Murphy's Law
THE GAME
What can go wrong?!

David Schlaphorst

(This slideshow should be interactive. Hopefully that works on your system, but if not, it will totally be in the spirit of this presentation's topic…)

IASPEI Early Career Scientists School
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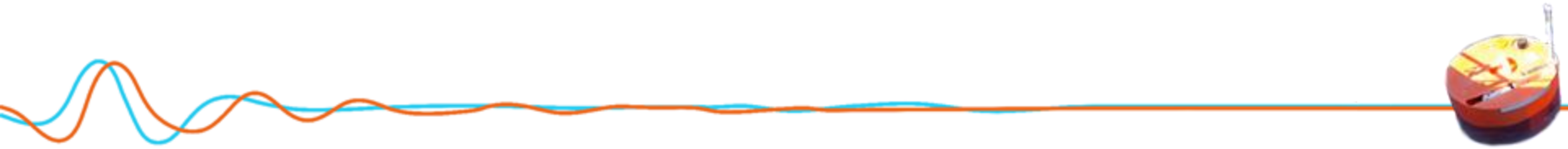
What we are doing in this presentation

- Think of details that could go wrong around an OBS project.
- To avoid unforeseen problems, it is helpful to try to foresee them.
- Also, for the end of the day, after trying to get everything right all the time, it’s just fun to (for once) trying to get everything wrong!
- This is NOT a full list!

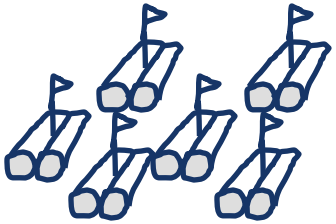


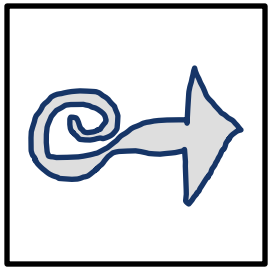
Game instructions:

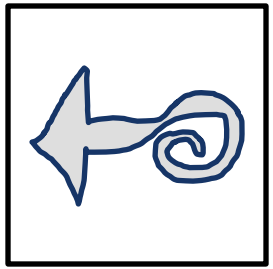
This game is played by clicking, either on the various little Droodles you can see or just on the screen.

These Droodles let you choose different options.

Sometimes, as a Droodle you will have a forward or backward arrow, to advance or go back.

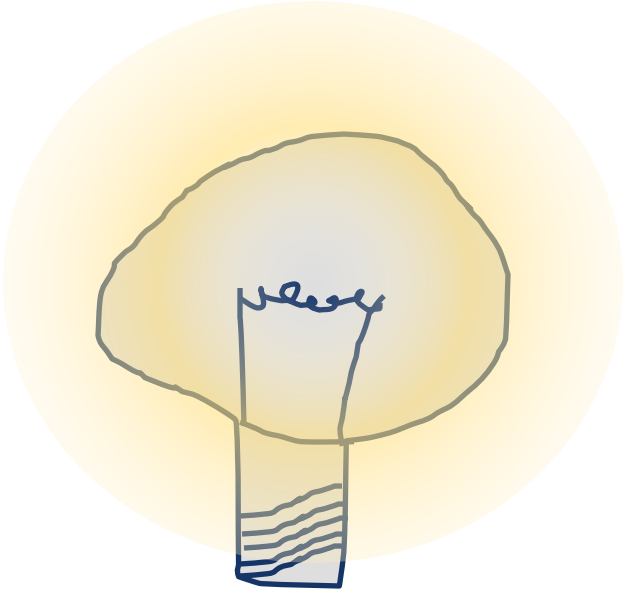




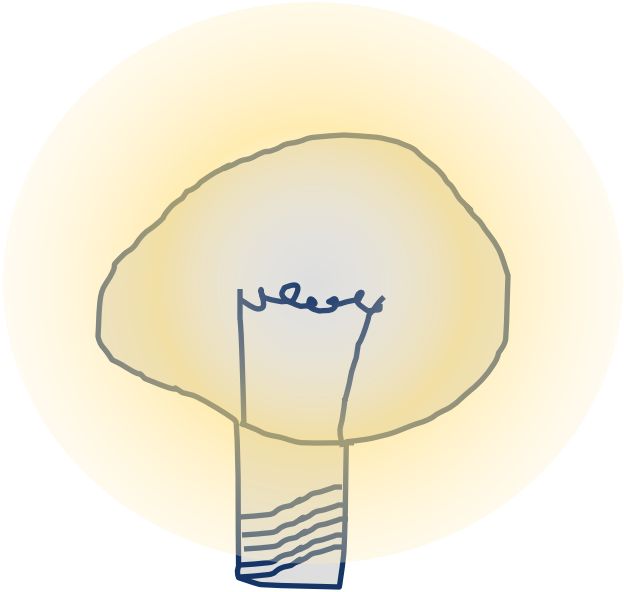


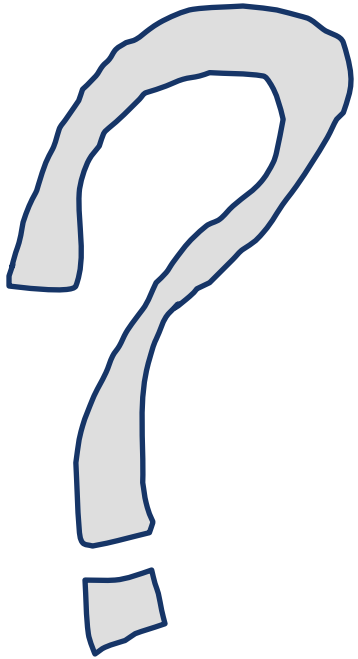
…and sometimes you will reach a dead end…
You can always click on the OBS to go back to the start of the game.

So, you have an idea for a project…



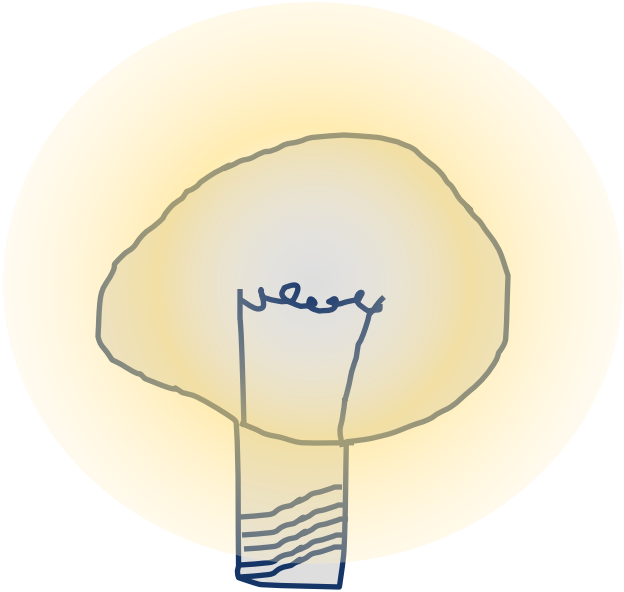
…what could go wrong first?

