedate dining at the Captain's table and the barbed politeness of the ladies conversation as they vie to display their wealth and position to the captain and Mr Andrews the shy and reserved design engineer from Harland & Wolff.

Samuel's tour of the ship's quarters allows him to build a rapport with the crew. He appreciates the humour of the post room and the quiet industry of the telegraph office, where Harold and Jack, the operators, are struggling with a backlog of trivial messages and trying to repair a faulty machine.

The incidence of unexplained events increases and Samuel experiences a growing sense of unease.

He finds himself sharing the lookout post as the huge iceberg materialises and grows out of the freezing stillness of the night.

As the crew battle to avoid the iceberg, the collision seems almost insignificant. With her engines now stopped while the damage is inspected, *Titanic* settles to an eerie silence in the icy waters.

#### DISCUSSION POINTS

- (Read p22): Samuel has just learned that his mother has died and his reaction seems a little unusual. What sorts of different feelings might people have when someone close to them dies? Are the feelings always sad? Why do you think Samuel felt the way he did? How and why do you think that feelings might change over time?
- (Read p26): The gypsy woman suggests that Samuel has had a previous life. This is called reincarnation and some people believe that this is possible. Do you think it is possible? If it were possible, what do you think its purpose

might be? Do you think it is a comforting idea or a frightening one?

- (Read pp 76 & 78): In the time before the *Titanic* disaster, a lot of different people had similar premonitions about the ship. The author uses this device to create a sense of foreboding. Do you think it really is possible for us to anticipate disasters like this or is it simply a set of linked coincidences?
- (Read pp 47, 52 & 57): The author describes Captain Smith as the 'millionaire's captain'. Do you think this description is a complimentary one? What do you think it says about him as a person?

#### ACTIVITIES

### 1. Accident Report

(Read pp 15 & 16) As part of Harland & Wolff safety procedure, each accident must be reported and investigated. The accident which caused the death of Samuel Scott was no exception.

Each report examines the facts, takes witness statements, determines the cause of the accident and makes recommendations that might improve safety for other workers.

Do you think that you could help to compile the report for the H&W safety officer?

### 2. It's a Bargain

(Read p 31) The Cork traders are very skilled in driving a hard bargain and use all their skills of flattery and persuasion to complete their sales to the American passengers without having to discount their prices.

Isobel has watched the exchanges and is able to recall every word to Jim later.

Do you think that you could create their dialogue, including the accents and voice tones. You can perform it for the class.

### 3. Do you understand me?

(Read pp 35-36) Samuel enjoys the babble of noise in the 3<sup>rd</sup> class common room, however because of the different languages spoken, it is difficult for people to really communicate.

To assist their passengers, White Star has commissioned **YOU** to create a conversation chart.

The chart will give information on useful phrases, greetings and polite conversation statements to help the passengers talk to

each other. The chart will be printed in all the main languages spoken on board and copies given to everyone.

Could you design and decide what to include on such a chart? You could use [translate.google.com](https://translate.google.com)

### 4. The Experience of a Lifetime

(Read pp 43-44) White Star has asked you to help design a promotional brochure to encourage very wealthy people from Europe and USA to sail on *Titanic*.

Remember that these people are used to enjoying rich surroundings, the finest cuisine and having servants attend their slightest whim.

You will have to decide on a marketing approach that will appeal to them particularly.

What do you think are the three most important considerations that would persuade this group specifically to sail on *Titanic*?

### 5. The Captain's Diary

(Read pp 49-52) In addition to completing his ship's log every evening, detailing all the technical and sailing information for that day, Captain Smith keeps a personal diary of events and his impressions of them. His habit is to describe two people only that he has met during the day. One of them he has admired and the other he has not.

Among the artefacts recovered from the wreck of the *Titanic* is the captain's personal safe and the diary is discovered to be still legible.

Do you think that you could recreate his entry for that last evening 13<sup>th</sup> April 1912?

