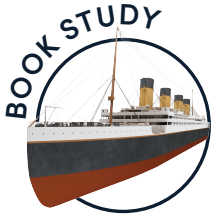


A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

POST-READING RESPONSE PROMPTS

After reading *A Night to Remember*, choose **five** of the following prompts to respond to.

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| <p>A.</p> | <p>The sinking of the <i>Titanic</i> is well known. What was it like reading a book where you most likely already knew the outcome?</p> <p><i>Student answers will vary but might mention that it was interesting to learn the details about each factor that contributed to the ship’s sinking. Answers might also mention how it made readers feel more invested in the characters. Even though they knew the story’s ending, readers didn’t know which characters were among the lucky survivors.</i></p> |
| <p>B.</p> | <p>Describe Captain Smith. Explain who he is, what happens to him, and why he’s important in the text. Use examples from the text to support your answer.</p> <p><i>At 59 years old, Edward J. Smith was a seasoned captain with 38 years of experience under his belt with the White Star. He usually took new White Star ships on their maiden voyages. Lord describes him as “more than just a senior captain of the line; he was a bearded patriarch, worshiped by crew and passengers alike.” He was known for being polite and firm, and a “natural leader.” In the face of adversity, he was able to retain his composure, often speaking softly, while still being able to make difficult decisions. He demonstrated these qualities when he ordered the lifeboats to be uncovered and when he gave his crew permission to abandon their posts. He is important to the story because he’s a character that’s entrenched in making decisions that affect all the passengers and the entire crew. His leadership in a dire situation makes for an inspiring and multifaceted character.</i></p> |
| <p>C.</p> | <p>Before its maiden voyage, the <i>Titanic</i> was referred to as “unsinkable.” What contributed to this narrative, and how did it affect the passengers’ reactions when the ship struck the iceberg and began sinking?</p> <p><i>At the time, modern shipbuilding was believed to be advanced and revolutionary. In brochures and magazines, the <i>Titanic</i> was publicized as being a technological marvel for its innovative compartment system. The mathematical discrepancy between the number of passengers and the number of life boats seemed to prove the confidence everyone had in the ship’s build and structure. Many of the passengers were nonchalant, acting as if there were no true emergency. Some felt inconvenienced by having to put on a life jacket, not to mention getting into a lifeboat. Part of this indifference stemmed from the widespread belief that the <i>Titanic</i> was unsinkable. In the text, Lord describes how the call to board the lifeboats was not met with the urgency one would expect in the event of a sinking ship. Many passengers didn’t believe the luxury liner would actually sink, and they didn’t want to spend a few hours waiting in a lifeboat.</i></p> |