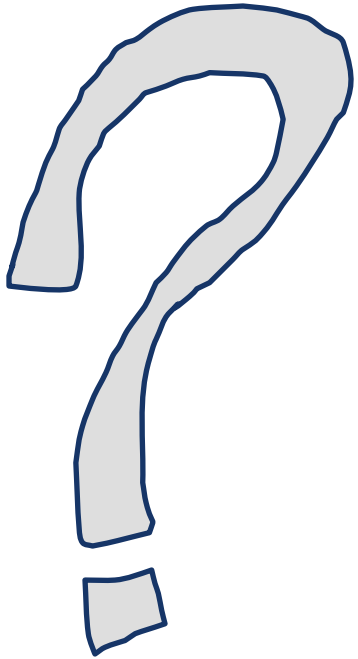




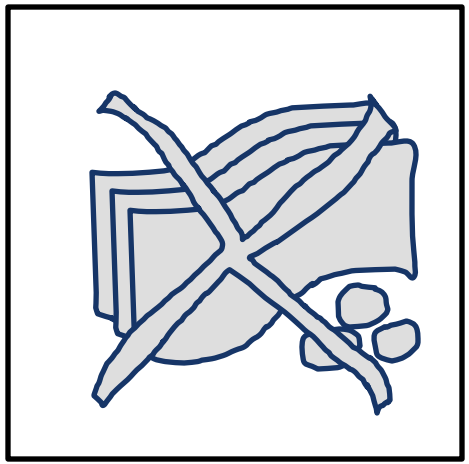
The idea is not new.

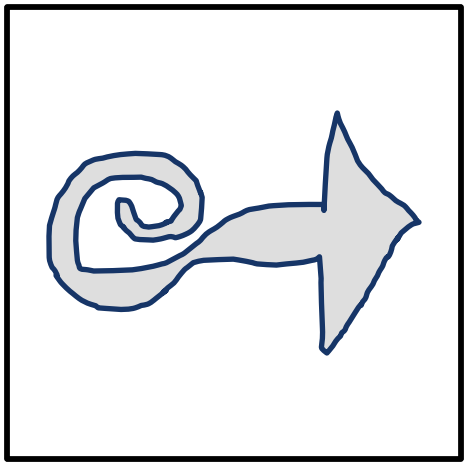
…but, ok, let’s assume it is…





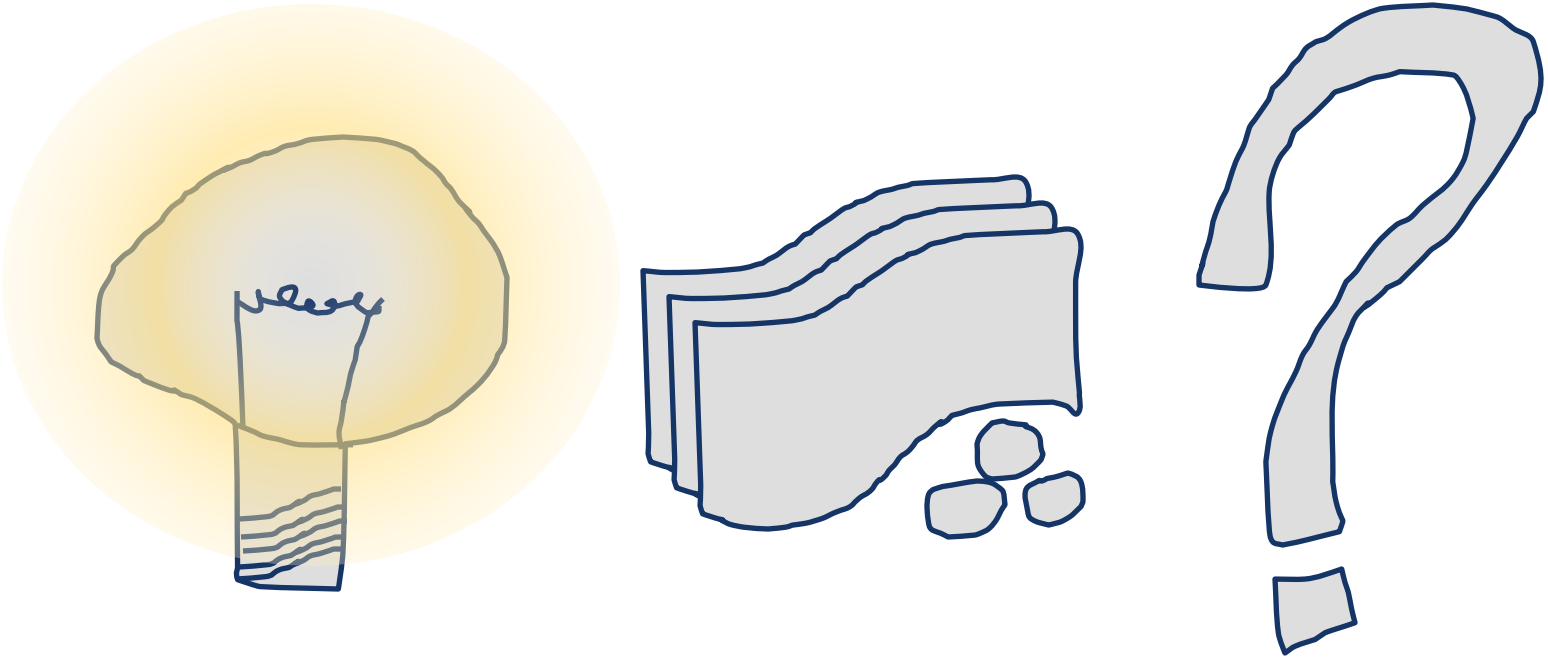
There is no funding!





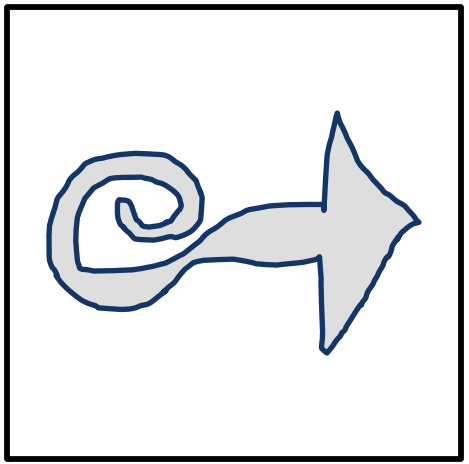
…but let's assume there is…

…what else could go wrong?



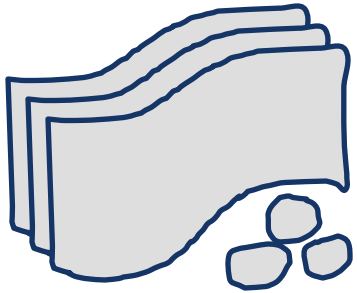
…what else could go wrong?

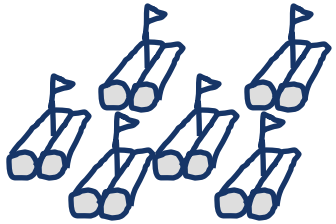
You don't find enough available instruments
(even combining different instrument pools).



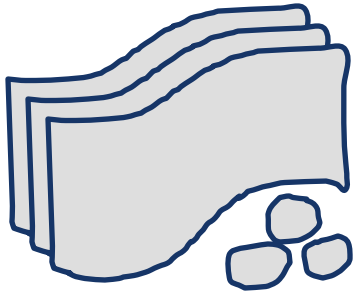
…but let's assume you do…

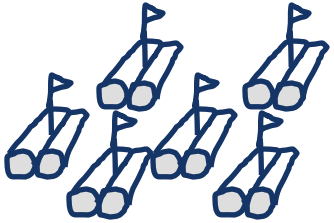
So, we have an idea, money AND the instruments!