### 6. Mr Marconi's Texting Machine

(Read p61 & pp54-56) The Marconi wireless telegraph was a very early and crude version of texting. It allowed people to send short messages quickly without having to write a letter.

If you were able, do you think that you could demonstrate for Harold and Jack the advantages of texting.

You could write a short note to your friends describing life on board *Titanic*; then abbreviate the main points as a telegraph and finally trim it further to send as a text message.

## 7. Night Workers

(Read pp71-72) While each of us sleeps, an army of unobserved workers make sure that all the systems we rely on, are kept operating. Can you imagine the chaos if everyone went to sleep and woke at the same time as you?

Do you think that you could write a short appreciation poem for the Night Workers acknowledging both their unsocial hours and the conveniences that you enjoy because of them?

(You can use a poetic form such as Haiku or Cinquains if you like.)

## 8. I Spy

(Read pp79-82 & p237) Fred the lookout never forgot that moment when he first saw the shape of the iceberg loom out of the darkness dead ahead of *Titanic*.

In the years that followed, he tried without success to capture the horror many times in his drawings and sketches of his view of the scene' from the Crow's Nest over the deck and bows.

Do you think that you could help him create a sketch or painting that would reflect his shock and terror? An idea might be to use white chalk on black paper for effect.

## 9. Where was the Key?

(Read pp80-81) You can work in small groups for this activity.

At the enquiry afterwards, both Frederick and Reginald, the lookouts, are quizzed about the events in the hours leading up to the collision with the iceberg. They both try to give a full and unbiased answer to each question.

However in every answer, there is just a slight difference in their accounts and interpretation of the facts.

Could you devise three questions that you think should have been put to them? Now try to construct the three answers that you think they might have given to each of these.

What do you think the differences were in their replies and what significance might these have been?

## 10. Precautions

(Read pp80-86) During the enquiry into the sinking of the *Titanic*, there were five precautions identified, that if taken might have prevented the collision with the iceberg.

Do you think that you could work in small groups to decide what these precautions might have been?

When you have identified your five precautions, can you rank them starting with the most important and give a brief explanation of how you think that each of them might have contributed to preventing the collision?

## Unit 2: Nemesis Sinking and 1st Class Evacuation (pp 87-154)

### SUMMARY

In the eerie and silent aftermath of the collision with the iceberg, very few realise the significance of the event as the captain routinely begins a damage inspection.

When Mr Andrews, the H&W designer, inspects the damage it is immediately apparent to him that *Titanic* is sinking and when he confirms this to the captain, both realise that there are insufficient lifeboats to save everyone on board.

Their only hope lies in being able to alert other ships close by to come to their rescue.

The captain advises the Marconi operators who begin the task of trying to locate another ship in their area.

They succeed in contacting the *Carpathia*, but their relief is shattered when the captain confirms that the *Titanic* will have sunk in the four short hours it will take *Carpathia* to reach them.

The evacuation to the lifeboats begins initially with the 1<sup>st</sup> class passengers, who are reluctant to accept the seriousness of the situation, only taking their seats after some persuasion.

Samuel is powerless to help when he discovers that no one has warned the 3<sup>rd</sup> class passengers who are still fast asleep below decks.

On deck Samuel witnesses countless little farewells as families are separated; some, realizing that the farewells are final decide against the dubious safety of the lifeboats and remain with their husbands to face the inevitable together.

In the Marconi room, Harold and Jack are desperately trying to contact any ship within range without success, frustrated that despite their clear messages, the full impact of their situation has not been

realised by the ships coming to their rescue. The captain arrives to confirm that all of the rescue ships will be too late.

Despite the inevitability of their icy fate, the mood of the passengers remains stoic as they attempt to maintain their social habits in their final minutes. While Samuel witnesses many scenes of selfless generosity as well as despair, he is shocked to discover that social propriety is preventing the 3<sup>rd</sup> class passengers from accessing the lifeboats until all the 1<sup>st</sup> class passengers have been evacuated first.

