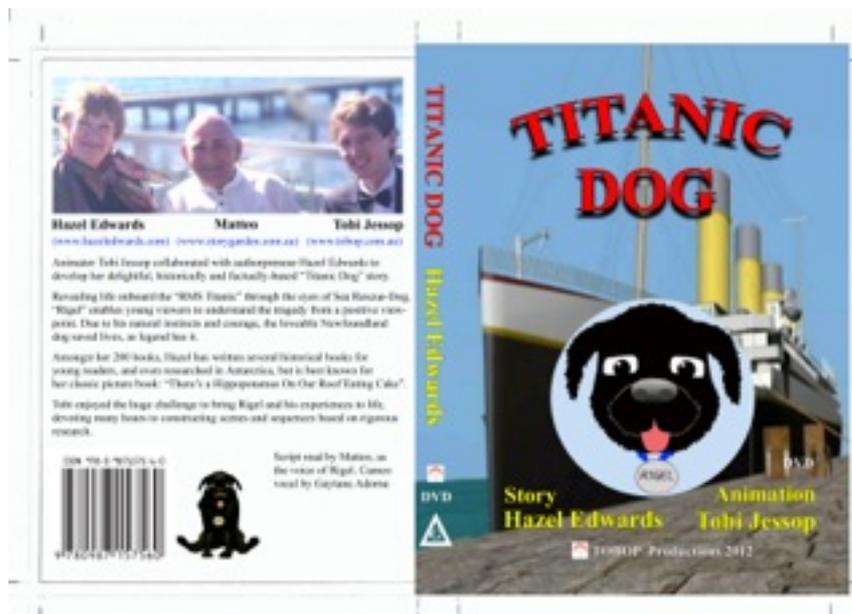


## 'Titanic Dog' Activities related to Heroes

by Hazel Edwards

- Relevance
- Curriculum Links
- Discussion questions: Heroes
- Collaboration: Animator's Process
- Teacher Activities
- Sample Script



DVD available from [tobopstuff@gmail.com](mailto:tobopstuff@gmail.com)  
[www.tobop.com.au](http://www.tobop.com.au)

Trailer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jS4TNo7Nkw>

<http://www.hazeledwards.com/page/videos.html>

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## Relevance:

What makes 'Titanic Dog' different is that an historic and tragic event is told from the perspective of the dog. Since the loss of life associated with the so-called unsinkable ship hitting an iceberg was a sad story, providing a positive, heroic version which involves and inspires children was a challenge.

Focusing on the skills of the 'Newfie' (Newfoundland sea-dog) was one way. Looking at qualities of heroism is another, which makes 'Titanic Dog' relevant for the curriculum study. Ideas can out-live their creators and stories can be handed down the generations. Even tall stories. Strictly speaking 'Titanic Dog' is fiction, but Rigel did exist and the facts of the Titanic are accurate.

And Tobi's style of animation, personalises the dogs and the onboard ship life as well as the lifeboat situation. So the process of creative collaboration of writer, animator and the Voice of the dog provides an example of multi-media as well as the content of the story being relevant as history.

The 100 year anniversary of the April 1912 Titanic sinking, is a timely opportunity to explore comparisons of then and now.

## Curriculum Links:

### Curriculum Links & Activities

Apart from the importance of an historic tale crossing media...into animation

**Maths:** Mapping voyage and estimating voyage length or time. Constructing a ship. Counting lifeboats and passengers and crew. Distance. Weather. How does weather affect fuel consumption?

**Science:** Icebergs, water survival, sea-dogs. Emergency details like lifeboat drills. Freezing point.

**Art:** Designing a dog parade, cabin accommodation onboard. Making a model of ship. Fashionable clothes of the period.

**Music:** Concert onboard, SFX. Choral reading or Readers' Theatre

**English:** reading clues, guessing, playing with words and shapes..

**LOTE** Clues in other languages. Morse Code. Emergency signs. How might animals react differently from humans who have language?

**S.O.S.E.** Celebrations e.g. first voyage. Anniversary.

### Personal Development, Health and Physical Education

- Nutrition - what's a galley? Food onboard? Tying knots and ropes.
- Personal identity – making friends: skills needed onboard.
- Relationship with others .Dealing with fears e.g. darkness, cold.
- Effects of physical activity- being part of a crew. Helping friends..
- Environmental health –effects of cold. Seasickness?

**Environment** Living and working at sea.

**Civics:** class voting Responsibility; who has priority in lifeboat?

**Technology:** Class electronic portfolio stories about Titanic,.Digital downloading. Creating own animation.

**Discussion:**

*Who is your hero?*

.....