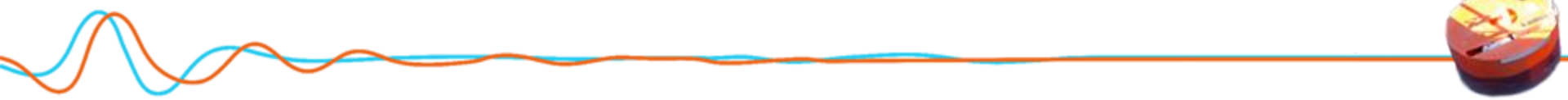




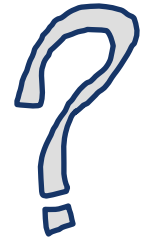
HOORAY!

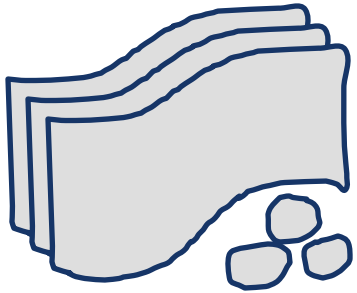


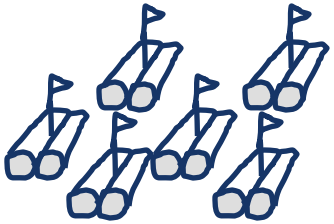


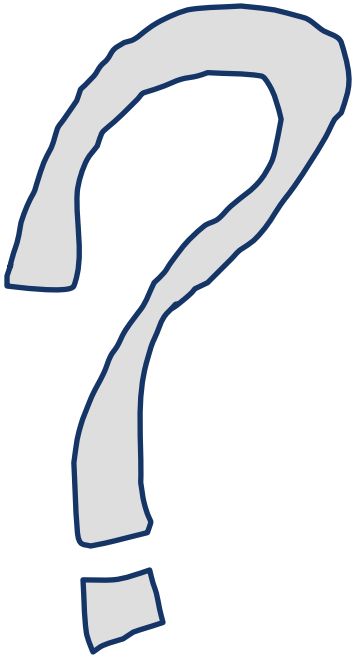


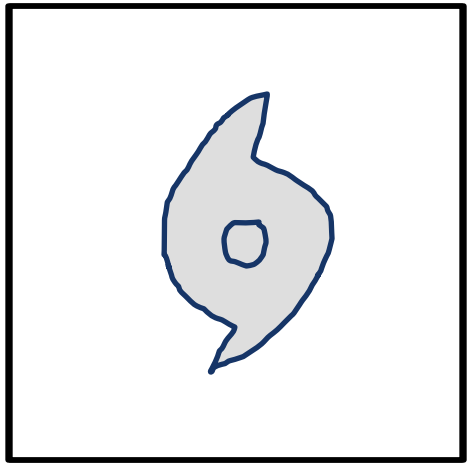
…I mean, there's nothing that could go wrong now, right