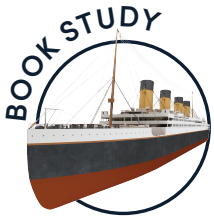


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| <p>D.</p> | <p>People react differently during a crisis. Consider the passengers' diverse behaviors when it was <i>first</i> revealed that the ship was sinking. Why do you think people acted the way they did? Choose three distinct individuals and provide a summary and analysis of each of their reactions. Be sure to represent a range of reactions to the tragedy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Steward George Dodd woke other crew members or instructed them to not let any man stay behind. • The Yasbecks, who felt the impact of the iceberg, ran into the corridor and down to the boiler rooms where they watched as engineers struggled to make repairs. The Yasbecks sprinted back to their cabin to dress, realizing the seriousness of the situation. • Mrs. Arthur Ryerson quickly assembled her family of six to get on deck. • Mr. and Mrs. Lucien Smith took time dressing and chatting as if the ship was not sinking and this was merely an inconvenience on their continuing journey. <p>The reactions were likely a result of the widespread belief that the <i>Titanic</i> was unsinkable. Some passengers might also have been in denial that anything terrible could happen on such a luxury liner or to someone with that much money.</p> |
| <p>E.</p> | <p>By today's standards, safety measures were extremely inadequate on board the <i>Titanic</i>. How did safety regulations change after the sinking of the <i>Titanic</i>? Use examples from the text to support your answer.</p> <p>The American and British governments established a safety organization called the International Ice Patrol. The coast guard made efforts to guide icebergs away from the shipping lanes. All passenger ships instituted a 24-hour radio watch, rather than relying on part-time radio operators. Ships were required to carry enough lifeboats to accommodate all passengers on board, and when filling lifeboats, "class distinction" was no longer an acceptable method for assigning passengers to specific boats.</p> |
| <p>F.</p> | <p>Millionaire John Jacob Astor IV was the richest man on board the <i>Titanic</i>. How did his wealth and prestige influence his actions and decisions while aboard the luxury liner? Use examples from the text to support your response.</p> <p>John Jacob Astor IV's wealth allowed him to have a special relationship with Captain Smith, and they had sailed together before. Astor heard the tragic news straight from the captain before the general public. When Astor went to investigate the iceberg, he reported back to his wife that it "didn't look serious," and he didn't seem concerned at all. Once life jackets were required, Astor had an extra one in his lap. He sliced it open to show his wife what was inside, possibly putting his own amusement over the very real possibility that the life jacket could save someone else. At the time of boarding the lifeboats, Astor didn't see the point—he still believed that the ship would not sink, and he didn't want to spend time on a cold and dark lifeboat. He truly believed that he was safer on the luxury liner. When it was time for his wife to board a lifeboat, Astor asked if he could join her, despite the "women and children first" rule. He was refused, at which point he asked for the number of the lifeboat. Some believed he asked so he could find her later, but another theory is so that he could make a complaint about being denied, figuring his prestige should have secured him a place.</p> |



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| <p>G.</p> | <p>A theme in <i>A Night To Remember</i> is hubris, or overconfidence, in technology. Explain three examples from the story that illustrate this theme.</p> <p>Student answers will vary but may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The travel brochures and <i>Shipbuilder</i> magazine touted the <i>Titanic</i>'s watertight construction technology that could shut down compartments to prevent flooding. Of course, this would be revealed as flawed—once five of the compartments were full of water, sinking was inevitable. • The Vice President of White Star told the newspaper reporters that they “place absolute confidence in the <i>Titanic</i>. We believe that the boat is unsinkable.” Meanwhile, he frantically wired Captain Smith for confirmation. • Mrs. Albert Caldwell asked a deckhand in Southampton if the ship was really unsinkable. The deckhand replied, “God himself could not sink this ship.” <p>In chapter 7, Lord discusses the repercussions of how people’s views changed dramatically after the sinking. If an “unsinkable” ship like the <i>Titanic</i> could go down, what did that mean not only for their faith in technology but also for their certainty in other parts of life? For example, if the wealthy were among those who perished, should wealth be as important as it was in society?</p> |
| <p>H.</p> | <p>The author uses a minute-by-minute account from survivors to tell the tragic story of the <i>Titanic</i>'s first and only voyage. Describe the effect of this method of storytelling. Why do you think the author chose to tell the story this way?</p> <p>The structure of the account effectively places the reader in the action as it unfolds, making the historic event feel like it's happening in real time. This helps readers experience the drama and feel close to the characters throughout the fateful trip. It also effectively builds tension and suspense within the story. This structure can be seen as helpful for diagnosing what went wrong and why. The structure might also make them feel like they're part of an investigation into the mistakes, miscalculations, miscommunication, and unfortunate luck that led to the sinking.</p> |
| <p>I.</p> | <p>Imagine you are a first-class passenger aboard the <i>Titanic</i> before the iceberg strikes. Then imagine you are a third-class passenger. Describe your experiences on the luxury liner from these two perspectives. How does your experience differ depending on what class you were in?</p> <p>A first-class passenger had a spacious cabin and access to fine dining options, such as an à la carte French restaurant and dining rooms featuring silver and china. They had a lounge, grand staircase, squash court, and smoking room where games were also played. First-class passengers also had access to a chief steward and bellboys. A third-class passenger’s experience was much less luxurious. A passenger in third class had an extremely small cabin located in the least desirable parts of the ship, on the lower decks near the ship's noisy engines. Their accommodations included a recreation space, dining saloon, lounge, and steerage staircase.</p> |