



ACTIVITY

Copper-Bottomed Ship

USS *Constitution*'s hull is lined with copper sheathing below the waterline. The copper prevents mollusks from boring into the wooden hull planks and destroying them. View the image of *Constitution*'s copper-lined hull. Check your local hardware store for a strip of copper and a block of wood. Have students compare the properties of each type of material. What are the pros and cons of using these materials in building a ship like *Constitution*?





Teredo Worm

This animal is why wooden ships need copper protection. It is a type of saltwater clam called *Teredo navalis*, or shipworm, and it burrows into wood, creating many tunnels and eventually weakening and destroying the wood.