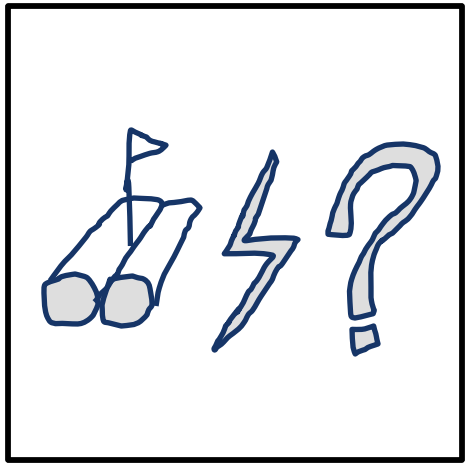


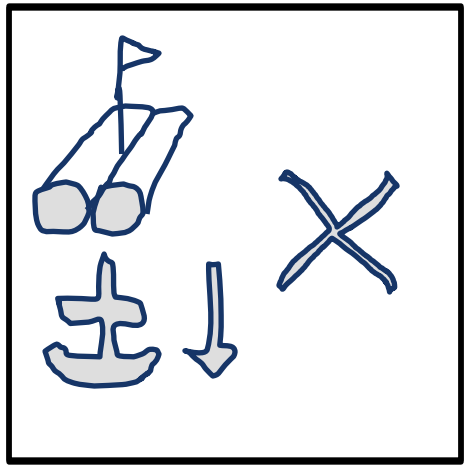


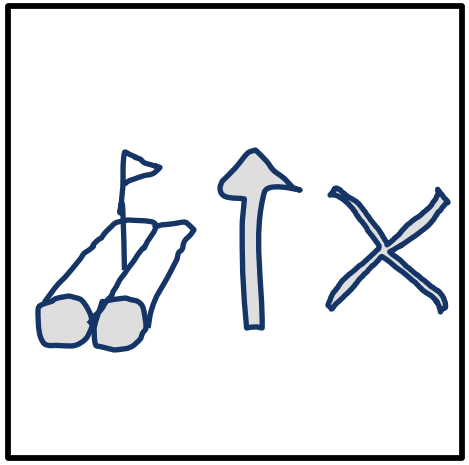


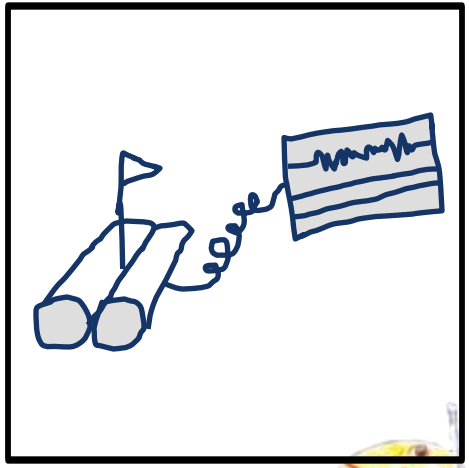




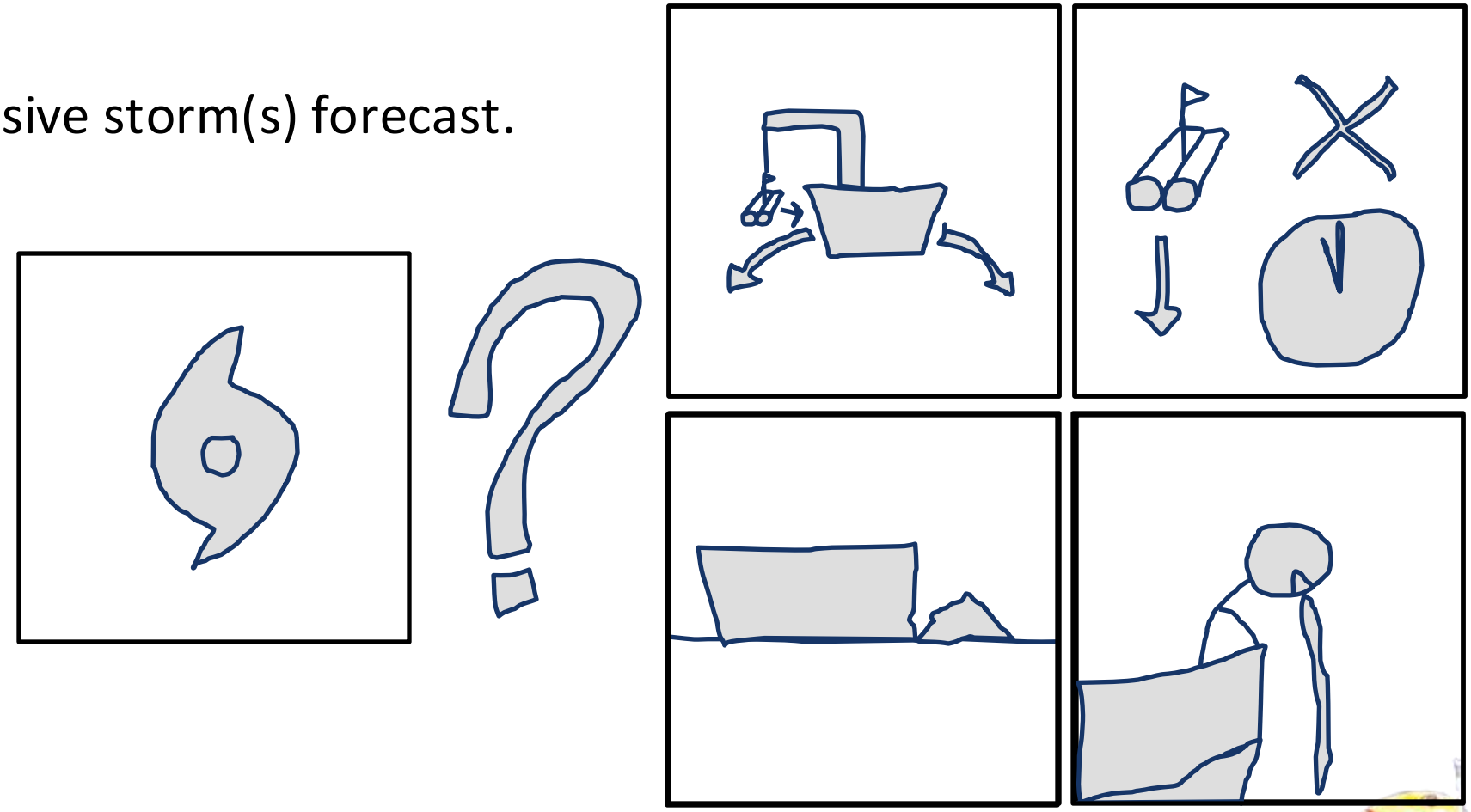




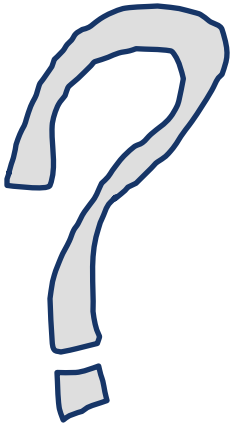


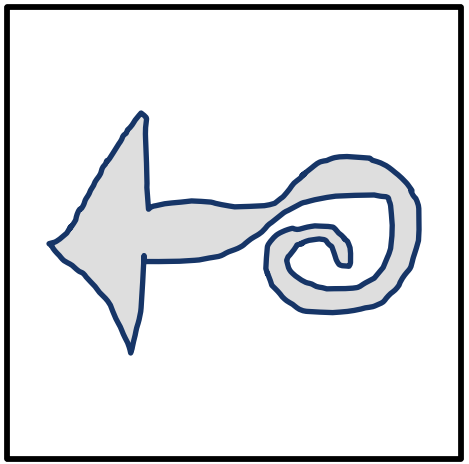


Massive storm(s) forecast.

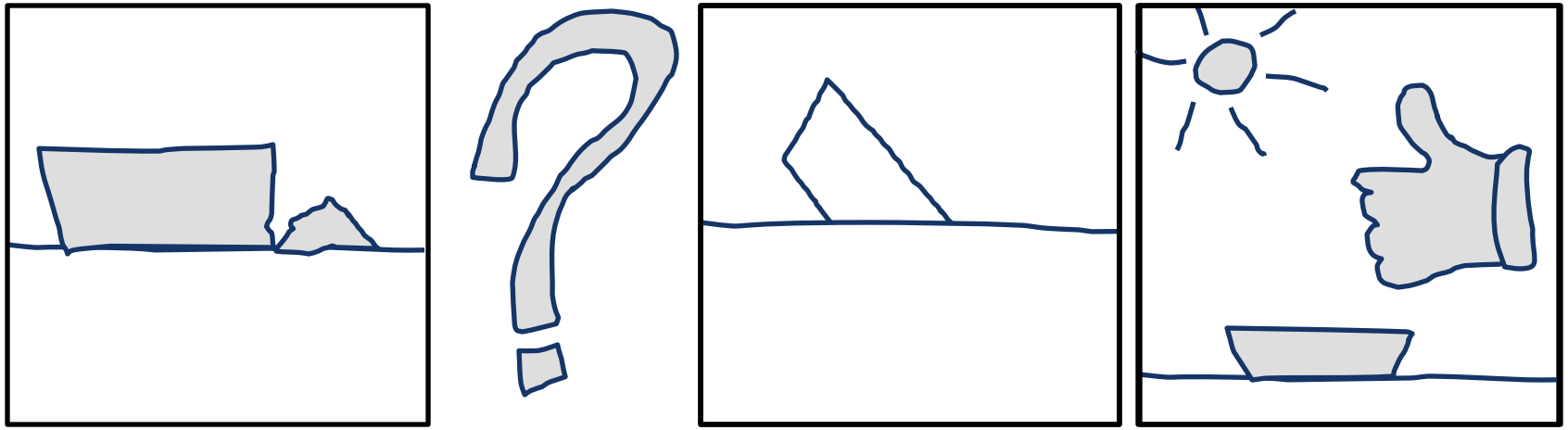


Instruments are smashed against the ship during deployment.

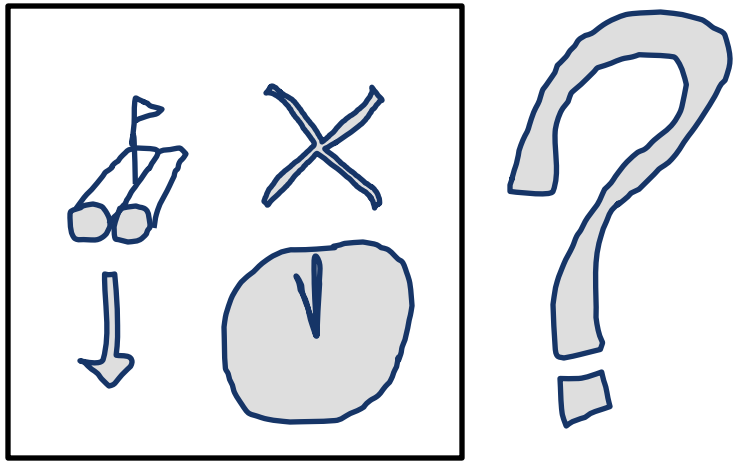


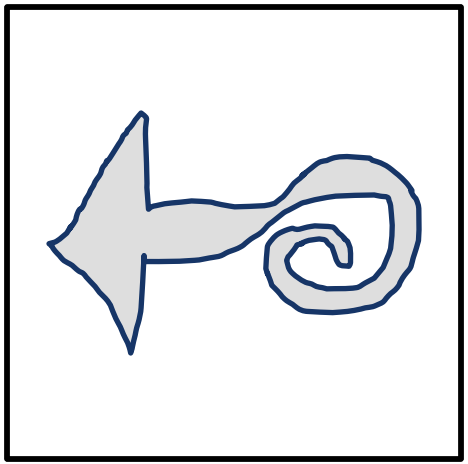


Ship breaks!

