

EXPERIMENTAL ARCHAEOLOGY TOWARDS EXPERIENCING ARCHAEOLOGY

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My name is Martin Lominy. I'm a trained archaeologist, a career educator, a self-taught craftsman and the founder of [Aboriginal Technologies Autochtones](#), a Quebec based business with an educational mission aimed at providing the general public with a more practical vision of the past and a better understanding of aboriginal cultures of North America through the reproduction and experimentation of ancient technologies. In the past couple of years, my Day of Archaeology posts have focused mainly on artefact reproduction because this is what I do most of the time. So this year I would like to talk a bit more about my work in education as I am spending the day preparing educational material for upcoming activities that take place in August during [Archaeology Month](#) in my home province of Quebec.



Flintknapping demonstration in a reconstructed native village. (Photo: Les Primitifs)



Third grade student learning to fletch an arrow.

Learning about ancient technologies through experimentation is central to my work but sharing this knowledge is the ultimate goal of my career. In fact, most of my artefact reproductions are purchased by museums and interpretation centres to complement their activities and exhibitions. I have worked as a museum educator for over a decade from delivering to developing public programmes and always enjoyed giving the general public a better understanding of what life would have been like in the past. I have dealt with all sorts of groups ranging from children to elders and from amateurs to scientists as well as survivalists looking towards ancient technologies to expand their wilderness skills. It's always been a challenge to adapt the complexities of archaeology to a variety of audiences but one that has kept me passionate about public education.



Families learning to make prehistoric fish hooks. (Photo: Maison Nivard De Saint-Dizier)



Survivalist group learning about ancient fishing technologies. (Photo: Les Primitifs)

As a craftsman, my educational approach is about communicating through objects that can be touched, used or created so my activities range from interactive conferences for adult audiences to craft

workshops for school groups and demonstrations for public events where people can experience the subject directly. For this purpose, my work in artefact reproduction is not about imitating artefacts with synthetic materials but rather going through the entire process or creating them from raw materials to finished tools and testing them so that I can explain how they were made and what this meant for people using them in the past. This level of experimentation is mostly a way for me to learn beyond theory but it also allows me to share my knowledge and skills with specialized groups such as college and university students interested in experimental archaeology.



Anthropology students from the University of Montreal learning about the uses of plant fibres. (Photo: RÉAUM)

As a part time anthropology teacher, I have also used my classroom experience to develop specific activities that can be integrated into anthropology classes to give students a better understanding of anthropological concepts, archaeological techniques and past lifeways. The school curriculum in Quebec includes several chapters on aboriginal culture and history which were integrated only a decade ago, so most of the groups that I meet are primary and secondary level classes looking to complement their programme with activities giving them access to specialized knowledge and material while discovering archaeology as a profession. Primary school children are my favourite age group whose limitless curiosity and enthusiasm inspire me the most to educate the public about the importance of learning from the past through archaeology.



Primary school students learning about prehistoric lifeways through a modelling project.

So these are the things on my mind and on my table today. To learn more about Aboriginal Technologie's educational programmes, please visit my [website](#).

Cheers!