Determined to find and help Jim and his family, he seeks them out below decks in the 3<sup>rd</sup> class section.

### DISCUSSION POINTS

- (Read p104): The 1<sup>st</sup> class passengers are very reluctant to board the lifeboats. What do you think is the main reason for this? Is it because they are afraid or because the orders are from the officers and not the captain personally? What does this say about them and their attitudes towards others?
- (Read pp 111 & 152): No one seems either to have warned the 3<sup>rd</sup> class passengers that the ship was sinking, or prepared them for abandoning ship. The criterion of women and children first seems to have applied to 1<sup>st</sup> class only. Why do you think that this situation was just accepted by everyone? What does this say about the social order and the way people lived their lives then? Do you think that are any situations like this today which are just accepted?
- (Read pp128-129): The guarantee group and the engine room crew have chosen to stay in the most dangerous place on the ship in order to maintain the engines for as long as possible, knowing that their lives are in danger. They have done this willingly and almost cheerfully. Why do you think that they have chosen to do this? What thoughts might have been in their heads as they tended the engines? What do you think of their actions? Were their actions brave or simply futile?
- (Read p144): Samuel seems genuinely puzzled that the 1<sup>st</sup> class gentlemen are able to behave as normal in the face of certain death when the ship sinks. He suspects that perhaps it is their wealth which has made them better people. Do you think that rich people behave in a better way because of their wealth? How do you think that having

great wealth might affect someone's behaviour and outlook? Can you suggest another interpretation for the behaviour that Samuel witnesses?

## ACTIVITIES

### 1. Evacuate

(Read p94) Officer Murdock has prepared a short statement to read to the passengers. There are neither loudspeakers nor ship's Tannoy on board so he has to make the statements in person in the large dining room.

He will make two announcements, one to the crew and one to the passengers: both short and calm, but containing all the information needed.

Can you help him prepare the statements?

Perhaps you could perform them to the class? How do you think his delivery might be different for each group?

### 2. Carpathia

(Read p97) When the distress signal from *Titanic* reaches *Carpathia*, her captain orders a change of direction and they steam for *Titanic's* location at full speed. However the first officer is concerned that this is dangerous and advises caution.

He and the captain have a brief argument before the decision is made. One of the junior officers overhears and later records everything in his diary.

What do you think was said by each of them? Could you re-create the dialogue and perhaps perform it for the class. (You could work in pairs for this activity.)

### 3. The Messages

(Read pp 113-114) Before Fleet climbs into the lifeboat on Lightoller's instructions, three separate passengers approach him and quickly press an envelope into his hand. He only has time to hear a whispered "Please! Will you deliver this?" before they step back into the crowd.

Much later on board *Carpathia*, as she approaches New York, he retrieves the envelopes from his pocket and reads them. Do you think that you could recreate the messages he read? Each was different and each gave a brief glimpse of a relationship that had now ceased.

### 4. Lowered in a lifeboat

(Read pp 115-116) As the lifeboat is lowered, each of the passengers seems lost in a paralysing stillness. Their drawn

faces mask the terrifying thoughts racing through their minds.

If you had the same ability as Samuel to hear each of their thoughts, what do you think they would be saying?

Do you think that you could draw a lifeboat and make a collage of all their frightened faces? You could add speech bubbles to some of the faces to give an impression of their thoughts.

### 5. Final Words

(Read pp119-120) When the distress rockets are launched, the passengers finally begin to accept the grim consequences of their situation and many couples are forced to separate with only a very brief opportunity to say farewell to each other.

If you found yourself in the situation of having to say a final farewell very quickly to someone who was very dear to you, who would you want to have the opportunity to speak to and what do you think you might say to them?

(You could try this activity in small groups to share ideas.)