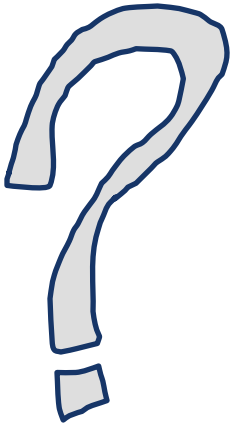


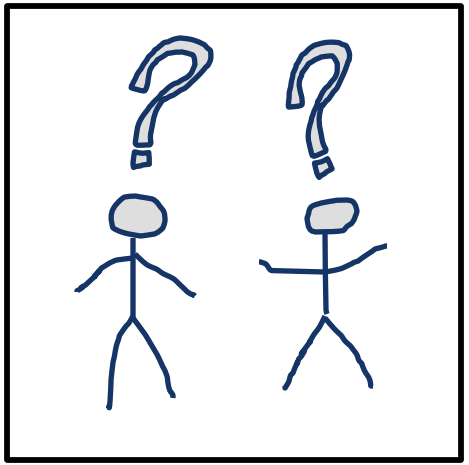
Instruments cannot be deployed in time.

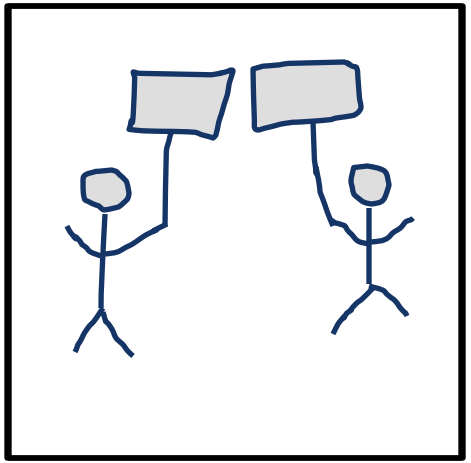


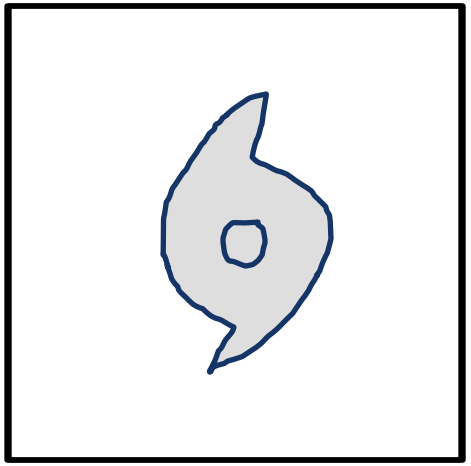


You try to do your expedition in a global pandemic, and you cannot get people to the ship without quarantine.

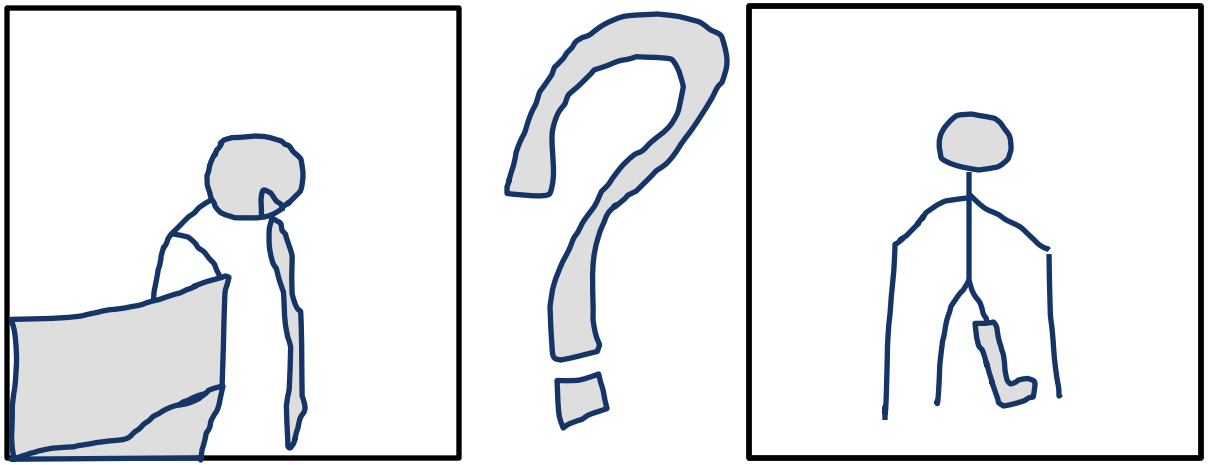




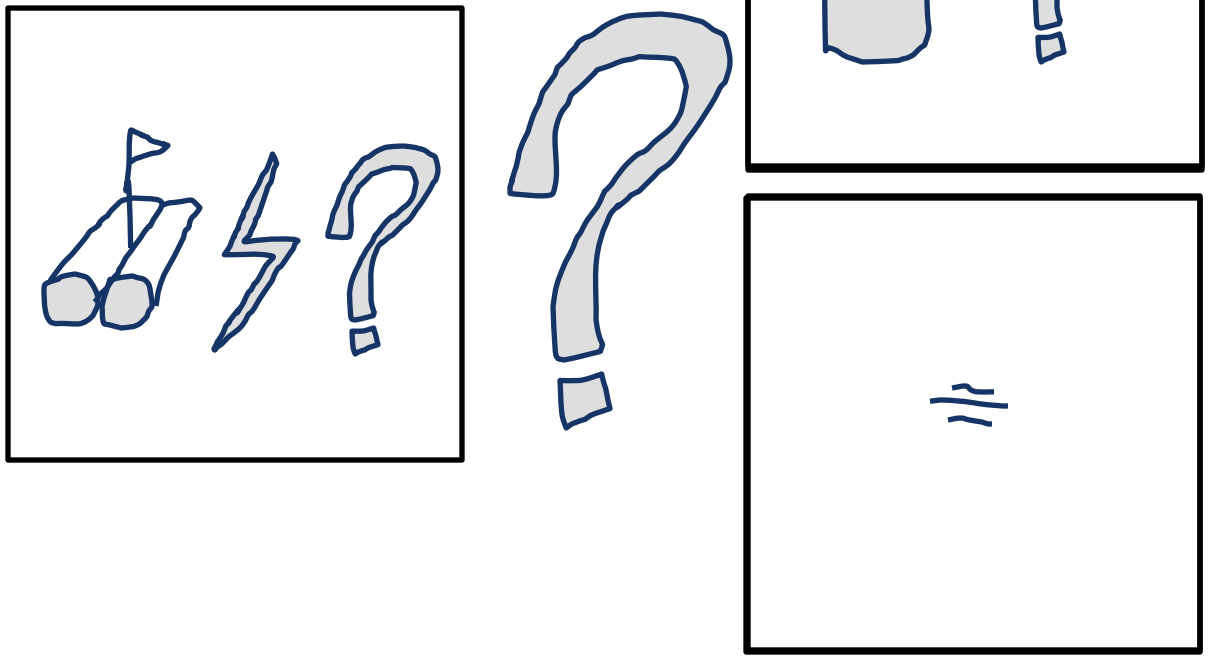




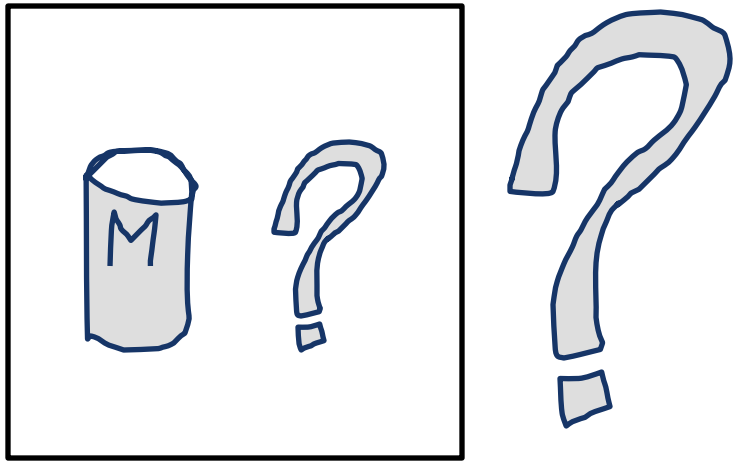
Everyone gets seasick.