*(Today the word 'hero' is used for males or females.)*

*Can an animal be a hero?*

.....

Q & A

***'Is being a 'celeb' the same as being a hero?'***

***'No.'***

***A 'celeb' or 'celebrity', is famous only for getting their photo in the media or being 'fashionable'.. Being a 'celeb' is NOT the same as being known for your heroic achievements or solving problems for others.***

A 'hero' may be in the news, but it's for what they have done, not what they are wearing or for misbehaving.

- *Some heroes act bravely in an emergency. This is fast courage.*
- *Others persist and do things a little better each day. Long term, their actions may influence many people*
- *Some heroes are role models, without even realising. Others are inspired to copy what they do.*

*Heroes are not perfect, but they can inspire.*

*A hero inspires others to do their best, even under difficult circumstances.*

*Heroes are not perfect. Like all of us, they have strengths and weaknesses but heroes try hard and are passionate about what they do.*

**Discuss: What makes a hero?**

- Is it what you do?
- How you do it?
- Or why

...That may make you a hero?

Perhaps timing matters too?  
Maybe it's all of those?

In what way might you consider Rigel the Titanic Dog to be a hero?  
Was anyone else in the story, heroic? Why?

## **Collaboration: Animator's Process**

Rarely do creators work alone. The collaboration of animator Tobi and writer Hazel is an example of the way many creators with different skills may work on a project. Initially Hazel had researched and written about the Titanic for another picture book project linked to the 1912 anniversary. When that project was cancelled and Tobi was seeking his first story to animate, they decided to share skills. Tobi thinks in pictures and Hazel in abstract.

**Check the Youtube clip which gives a taste of the animation.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jS4TNo7Nkw>

A film about 'Rigel', a Newfoundland (Newfie) dog and the Titanic voyage in 1912.

## **Animator's View: Tobi Jessop**

The animation 'Titanic Dog', was tricky yet fun to produce.

First came the task of researching as much as possible. Then, creating all of the characters and getting the scale (size) correct.

The process of making characters consisted of, a 'mesh' for the body, and then various meshes for other parts like dog collars and name tags of the known dogs, and pieces of clothing for the human passengers on-board which fit the time era.

Objects for scenery and the digital environments such as buildings and boats, clouds, docks, paintings, furniture, ice bergs and a digital ocean were then either created from scratch or imported from other files & edited to fit the animation.

The editing of the Titanic was quite a task. There are so many parts to the glorious ship, I learnt a lot constructing and editing it in 3D. I can only imagine what it would've been like in real-life.

The Grand Staircase is a mixture of objects, which originally were just cubes which I then heavily edited and shaped.

Next I painted the characters & objects using a mixture of various pictures for each character. 138 to be exact.

Every character was saved in separate files to be further edited slightly, given a bone structure, then animated. Also used for testing and portraits.

Separate scenes into which characters, objects and animations were placed were made and saved. 'appended' is the specific term.

Scenes were then a virtual set. I moved the camera when necessary,

and looped the characters animations by copy & pasting individual frames or chunks of frames.

Often I'd go back through the animation and change the positions of the character to give it a bit more life but at the same time not filling the scenes with too much movement.

Every scene had to be double, then triple checked for any issues, especially with the lighting, before the lengthy 'rendering' task took place.

'Rendering' is the term for putting everything into a movie file which can be edited in another software package. This can take a very long time depending on how many things are in the scene.

'Titanic Dog' had a total of 61 separate rendered scenes which were then put in order, trimmed to fit the audio and added visual transition effects when appropriate.

The program I used to create the 3D rendered scenes was Blender 2.6, I then edited them, and timed the sound in Power Director 9. Audio files were mixed with Audacity.

I recommend everyone to give 3D animation a go. It's extremely fun!

Tobi Jessop.

I also created this e-book a while ago for creating 3D animation. Only a few things I should add and change. But it has enough information to get people started:

[http://tobop.com.au/TDownloads/LampBug\\_11.pdf](http://tobop.com.au/TDownloads/LampBug_11.pdf)

## Hazel Edwards' TEACHER ACTIVITIES

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1. How many places or projects are named after the Titanic ? e.g. Theatre restaurant with a re-enactment. Film.

Originally, what was the significance of the name Titanic?

2. Devise a TV or online quiz program of questions and answers about issues such as:  
Historic facts about Titanic

Working Dogs

Search & Rescue

3. Find out 10 facts about one of these, and share with the rest of the class. Can use visuals.

Sea-dogs/Newfoundland breed.