### 6. Unspoken

(Read p 131) When Mr Andrews and the captain meet in the corridor, the atmosphere between them is very tense and neither of them says what they are really feeling. They are the only two on board who have realised the full consequences of the collision right from the start.

Samuel, however, can hear their thoughts clearly as they mutter a strained exchange.

What do you think that he heard from each man? What did they really feel about each other? Do you think that they blamed each other?

Can you use a picture of each of them and speech bubbles to show what you think Samuel may have heard them thinking?

### 7. The Memory

(Read pp 141-142) Samuel takes comfort in memory flashes of incidents from his childhood when things were happier at home. This is something that everyone does at times when they are feeling sad or distressed.

Can you recall your own favourite childhood memory and explain why you like to revisit it? You can add an illustration as well if you like.

## 8. Dear Father

(Read pp 146-147) John Lipton knows that he has his father to thank for insisting that the officer allowed him to board the lifeboat' thus saving his life. His last memory of his father is his smile as he stepped back knowing that his son was safe.

When John reads of the discovery of the wreck of the *Titanic* on the ocean floor he decides to write a letter to his father to thank him and tell him how his life has turned out.

It is a short letter but very powerful. Do you think that you could help John to compose it?

## 9. When I have Fears

(Read pp150-151) Captain Smith seems to be numbed by fear and despair, yet he still has responsibilities to his passengers and crew.

Fear can have this effect on people and can leave them paralysed and unable to function. Different people have different strategies for dealing with their own fears.

If you had the opportunity to offer him three pieces of advice, what would they be and how do you think each of them might support him?

Your advice should be VERY brief and to the point. You can add a little more detail in your explanations.

## 10. I'll Help You

(Read pp 153-154) Samuel finally realises that the reason he is aboard *Titanic* is not simply to observe, but to help. Making a sudden decision, he decides to find Jim and his family and do everything that he can to rescue them.

If you were in the position to be able to rescue someone from the ship, whom would you save? Can you explain your choice and why you think that they should be saved?

## Unit 3: Redemption The End & 2nd Class Evacuation (pp155 - 233)

### SUMMARY

Samuel is frustrated to find confusion in the 3<sup>rd</sup> class section as Jim and his family, together with the other passengers pack and then shuffle to a standstill at a locked

gate in the corridor, completely unaware of their danger and apparently abandoned by the crew who continue to manage the evacuation of the 1<sup>st</sup> class passengers from the upper decks.

The sight of Jim triggers a powerful memory for Samuel and we glimpse how the death of his own father devastated his relationship with his mother. He is now determined that he will not allow Jim to be taken by the sea as well and decides to do everything he can to see them all rescued.

Samuel realizes that they have been forgotten and desperate to help them notices that Sarah, the infant in Isobel's arms is watching him.

Seizing his chance, Samuel begins a game of 'Clap Hands' with her and as she wriggles in her mother's arms to play, he manages to steer the family away from the locked gate towards a crew stairwell and a chance for safety.

Isobel now realises that Sarah sees something that she can't and suspects Samuel's presence as they make their way through the labyrinth of decks leading some of the other families who have followed them; unaware that their sense of direction is dictated by an infant's coos and wriggles.

Samuel's mind is in turmoil as memories seem confused by what is and what was; memories of his father duel with the fear that he sees all around him as *Titanic* and her passengers slide into catastrophe.

Jim and his family are bewildered by the scenes as they are finally led to safety by Samuel. Jim manages to secure his family on the last lifeboat before making a hurried farewell and then steps back relieved, to wait for the end.

As he tours the ship Samuel is almost overwhelmed by the many farewells he sees now that the lifeboats have gone and hope is all but extinguished.

Mr Andrews is consumed by sorrow and guilt that his designs have proved inadequate. Captain Smith has returned to meet the end on the deserted bridge while the musicians and the remaining officers brace themselves at their stations.

The end when it comes is explosive and violent, without regard for age, rank or class, as those left on board are spat into the icy waters to die quickly.

