Come to the Table: American Pressed Glass

At the turn of the 20th century (the 1900s), glass makers discovered a way to make decorative glass available to not just the wealthy.

This method for producing such glass came to be called **pressed glass**.

**How Pressed Glass is made:**
- A skilled artisan makes a mold of the design that they wish to produce in the factory. This can be for a dinner plate, drinking glass or pretty much anything you can think of that might be used to serve a meal.
- Workers in the factory then heat up glass until is molten (almost liquid) and then pour the hot glass into the mold.
- A plunger (yes, something like you’d use in the bathroom) is then shoved into the mold with the hot glass, forcing the material into all of the tiny spaces within the carved mold.

**Pressed glass** was easy to produce over and over again because you really only needed one skilled artist to make the mold and the mold itself could be used countless times. The pouring and plunging of the glass could be done by any worker employed by the factory.

**Pretend** that you are a skilled glass pattern designer. Use the blank cups and plates below to create your very own patterned set of tableware.

Think:
- Who is my customer?
- Where would my tableware be sold?
- Why?