Difference between ice breaker and ice resistant ship

Icebergs

Crew's jobs on the Titanic

Lifeboat regulations and drill

How are animals 'housed' onboard ? Then? Now?

- 4 You've been invited to give a 10-minute presentation on the Titanic. You may use maps, visuals and text in any medium.

5. Utilise new media and invite individuals or student groups to devise their own short presentations using audio, computer skills or graphics

e.g. A day in the life of...a ship's captain? Lifeboat crew? Designer of ships? Model-maker? An occupation as health & safety officer TODAY.

e.g. Create a map showing the Titanic route.

6. Research: What does a ship's captain do?  
What kind of training is needed?

What is life-boat drill? Who does what?  
What should be kept in a life-boat?

What was the importance of the new design of the Titanic ship?  
In what ways might it be difficult to test an 'un-sinkable' ship?  
List five facts about ice-ships

7. Q & A Often you are asked a question and expected to give an answer. This is the other way around. If each of these is the answer, what might the question have been?

- Titanic
- Iceberg
- April, 1912
- Newfoundland Dog
- sea-dog.

8 Role Models: Who or what is a role model? What are some of the actions which you found most inspiring in the Titanic story, and why?

10 DESIGN: Making Models: use any medium such as paper, clay, animation.

- Construct a Titanic ship
- iceberg
- Map of Titanic route
- Equipment needed in a life-boat
- The perfect life vest

9. DESIGN: Design your own poster to promote the 'Titanic Dog' animation. Or design your own book cover.

PRODUCE your own YouTube clip to encourage involvement in an historical project in your area.

10 Unforgettable Dogs: Working dogs such a 'seeing eye' and 'hearing' dogs and the quarantine/customs Beagles have also done memorable work. STAY the plastic 'donation' dog of Antarctica is also worth researching. Choose a working dog and write their story to present in any media format.

11 DRAMA: Have four students role-play:

- Ship's captain,

- Crew member in charge of lifeboat
- First Class passenger who wants pet to be saved in lifeboat
- Pet /child

They are discussing/arguing about who should be chosen to go in the limited spaces in the lifeboat and must come to a practical solution within 2 minutes.

12 Geography.... Multi- media presentation of where notable shipwrecks have occurred internationally.

13 MATHS: You have been asked to work out the budget for one of the following projects:

Paying the crew for one 10 day voyage on a BIG cruise ship.

How much does it cost to train a sailor?

Providing 24 hour care for a person who is sea sick.

Swimming lessons for every child in your class.

#### **14. Hypothetical:**

A Hypothetical is where you say 'What if?' and play with ideas as a way of solving future problems.

Often it's done in a group, with a MC (Master or Mistress of Ceremonies) acting like a DJ and pulling the ideas together. Participants can all have different views.

Use these as starting ideas

What's a philosophy? It's why you think something is worth doing

If you can use your skill to improve another's life, that's worth doing. Isn't it?

Legacy: A legacy is something you leave behind when you die.

What legacy did Titanic Dog leave?

What legacy would you like to leave and why?

Further resources at [www.hazeledwards.com](http://www.hazeledwards.com)

Other Hazel Edwards books which examine the 'heroic' theme are

New Frontier Aussie Heroes; Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop' and 'Professor Fred Hollows'

Antarctic Close Up (National Museum' Making Tracks series.

**Sample Script:**

Extract from sample draft manuscript to show the Voice of the Newfie  
Perform it.

*I'm a 'Newfie.'*

*That's short for a Newfoundland dog.*

*But I'm not short.*

*I'm BIG for a dog.*

*I worked on the 'Titanic' as a sea dog.*

*But I didn't expect to become a BIG legend.*

*Sea-dogs like me help fishermen*

*Usually we swim-pull the fishing nets.*

*Fishing is our day job, as my great-great-great dog ancestors were Vikings.*

*Sometimes it's our night job too, because fishermen work all hours.*

*Sea-dogs are workers too.*

*When you're big, you can be useful around boats.*

*What am I good at?*

*Long distance swimming.*

*Why?*

*Well, I've got these big webbed feet*

*And water repellent fur, two coats really.*

*And I'm powerful at breast stroke,*

*Plus*

*My tail acts like a rudder.*

*Swimming is what I'm good at*

*But, in emergencies, I'm also a water-rescue dog*

*April 1912 was a special voyage.*

*I was proud of working on the Titanic cruise.*

Last page:

*Did I survive?*

*Yes, I did,*

*As a legend.*

*And in the story of other Newfies who were rescue-dogs*

*And in my great,great, great grand puppies*