

# Glassware in the Victorian Era

## LESSON PLAN #5-April 20

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Glassmaking was one of the first industries to be adopted by American Colonists. A glass workshop was established at Jamestown, Virginia as early as 1608. Unfortunately, due to a combination of factors, including bad weather, disease, and difficult relations with the native peoples, the workshop at Jamestown was eventually abandoned. Today, modern historic interpreters operate a rebuilt **replica** of the Jamestown Glass workshop, where artisans recreate some of the first hand-made glass objects that were used by America's earliest settlers. By the mid- to late-1700s, the 13 American colonies imported most of their glass. **Imports** included windows, table glass (such as bowls and cups), and various types of bottles. In the 1800's, glassmaking in America increased in scale and most glass became machine-made instead of hand-made. The invention of pressing, a manufacturing process for pre-made glass, sped up and simplified glassmaking and allowed for more **ornate** patterns to be imprinted on the glass. As American industry and prosperity increased and glass became more affordable to more people, the demand rose and allowed for specialized companies to be established.

The Herman Tappan Perfume Company was one of the major American perfume companies during the time known as the Victorian era. The company operated out of New York City. Most of Tappan's perfumes and colognes were aimed at the middle class and their prices were affordable. The Tappan Company was noted for manufacturing perfume bottles in many shapes, sizes, and colors. They were also known to make perfume bottles that resembled such objects as boots, miniature dolphins, rabbits and other **whimsical** figures especially popular with children.



### Critical Thinking Questions:

- ◆ If you were in the manufacturing business, why would you want to make your product affordable to the middle class?
- ◆ The antique glass bottle in the picture above contains sand instead of perfume. What might be the reason for that?
- ◆ What were the years that made up the Victorian era? Who is this era named for?
- ◆ Many new inventions arose during the Victorian era. Name at least 3.
- ◆ WRITE a short paragraph on how each of your selected inventions impacted society.

### VOCABULARY:

Imports— Products brought into a country from another country for sale.

Replica— An exact copy or model of something.

Ornate- decorative, fancy, detailed.

Whimsical— The opposite of serious and practical. playful or amusing. .

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Click on this link for more information on Victorian Era inventions:

<http://www.primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/victorians/inventiotimeline.html>

To learn more about the Jamestown Glass Workshop visit this website:

<https://www.nps.gov/jame/planyourvisit/ghgiftshop.htm>

Test Your Knowledge with this online Quiz:

<http://www.quiz-maker.com/QK1N6OG>