

The Captain's Job

Nonfiction

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The captain of an airplane has a big job. The captain has to make sure that the plane is safe. The captain needs to be able to make good decisions. There could be a problem before the plane takes off. The captain checks everything to be sure it is ready. The captain needs to decide if it is safe to fly. Then the captain has to figure out what to do if there is a problem while flying.

In January 2009, the captain of a plane took off in New York. That's a very busy city. As the plane rose, it ran into some birds. The birds got caught in the engines. Both engines stopped. The captain had to figure out how to save the plane. There would not be time to go back to the airport.

He saw a river, the Hudson River. It's a big river. But there were boats on it. And the water was cold. Still, he knew that would be the safest place to land. He told the passengers to get ready for a hard landing. He wanted to be sure they got to safety.

In the cabin, the passengers were scared. The airline workers told them to do their best. They said to put their heads down and hold on tight. Passengers did that. They looked at each other. Family members held hands. They told each other how they felt.

Then the plane hit the water. It was a jolt. Then water started coming into the plane. But they helped each other. The airline workers helped them get out. When everyone was safe, the captain left, too.

They were standing on the wings of the plane as it floated in the water. It was sinking. But boats came to get them. There were firemen on the boats. There were police officers, too. The people on the boats said they were lucky to have such a good captain.

He said, it is not about me. We all did it together. In fact, you're the heroes.