

glass

introduction

Look around you. How many different things can you see that are made of glass? How many things have you seen or used today that are made of glass? In fact, glass has so many different uses that it's hard to believe the main ingredient is sand. The oldest glass objects that we've found date back to around 3500BC and were made in Egypt and Mesopotamia. In the 1st century BC glass production was made faster, cheaper and easier when the blow pipe was invented by Syrian craftsmen, and between the 7th and 14th centuries glass making really developed in the Islamic world, with new methods of decoration and cutting, and experiments with optics, lenses and chemistry. Glass was used to decorate mosques with beautiful lamps and stained glass windows and it has been suggested that stained glass windows in churches came about after the Crusaders saw these in the Islamic world and brought the idea back to Europe.

questions to think about

- How many things can you think of that are made of glass?
- What are some of the properties of glass that make it useful?
- What and how does glass help us see?
- How is glass used in medicine and science?
- What is glass made from?
- What are the advantages of glass over plastic?



Modern buildings use lots of glass on the facades



where to find out more

- Lots of information about the history and making of glass: <http://www.historyofglass.com/>
- How is glass made? <http://mocomi.com/how-is-glass-made/>
- Make your own glass with this digital game! <http://www.nationalglasscentre.com/learn/digitalresources/glassmakinggame/>
- The rise of the glass industry in the golden age of Muslim civilisation: <http://www.1001inventions.com/glass>
- Uses of glass: <https://www.glassallianceeurope.eu/en/applications>
- <https://www.romag.co.uk/knowledge-hub/>