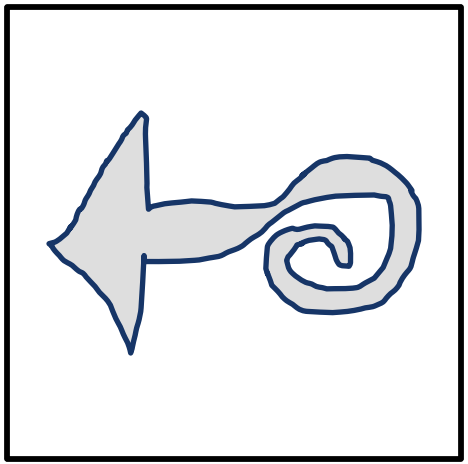


Realise that there are not enough batteries for all the instruments, while you're already at sea.



You didn't pack enough Molykote.

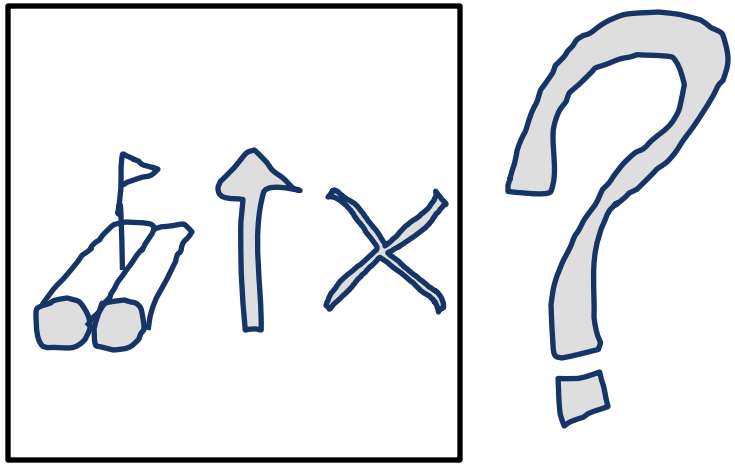




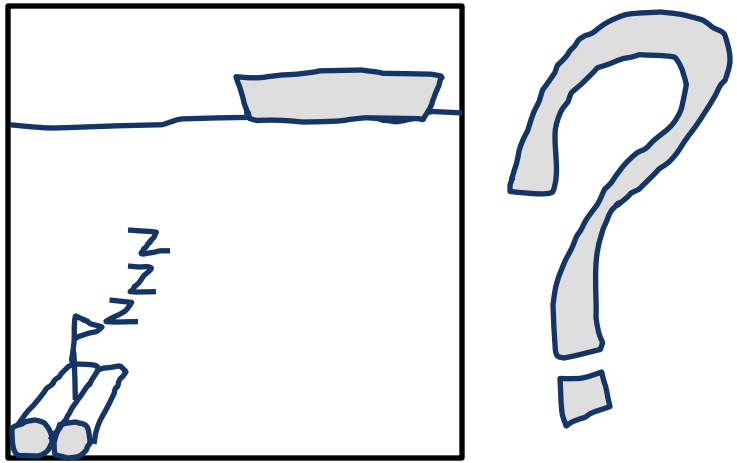
Anchor release does not work.

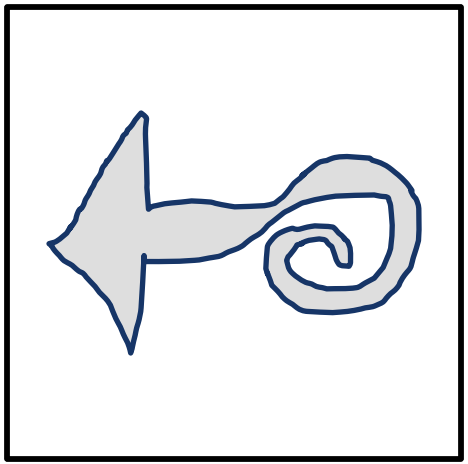
Instrument recording does not work.

The instruments don't come back up.

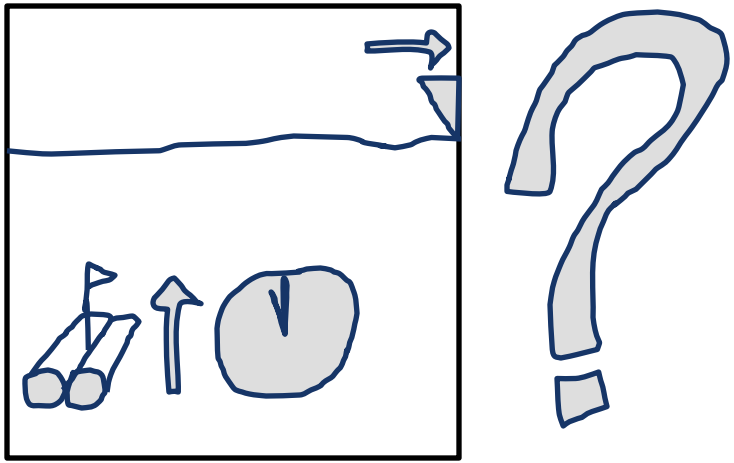


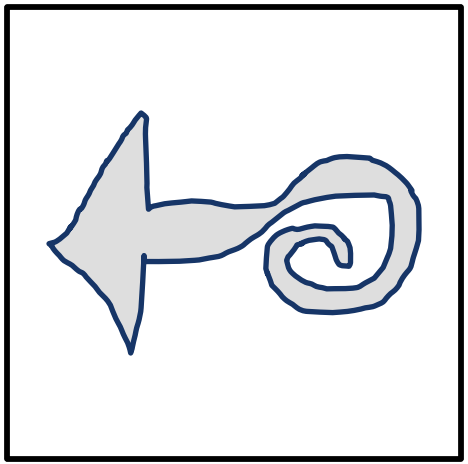
Instrument does not reply.



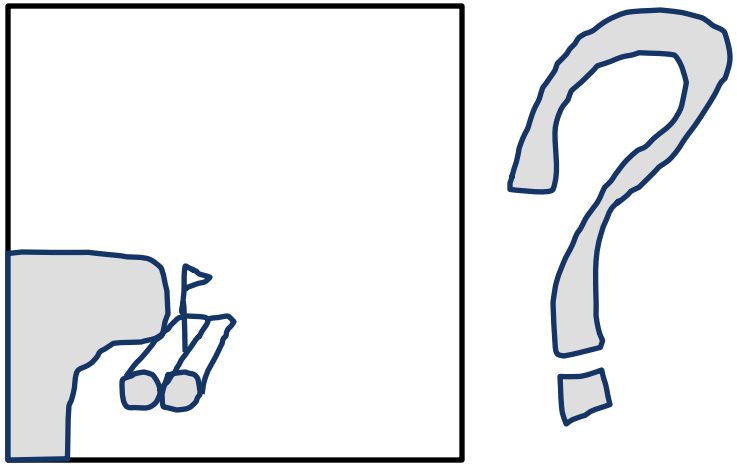


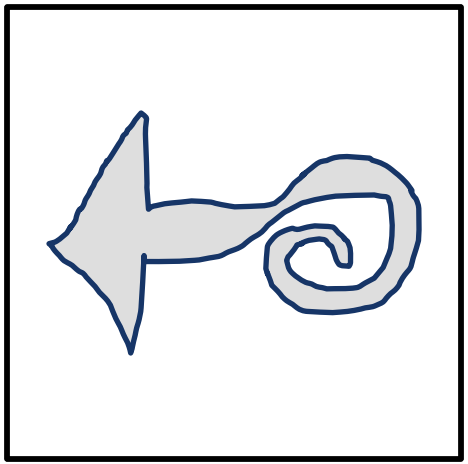
OBS comes up too slowly and you leave before.



