

Glass > Issaquah Schools Foundation

 isfdn.org/glass-reference



Like most practical arts, people find a way to make them beautiful. Glass is naturally beautiful, so it didn't take long before glass became an art form of its own. In early cultures, people made daily objects of glass beautiful. In the middle ages, glass took on a theoretical and spiritual importance in churches. The colored light that sifted through the stained glass windows bathed the interior in soft colors and was supposed to remind people of the Holy Spirit. In the Victorian and Art Deco years at the turn of the 19th century, mass production and growing wealth created a huge market for the beautiful glass work of companies such as Tiffany and Corning. In the second half of this century, art glass experienced a revival. Because of Dale Chihuly and others, Seattle is one of the places where this art form is concentrated.

Glass is also an amazing material which we can tie into the sciences. The glass we use for art is made of silica and is an amorphous solid, meaning that it doesn't have a crystalline structure. It is a really hard liquid which gets much softer when it is heated. When we fuse glass, we heat it almost to its melting point, which is different for different glasses, and let it run together. As it cools it hardens. This all happens in the kiln at very hot temperatures (around 1500-degree F).

Glass can be transparent (light comes through) or opaque (no light comes through) and comes in many colors. When we stack glass, we have to think about how the colors will combine to get what we want. We can see that by holding the glass up to light and seeing what color we get when two pieces are stacked on top of each other.

Glass is also sharp on its cut edges. When handling glass pieces you need to move them around with a pencil (if you are digging through a bin to find the piece you want). And only touch it on the larger flat sides, not the thin cut edges.

Sample Projects:

- [Abstract Fused Glass Tiles](#) (4th Grade) art lesson.
- [Fused Glass Birds](#) (4th Grade) art lesson.

- Reverse Plexiglass Painting (4th Grade) art lesson.
- Contact paper stained glass. Make a square or round or heart-shaped frame out of black construction paper. Put it on contact paper. Cut out cellophane pieces and attach to sticky side of contact paper to make a “stained glass”.
- Make a sun-catcher by pressing flowers, leaves, etc between pieces of glass or plexi-glass. Frame in metal. (can be found in craft stores).
- Glass painting.



Blue Glass Cup, Egypt 91 Shaped with pliers.

Rose Window, Chartes 13th c.



Mille Fiori paper weight, 1845, specialty of the Venetians and Arab cultures.

Window Frank Lloyd Wright, 1912.

Violet and Green Persian Set, Chihuly, 1990.

Crocodile Man, Ruth Brockmann, 1985.

Chair, Danny Lane, 1988.





