



Silver - Ag

Silver, for all of you geeks,
Has been mined since the ancient Greeks:
For plates cups and idols
And lots more 'besidals'.
Dig in Mexico, if for it you seek.



Aleixo Garcia resigned
To sail to the Argentine.
His heart was aquiver
With the thought of that silver.
- He was greedy, most of the time!



Silver makes mirrors so fare
Tooth filings and tableware.
It's a killer - serial
Of things bacterial -
The microbes that float in the air.

You've heard of silver that's 'Stirling'
For bangle, trinket and earring?
For Stirling made 'proper'
Mix A-g with copper
To keep it shining and 'blinging'.



©JMS

When it's dug up out of the ground, silver can be in a pure form, rather than mixed in with other elements. This means that it was pretty easy for our ancestors to spot.

'Ancestors' is an appropriate word to use because humans have been using silver since around 3000BC!

Chemistry has been around for a very long time. To find out more, use the link below and listen to the podcast on funkidslive.com



<https://edu.rsc.org/download?ac=15995>



INVESTIGATE THE SCIENCE

- ✓ Silver can be rather expensive, so doing some experiments with it at home isn't really possible. However, the poem talks about some *properties* of silver which we can investigate.
- ✓ Silver, for instance, makes the best mirrors! Although it will tarnish over time, silver is the best-known reflector of visible light. You can use a couple of cheaper alternatives to investigate reflecting light by making a periscope.
- ✓ Why not design and make a 'Wanted Poster' for silver? It could display its 'crimes' - in other words, the things that it is responsible for and what it's used for.



Make your own Periscope:

Materials Required:

A piece of easily folded card or a cereal box - A4 size at least

Template - provided

2 mirrors (5cm x5 cm approx.) - You can buy card mirrors or use handbag mirrors.
Aluminium foil stuck to card will work but the results may disappoint!

Glue stick or PVA glue

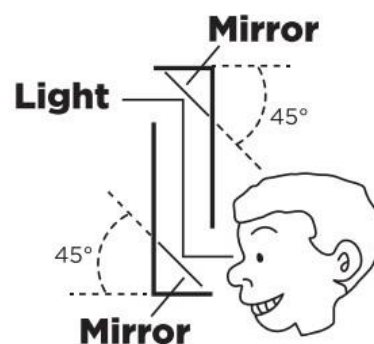
Masking tape

Scissors

Materials for decoration - if desired.

Method

- ❖ Print off the Periscope template and glue it securely onto the cardboard.
- ❖ Only when the glue has dried, carefully cut out the template along the solid lines.
- ❖ Using a ruler, score along the dotted lines. You may require some adult assistance for this!
- ❖ Fold inwards along the scores. Use the ruler to help keep the folds straight.
- ❖ Fold the periscope over to make a tube shape. Glue the flaps down or use masking tape if this is easier.
- ❖ Glue a mirror into each open end of the periscope.



- ❖ Have fun snooping!



INVESTIGATE THE STORY

Aleixo Garcia was what was known as a conquistador: a Spanish or Portuguese soldier/explorer from the 16th century.

He explored South America and managed to gather a large horde of silver for himself. However, he came to a rather sticky end!

Choose one or more of the topics below and produce a mini project. You can produce a poster, a mind-map, a factsheet, a PowerPoint or video.

- What can you discover about the life of Aleixo Garcia and his adventures?
- What can you find out about the conquistadors? What inspired them to explore the Americas?*
- Research the story of conquistadors such as Cortés or Pizarro.*
- Investigate the peoples of Central and South America before the arrival of the Europeans: the Incas; the Aztecs and/or the Mayans (there were many other American civilisations apart from these three)*
- Mexico is the world's largest producer of silver. Can you find some of the other major producers and mark them on a map?

*Why not check out 'Horrible Histories' by Terry Deary

CHEAT

OK. You'll pretty soon discover that Aleixo Garcia **DID NOT** sail to 'The Argentine' (Argentina) as the poem says. In my defence, it rhymes, **and** it is in South America **and** it has a connection with silver. That's called 'poetic licence'! Can you discover what that connection is?



INVESTIGATE THE POEM

Our poem isn't so much one poem, but a series of poems called Limericks.

Limericks are humorous, 5-line poems which originally came from the Irish city of Limerick. Their origins can be traced back to the 14th century! However, they were made famous by the Victorian English author Edward Lear in his 'Book of Nonsense'.

The first, second- and fifth-lines rhyme with each other and have the same number of syllables (usually 8 or 9).

The third- and fourth-lines rhyme with each other and have the same number of syllables (usually 5 or 6)

Limericks quite often, but not always, start with 'There once was a...' or 'There was a

Try writing your own Limerick. Write your first line and then brainstorm rhyming words for the last word of the line which can be used later in the Limerick. Write the second line, but again, keep in mind that you'll need a line to follow which rhymes. **Above all, stick to the pattern and have fun!**

Examples of traditional Limericks by Edward Lear:

There was a Young Lady of Ryde,
Whose shoestrings were seldom untied.
She purchased some clogs,
And some small spotted dogs,
And frequently walked about Ryde.

There was an Old Man with a flute,
A serpent ran into his boot;
But he played day and night,
Till the serpent took flight,
And avoided that man with a flute

There was an Old Man of Kilkenny,
Who never had more than a penny;
He spent all that money,
In onions and honey,
That wayward Old Man of Kilkenny.