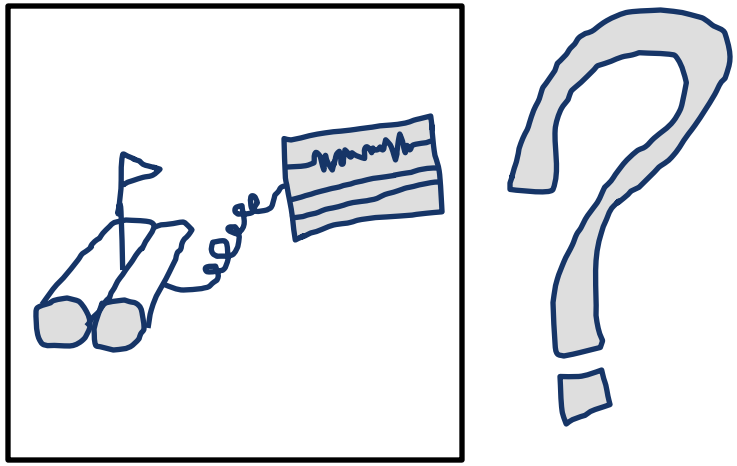


OBS gets stuck.

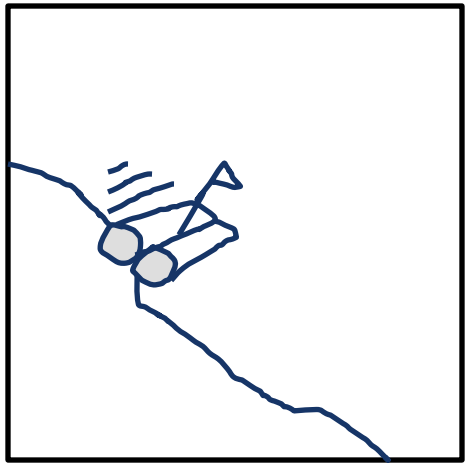


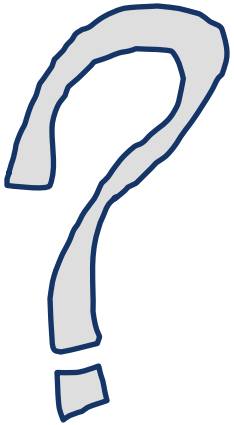


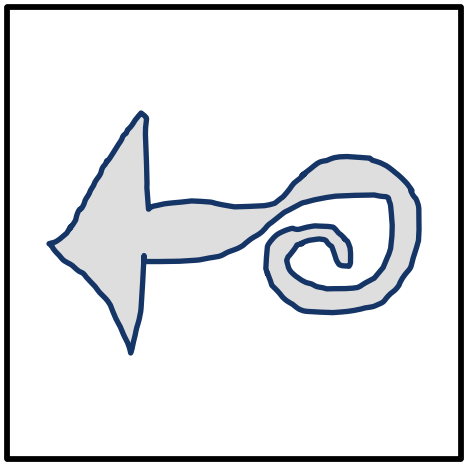
The instruments didn't record (e.g., broken components).



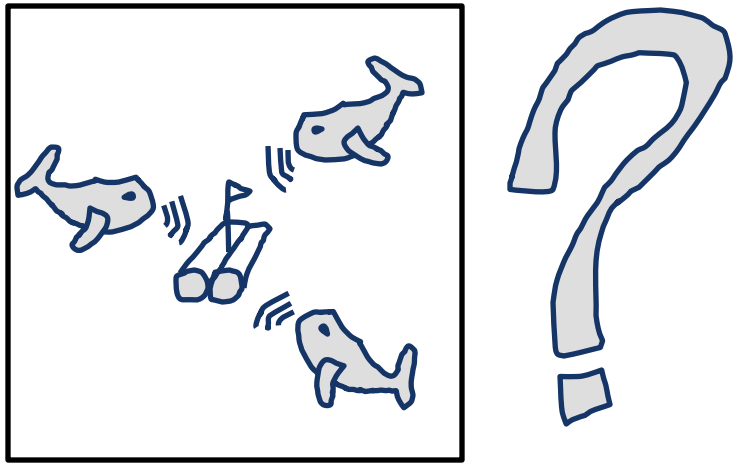
The instrument was located on a slope and was gradually (but not continuously) sliding down.

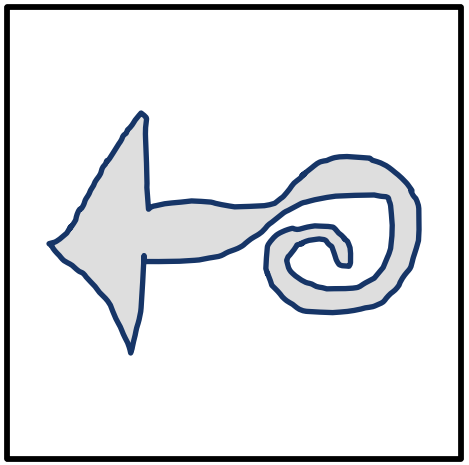




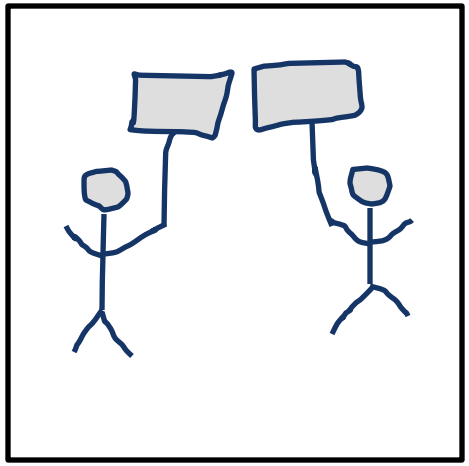


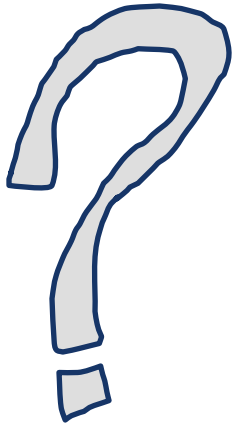
You want to focus on earthquakes, but whales just don't stop singing (you might still be ok because of different frequencies).

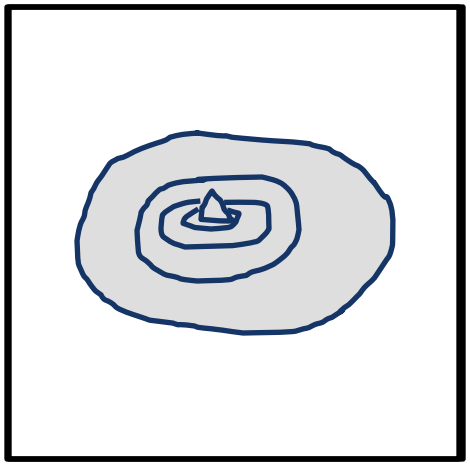




Strikes (e.g., harbour strikes, and you cannot get to stuff around the harbour or even leave it yourself).

