

Seeing the

Bigger Picture: Photo Mosaic Activity



Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary is an important location for maritime archaeologists. There are approximately 200 shipwrecks in and around Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, representing every type of vessel that sailed on the Great Lakes during the "Shipwreck Century" from 1825-1925. With that many shipwrecks, it makes Thunder Bay a very historically significant place. Archaeologists from all over the world come to study the shipwrecks in the Great Lakes, especially the shipwreck sites in Thunder Bay.

How do **maritime archaeologists** study shipwreck sites? SCUBA divers dive down to the wreck to observe and record what they see. When archaeologists study a site they carefully document the shipwreck and its artifacts. That means they take many measurements, make drawings, and take pictures and video of the site. When archaeologists make a carefully measured drawing it is called a **site plan**. If archaeologists piece together the video or pictures from a shipwreck site, they create a **photo mosaic**. Photo mosaics are very useful in studying shipwreck sites because archaeologists can see exactly what the wreck looks like on the bottom of the lake.

Vessel Vocab

ROV - Remotely Operated Vehicle.

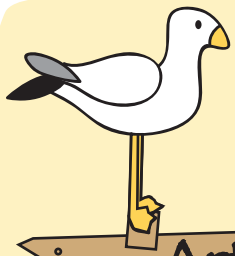
ROV's are underwater robots that help archaeologists document shipwreck sites.

Maritime Archaeology - A discipline that studies human interaction with the sea, lakes and rivers through the study of vessels, shore side facilities, cargoes, and human remains.

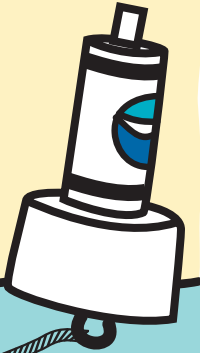
Photo Mosaic - A composite image formed from many small pictures taken of a vessel, which are then stitched together using a computer to create one large picture.

Site Plan - A scaled drawing of a shipwreck and its artifacts as it lays on the bottom of the sea or lake.





Sometimes when a site is very deep and archaeologists can't spend as long on the site, they use **remotely operated vehicles (ROVs)** to take pictures and video for them. ROVs are a useful way to document a shipwreck site because they don't need air like SCUBA divers, so they can stay on the bottom for a very long time.



Arti-FACTS

Activity

You and your team will act as real maritime archaeologists piecing together single images of real shipwrecks. When you have successfully arranged your photo mosaic, try to identify which vessel your team put together.

Materials

- Photo Mosaic pieces
- Site Plans vs. Photo Mosaics handout
- Parts of a Ship handout
- Vessel Histories handout

Crew Commands

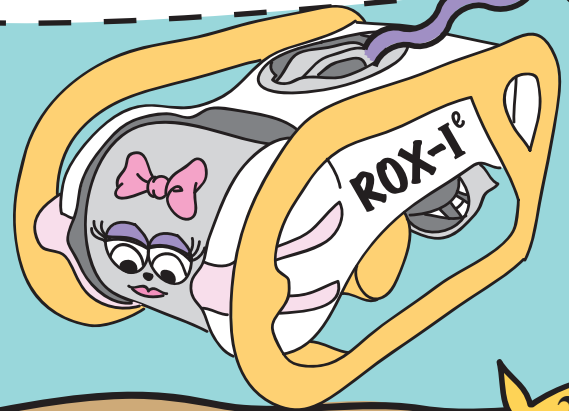
1. Read *Site Plans vs. Photo Mosaics*. Notice the differences between the two as you assemble your puzzle.
2. Assemble the pieces on your table to create a photo mosaic of a shipwreck.
3. Read through your *Vessel History* and *Parts of a Ship* handouts and try to identify the wreck that matches your photo mosaic. How do you know it is that wreck?
4. Look around the room at other groups' photo mosaics. How are they different from the one your team put together?
5. Scramble your pieces and try another team's photo mosaic.

Figure It Out

With Inspector Perry Mussel



How might archaeologists use photo mosaics to better understand shipwreck sites?



Shipwreck Challenge

Create your own mosaic by taking many pictures of anything you want. Then try to put all of the images together to make one big picture.