Distraught by the devastation Samuel finds Jim barely alive and manages to

direct a lifeboat that has returned to check for survivors to save him.

Dawn breaks to reveal to Samuel the full extent of the tragedy in the army of lifeless and bobbing passengers held upright in the freezing waters by their lifejackets.

As the mist clears off the silent icy waters Samuel finds the scene transformed and witnesses those who died make the transition to the next stage of their journeys of existence.

Finally released from his role of responsibility as Spirit of *Titanic*, Samuel discovers that he too is able to continue his own journey and responds to the call of his parents to join them as they all move on together.

### DISCUSSION POINTS

- (Read pp157&162): During their evacuation, the 3<sup>rd</sup> class passengers were forced to wait. To us today this seems very unusual, that they were prepared to wait timidly as the ship sank while others of a different class were rescued before them. Why do you think that they did not demand to be treated equally? What does this tell you about life in the early 1900s? Why do you think that they accepted being treated in this way?
- (Read pp161&172): Samuel and his mum are both grieving the loss of his father; however their grief seems to be driving them apart rather than bringing them together. How do you think that Samuel and his mum are showing their grief? Do you think that people always express their grief in the same way, e.g. crying and sadness? What other feelings might people have when they are grieving and how might they express them?
- (Read p182): Officer Lightoller admires the strength of the young couple and their infant daughter, prepared to meet their deaths together rather than be separated. However, do you think it was fair of the couple to make this life / death decision for their child: to rob her of the opportunity of life simply to satisfy their need to be together? Which do you think is the more courageous decision: to separate and save the woman and child or stay on board and all die together?
- (P203): Mr Andrews, the chief designer has decided that he will make no attempt whatsoever to save himself and in his shame and guilt simply awaits his fate. Do you think this was over-dramatic

of him? Should he have made an effort to survive, at least for the sake of his family? Who do you think he was really thinking of and what might he have been trying to avoid when he made the decision to go down with the ship?

### ACTIVITIES

#### 1. Left Behind

(Read p155) In their rush to escape, the 3<sup>rd</sup> class passengers must quickly gather their treasured possessions. Inevitably, decisions will have to be made as to what must be left behind.

If you were forced to flee your home with only moments to decide what you would take and what you would leave' could you make a list of four items only that you would definitely take? Could you describe what they are, why would you take them and how you think that they would be useful to you no matter where you went?

#### 2. Follow Me

(Read p167) Isobel is convinced that someone or something is trying to lead them to safety. She has to persuade Jim to allow Sarah to lead them to safety and she has only a very few moments to do this. Jim is doubtful and can't see how Sarah can possibly know her way around the ship.

What do you think that Isobel said to Jim to convince him?

Do you think that you could write the dialogue that they had just before they moved into the narrow stairwell? How do you think they would have spoken to each other? Remember... there were others listening.

#### 3. It's Perfect

(Read p173) Samuel's mother has bought his dad a new cap for Christmas and is delighted when he announces that it is better than perfect.

Have you ever been given a present that was better than perfect?

Could you describe what it was, who gave it to you and how did you feel when you received it?

#### 4. How do you feel?

(p174) You can work in groups for this activity. When Samuel's father dies, everyone seems more interested in the details of the event rather than how Samuel might be feeling.

Do you think that you could write a guide that would help your class support someone who was bereaved? What things should you say and do and what things should you not say? How would you deal with their anger and loneliness?

Try to think of three or four main strategies that are easy to remember. Perhaps you could design a class chart that everyone could see? Here are some useful resources:

[www.rd4u.org.uk](http://www.rd4u.org.uk)

[www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk/Children.html](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk/Children.html)

[www.winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.winstonswish.org.uk)

## 5. New York 1922

(Read p 175 & 164-166) Sarah and her family now live happily in New York. It is ten years since the sinking of *Titanic* and Sarah is almost eleven years old.

