

Lesson: John Deere, That's Who!

*Use this lesson as a hands-on activity following reading *John Deere, That's Who!* aloud to the class. It teaches students the importance of creative thinking while designing tools to meet specific needs. This activity can be done in pairs or individually.*

Supply List

"Blacksmith for a day" scenarios

Foil sheets (1 sheet per student)

Popsicle sticks

Various art supplies (scissors, tape, glue, construction paper, etc)

Procedure

1. Read *John Deere, That's Who!* aloud to the class.
2. Ask the following questions after you've read the story:
 - a. What was John Deere's job? (A: Blacksmith)
 - b. Blacksmith is a person who makes and repairs things made out of iron and steel
 - c. What did John Deere repair for the town of Grand Detour, IL? (A: broken pots and pans, horseshoes, pitchforks and plows)
 - d. Since John Deere manufactured his first plow in 1837, approximately 596 different tractor models have been designed, produced and sold!
3. Pass out materials (foil, toothpicks, art supplies, popsicle sticks, etc). Explain that the students are now blacksmiths who make things out of metal.
4. Give the students a scenario in which someone is in need of a new piece of equipment just like John Deere and the farmers of Illinois. Prompt them to start thinking about inventing and producing something that meets the needs of other people.
5. The tinfoil represents metal used by a blacksmith, popsicle sticks – wood, and so on.
6. After the students have produced models of the items they think will meet the needs of the consumers in the scenarios, have them share their ideas with the class.