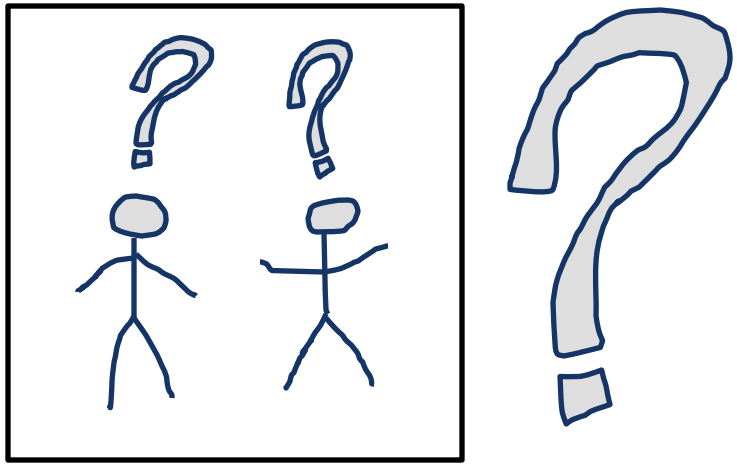


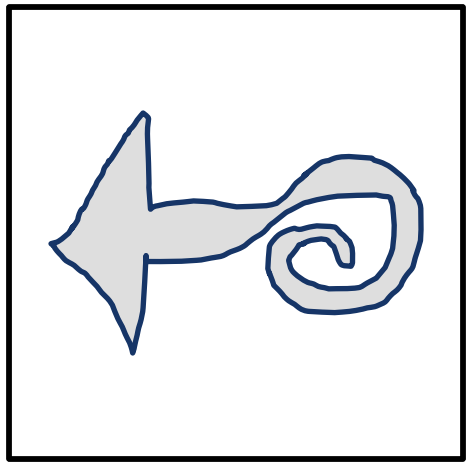




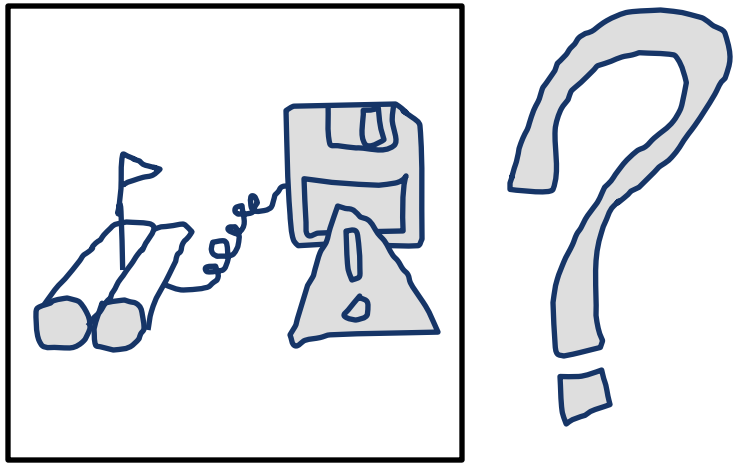
Injuries of crew members.

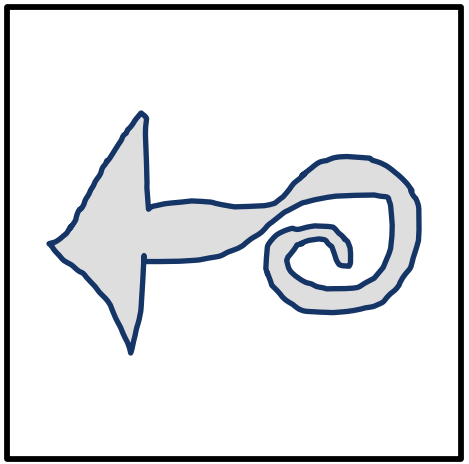
Crew members that don’t know what needs to be done or how.



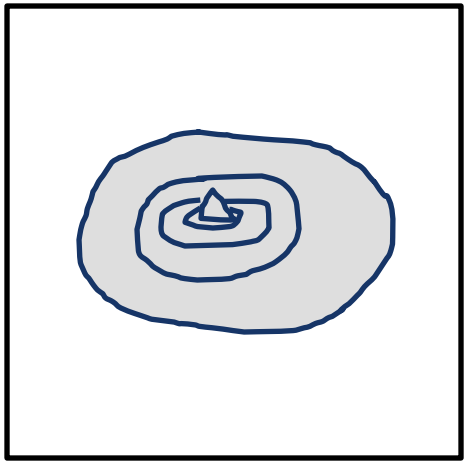


Not enough backup storage on board for all the data.

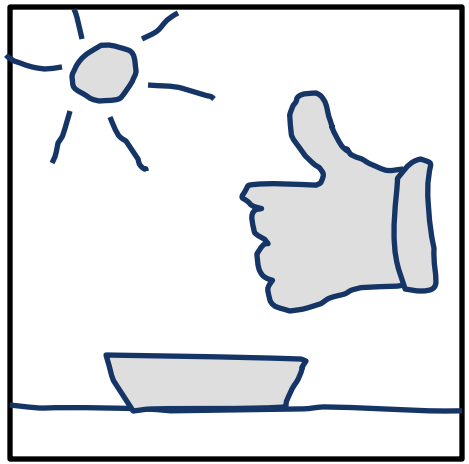




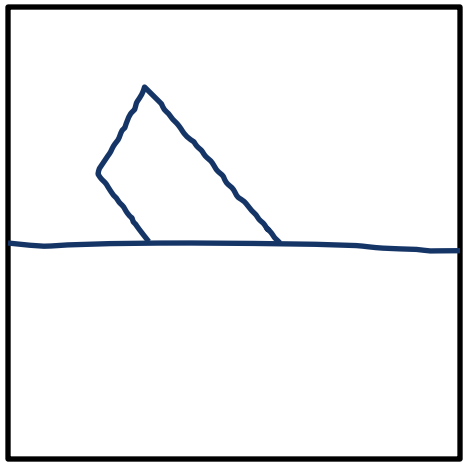
SHIP SINKS!



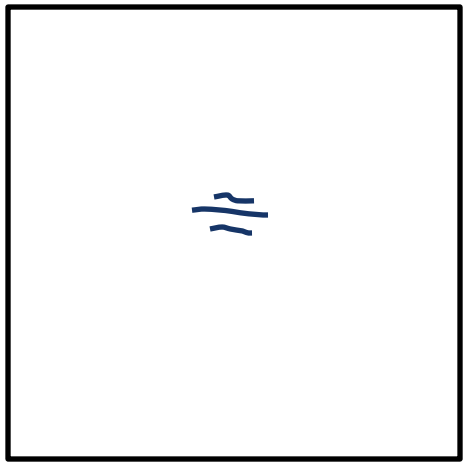
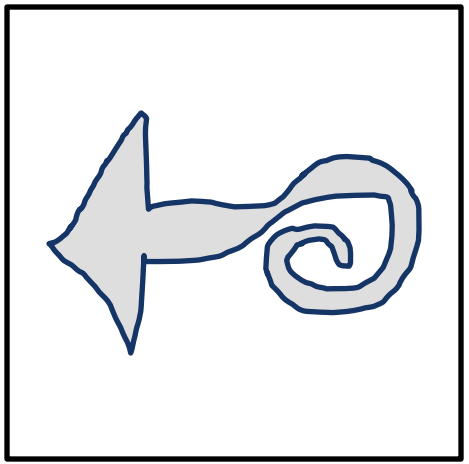
HA! You thought it’s fine … but NO!



SHIP SINKS!



SHIP SINKS!



HA! You thought you were going back …
but NO!