Recently she has been troubled by strange dreams and when she wakes she remembers running along a dark maze of corridors chasing something, but not quite sure what it is.

Tonight she awakens with a cry and her dream is particularly clear. When her mum rushes in to see what is wrong, Sarah describes the dream in detail.

Can you describe what Sarah saw in her dream and what she remembers from that night? What do you think that her mother told her?

## 6. Sound and Silence

(Read p190) You can work in groups for this activity.

As the end approaches Samuel becomes aware of how the sounds and silences aboard the ship have changed.

Do you think that you could create a very short (1-2 minute) sound recording of the story of *Titanic*?

What sort of sounds would there be at her building and launch? What sounds would typify her passengers? What sounds would now be heard as she sinks?

What sound do you think would be effective as the final sound?

You could add snatches of dialogue if you think that would be effective.

How would you use silence and softer sounds?

## 7. Something Special

(Read p 193) Samuel overhears Mr Stead

and Jim discussing how they have made history as *Titanic*'s first and last passengers. They agree that they have both shared something very, very special. What do you think this was?

If you were able to ask any four crew or passengers what was special about their *Titanic* experience, what replies do you think you would get?

Who would you choose to question and why?

## 8. The Last Message

(Read p196) Jack continues to tap a message despite being relieved of duties by the captain.

When the captain leaves, he catches Harold's eye and together they decide on one last message from *Titanic* before signing off.

They realise that their message will go down in history and they want it to reflect both how they feel and the bravery of all that they have seen.

What do you think that this last message should say?

## 9. Ships Heroes

(Read p220) As the ship sank, the sea 'consumes the heroes one by one.' There were many heroes aboard *Titanic* that night. Could you choose two that impressed you and do a profile of them? Say why you chose them and what they did.

Could you make a short list of five attributes that you think heroes have and describe how many of the attributes you think that you have yourself?

## 10. The Memorial

It is almost 100 years since *Titanic* sank. Much has been written and researched about the disaster.

To commemorate the centenary of the sinking, the *Titanic* Association is promoting a competition to design a permanent memorial.

Do you think that you could build a model of the memorial? What do you think it would look like and where do you think it should be sited?

## Class Activity

To commemorate the centenary of the sinking of the *Titanic* you could produce a short newspaper spread on the event including:

- Interviews with survivors
- Official reports
- Discovery of the wreck
- Drawings and sketches from the event
- Description of artefacts recovered and their significance
- Comparison with subsequent disasters
- Descriptions of conditions on board
- Advice on safety at sea

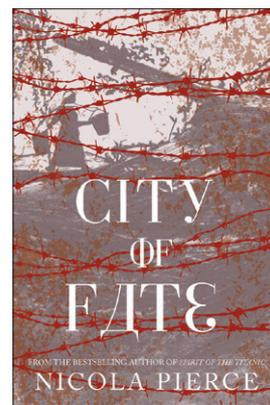
## VIDEO

Go to [www.obrien.ie/spirit-of-the-titanic](http://www.obrien.ie/spirit-of-the-titanic) to see a 15 minute video about the book and the *Titanic*. Featuring the author, background and re-enactments of scenes from the book it is the perfect way to get a classroom discussion going!



## ALSO BY AUTHOR NICOLA PIERCE

### City of Fate



Imagine your home is bombed one Sunday afternoon by a horde of enemy planes. Imagine your family has gone and you are left behind.

Imagine being ordered to leave school to fight the terrifying Nazis in WWII. Imagine you are right in the middle of a battle.

The battlefield is the city of Stalingrad, the pride of Russia. Nobody has managed to stop the triumphant Nazi invasion across Europe. It all depends on one city – Stalingrad – her citizens, her soldiers and her children.

'well-crafted, thought-provoking and well-written ... gripping, gritty and riveting ... this book should be on the reading list of all twentieth-century history modules in school' Inis Magazine