

### GET INSPIRED

In Colonial times, there were no banks for the colonists to use to keep their silver safe. If their silver coins were stolen, there would be no way for them to prove that it was theirs or how much that they had. This is why they started using silversmiths.

A silversmith is a metalworker who crafts objects from silver. Silversmiths saw or cut shapes from silver sheets or bars, and then use hammers to form the metal into shapes. As the metal is hammered, bent, and worked, it becomes harder.

The colonists took their valuable silver coins to a silversmith who crafted it into beautiful silverware pieces like spoons, platters, cups and other items. This would make it easier to identify if their items were ever stolen. Further, if a person owned a spoon made of silver, they owned a spoon made of money - if one's luck ran out, that person could sell the spoon for money to buy what he or she needed. While most major colonial cities had a silversmith shop, many silversmiths found themselves floundering in the competition with British imports. A rare commodity in the colonies, new raw silver was difficult to find

The spoon below was made of silver by Paul Revere in Boston, Massachusetts between 1770 and 1780. *Courtesy The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY*>



Silversmith Preston Jones Crafting a vessel in the same fashion as silversmiths of the 1700s would have done at Colonial Williamsburg. *Courtesy of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation*

and many colonial silversmiths had to make ends meet by mending pieces for clients and taking on part time work unrelated to silver-smithing, such as dentistry.

Silver items were more than just economics. The items made from silver were often very fine and beautiful; silversmiths were considered artists. Because silver was so highly valued as a precious metal, clients respected the work of smiths. One famous silversmith from colonial times that you may have heard of was Paul Revere, who was later an instrumental part of the Revolutionary War.

# BANK OF SPOONS

## THE ART OF SILVERSMITHING

In this activity, you will learn to do silver plating like a silversmith and add your own personal touches to make your platter easily identifiable as your own!



### MATERIALS NEEDED:

A foam tray  
Aluminum foil  
Scissors  
Paper Plate  
Glue  
Yarn  
Paper Plate

### INSTRUCTIONS:



- Make a puddle of glue on the paper plate.



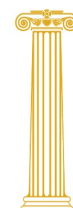
- Dip the yarn in the plate of glue. Use the yarn to make your design on the foam tray and push them down into place.

- Let the yard dry completely onto the tray, a few hours to one day.



- Once the yard is dried onto the tray, cover the tray with the aluminum foil.

- Use your fingers to gently push the foil into the edges of the yarn to make your design show through.



TROUP  
COUNTY  
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