

Finding cause of Asiana crash could take years

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Air crash investigators have said it could take years to determine the exact cause of why an Asiana Airlines flight that crash-landed at San Francisco's airport on Saturday. Deborah Hersman, head of the USA's National Transportation Safety Board said it was too early to say whether or not the accident was the result of pilot error. Many analysts have already concluded that it was very unlikely that mechanical error was involved, citing the excellent safety record of the Boeing 777 aircraft. Kevin Hiatt, CEO of the Flight Safety Foundation, told reporters that any conclusions about what caused the crash are months, if not years, away. What is known is that the plane was flying too slowly as it approached the runway.

As firefighters extinguished the last of the flames from the burning wreckage, survivors described the horror of escaping from the aircraft. They said it was a miracle that 305 of the 307 people on board made it out alive. Two Chinese students died in the accident. Passengers were quick to praise the professionalism, quick thinking and selflessness of the flight attendants, one of whom hauled an injured passenger to safety. Frequent Asiana flyer Eugene Rah recounted the heroism of flight attendant Jiyeon Kim, saying: "She was a hero. This tiny, little girl was carrying people piggyback, running everywhere, with tears running down her face. She was crying, but she was still so calm and helping people."

Sources: USA Today / Wall Street Journal

Writing

Statistics often say flying is the safest form of travel. Compare and contrast flying with other forms of travel.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

air crash / investigators / airport / pilot error / safety record / conclusions / runway / firefighters / survivors / miracle / professionalism / selflessness / heroism / piggyback

True / False

- Investigators said it would take 3 years to find the cause of the crash. T / F
- A transportation boss believes the crash was due to pilot error. T / F
- Industry experts have pretty much discounted mechanical error. T / F
- The plane wasn't travelling fast enough to land. T / F
- Survivors have said little about what happened. T / F
- Many passengers have commended the actions of the cabin crew. T / F
- A flight attendant rescued a passenger by carrying them on her back. T / F
- The flight attendant did not cry while carrying out the rescue. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. investigators | a. wonder |
| 2. exact | b. referring to |
| 3. error | c. put out |
| 4. citing | d. commend |
| 5. approached | e. detectives |
| 6. extinguished | f. bravery |
| 7. miracle | g. precise |
| 8. praise | h. composed |
| 9. heroism | i. moved toward |
| 10. calm | j. miscalculation |

Discussion – Student A

- Why could it take years to find out why the plane crashed?
- How can airlines reduce pilot error?
- Is autopilot safer than a human pilot?
- Has this crash made you more worried about flying?
- Do you ever worry when you're on a plane?
- What advice would you have for anyone afraid of flying?
- Which do you least like – takeoff, landing, or the cruising at altitude?
- Have you ever had a bad experience on a plane?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. determine the | a. error was involved |
| 2. it was too | b. to safety |
| 3. unlikely that mechanical | c. approached the runway |
| 4. citing the excellent | d. piggyback |
| 5. flying too slowly as it | e. exact cause |
| 6. firefighters extinguished the | f. running down her face |
| 7. quick to praise | g. early to say |
| 8. hauled an injured passenger | h. safety record |
| 9. carrying people | i. the professionalism |
| 10. with tears | j. last of the flames |

Discussion – Student B

- Do you think it would be difficult for the survivors to fly again?
- How difficult is the job of a flight attendant?
- How do you think they can be trained to not panic in an emergency?
- What do you think of the flight attendant mentioned in the article?
- How do you think you'd cope or act in such an emergency situation?
- What will airplane safety be like in 50 years from now?
- How do you think we could make flying safer?
- What questions would you like to ask an aviation expert?

Spelling

- Air crash roiesatntgvis
- mdrieet the exact cause
- unlikely that mechanical error was odviveln
- icngti the excellent safety record
- CEO of the Flight Safety nnuFtaiod
- as it haacoprepd the runway
- firefighters xesidituengh the last of the flames
- the burning krwageec
- it was a clmeari
- elsfssnessel of the flight attendants
- luaehd an injured passenger to safety
- carrying people kpycbgagi

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. g	3. j	4. b	5. i
6. c	7. a	8. d	9. f	10. h

Role Play

Role A – By plane

You think plane is the safest way to travel. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't as safe with their forms of transport. Also, tell the others which is the least safe of these (and why): train, car or ship.

Role B – By train

You think train is the safest way to travel. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't as safe with their forms of transport. Also, tell the others which is the least safe of these (and why): plane, car or ship.

Role C – By car

You think car is the safest way to travel. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't as safe with their forms of transport. Also, tell the others which is the least safe of these (and why): train, plane or ship.

Role D – By ship

You think ship is the safest way to travel. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't as safe with their forms of transport. Also, tell the others which is the least safe of these (and why): train, car or plane.

Speaking – Flight attendant

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the most important at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| • nice uniform | • courteous |
| • always smiling | • honest |
| • nice looking | • good in emergencies |
| • sense of humour | • brings meal / drinks quickly |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.