



THE GREAT

Lumbering on the Ottawa River

Bytown is known for the building of the Rideau Canal, however, the lumber industry before and after the canal's construction brought profit and encouraged settlement in the Ottawa River Valley. Due to trade blockades during the Napoleonic Wars, Britain needed a new supply of timber for shipbuilding. The Ottawa Valley was rich in white pine and the demand meant many French-Canadian settlers and European immigrants came to the area in search of jobs in the early 1800s. The labourers would work in the lumber camps cutting down trees, during the log drive floating the logs down the Ottawa river, and on the timber-rafts destined for Quebec City.



THE LOG DRIVE

Throughout the winter in the Ottawa Valley, logs and squared timber from the lumber camps would be brought to waterways on skids and sleighs. In the spring, when the river would thaw, the logs were floated along the river until they reached Bytown, where they would be made into timber rafts to make their next journey to Quebec City and then the Atlantic Ocean. The log drive was a dangerous job that required men to continuously break jams along the river so the logs could continue to float on. The men would jump from log to log, wearing special shoes with metal spikes called caulk boots (Learn more about these boots through our website!). These boots would help stop the men from slipping on the wet timber. Then using peaveys, the men would push the logs to break up the jams. The water would have been near freezing at this time of the year and a fall into the river could be fatal. Many of the men working the log drive were also not able



to swim. If the jams could not be broken by the men and their peaveys, they would use dynamite to blast the stuck logs. These blasts were dangerous for the workers and also caused damage and loss of valuable timber.

TIMBER RAFTS

Timber rafts were used to transport large quantities of lumber over long stretches of the Ottawa river. These stretches of river were often interrupted by rapids and waterfalls, making them difficult to navigate. When encountering rapids or falls along the journey, the rafts would have to be shored, disassembled, and then reassembled further down the river. The rafts were made of a few thousand pieces of wood, which were first made into smaller cribs and then assembled into a larger raft. They were also built with living quarters. The living quarters included places to sleep, protection from the elements, and a raft cookery. The lumber industry in the Ottawa Valley at the time was very profitable. However, as supplies and demand changed throughout the 19th century the need for log drives and timber rafts decreased. In 1908 the last timber raft left from Ottawa to complete its voyage to Quebec City.



THE TIMBER

Gather your popsicle sticks, it's time to make a timber raft! For this craft you will be building a raft, complete with living quarters for your journey!



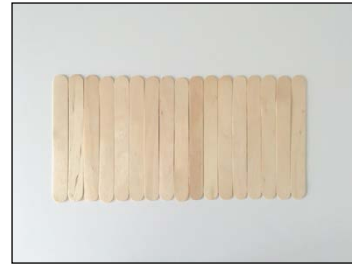
What you will need:

Popsicle Sticks
Hot Glue or White Glue*
Scissors
Construction Paper

*White glue will need to dry for 24 hours before the raft is ready to head out on the water.

PART A: THE

1. For this raft, line up about 17 popsicle sticks edge to edge and set aside.



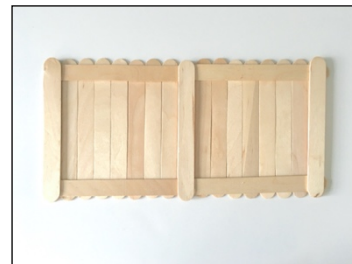
2. You will need four new sticks, which you will apply the glue to. If you are using a hot glue gun, make sure to be careful!



3. Glue down each of the four sticks as shown. The glue should connect all of the base sticks together.



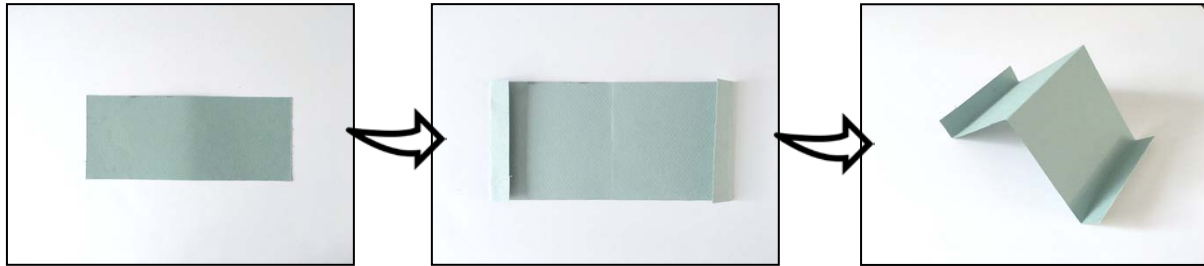
4. Take three more sticks and put glue at each end. Place the sticks at each end and across the middle. This will help strengthen the raft.



(If you don't have enough popsicle sticks, or would just like to make a smaller raft, you can follow the same steps except it will look more like this!)



PART B: THE



1. Cut the construction paper into a rectangle about 8cm by 16cm.
2. Fold over about 1cm of the paper at each end. This will be the tabs you glue to your raft to secure the tent.
3. Fold the rectangle in half in the opposite direction of the tabs to give your tent a peak.
4. Put glue on the tabs and attach the tent to your raft. Your timber raft is now complete!

Time to take your raft out on the water! Don't forget to post a picture of your custom timber raft and tag [@bytownmuseum!](https://www.instagram.com/bytownmuseum)

