

# Arts, Literary & History Trail - KS5 - Teacher Notes

## Introduction

- The trail is designed for learners to engage with the rich arts, literary and historical heritage of this part of the Isle of Wight.
- The resources act as prompts for ideas that students and teachers can explore either before, during or after their visit to the Island. It is the teacher input that will be able to make the crossover activities meaningful.
- Suggested tasks are flexible and designed to be starting points for learning opportunities.
- Subjects of interest include English (Creative Writing), Literature, Art, Media, History and Photography.
- The following pages contain notes on learning opportunities at each venue - for key stage 5.
- The final pages of the pack contain biographies and background information on the poets, painters and writers referenced in the student resources.

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## Linked Documents

Please use these supporting notes in conjunction with the resource documents numbered below - there is one per location:

1 0 7 6 8 1

Shanklin

1 0 7 6 8 2

Bonchurch

1 0 7 6 8 3

Ventnor

1 0 7 6 8 4

Chale & Blackgang

1 0 7 6 8 5

Brook & Mottistone

1 0 7 6 8 6

Freshwater Bay

# Arts, Literary & History Trail - KS5 - Teacher Notes

## Location 1: Shanklin

### KS5 Subject areas:

#### English Literature

**Background:** John Keats visited the Isle of Wight in April 1817 with the intention of staying over the summer whilst recovering from illness.

He stayed in Shanklin. He speaks with enthusiasm of the beauties of Shanklin, but in a postscript written the following day, mentions that he has been nervous from want of sleep, and much haunted by the passage in Lear, 'Do you not hear the sea?' - adding without further preface his own famous sea-sonnet (details from the biography by Sir Sidney Colvin (1887)).



Keats did not like the solitude of the Island, and left the following month.

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Pupils could read the letter Keats wrote, describing his impressions of Shanklin and Carisbrooke.

<http://www.john-keats.com/briefe/180417.html> [www.edudest.uk](http://www.edudest.uk)

Try to focus on ways Keats communicates his enthusiasm and his disdain for different things he sees.

Consider traditions and features of letter writing, and his use of what he sees around him as the inspiration for poetry.

**On-site (or follow-up) activities:** Students can complete the writing tasks on the worksheet or any others the teacher feels may be suitable.

There are two poems written whilst Keats was on the Island on page 1 and 2 of the resource for students to use in practising their analytical skills.

### History

The information on the last page of the resource can be used as background, or to build further knowledge of the location and influences that promoted change over time here.

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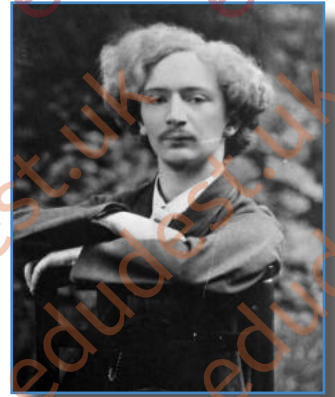
## Location 2: Bonchurch

### KS5 Subject areas:

#### English Literature / Creative Writing

**Background:** Swinburne grew up at East Dene, a large stone mansion and estate in the village of Bonchurch on the Isle of Wight, which his father bought as a holiday home in 1841. At the age of five, he was baptised in the old church in 1843. He was a poet and novelist and was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature each year from 1903 – 1909 (with the exception of 1908). Due to being a vibrant, rather rebellious character who enjoyed the excesses of life, his health suffered, and at the age of 42, he was looked after for the rest of his life by his friend Theodore Watts, in Putney, London.

Despite dying in Putney in 1909, he was later buried in Bonchurch (according to his will) where his grave can be found. Known as an atheist, he requested that there was to be no Christian ceremony at his funeral. The poet and author Thomas Hardy, a close friend of Swinburne's (who is said to have been influenced by some of his beliefs), wrote the poem 'A Singer Asleep' whilst sitting next to Swinburne's grave.



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poems created at the expense of sense. Look at some of his poetry online. Would you agree? Does it matter?

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They could also consider the event in 1879 which caused Swinburne to become somewhat of a recluse but almost undoubtedly contributed to his prolonged life.

**On-site activities:** Take students to visit Swinburne's grave at St Boniface Church, just up the hill from East Dene. Being an ardent atheist, Swinburne asked for no Christian ceremony. Despite this, some prayers were still read out at his funeral. What are students' thoughts on this?

Read Hardy's poem, 'A Singer Asleep' (printed on page 2 of the resource), written at the graveside in 1910, a year after Swinburne died. Analyse aspects of form, structure and language in the poem as a group.

Students could also find a place in one of the churches or in the village where you feel moved to write a few lines of poetry.

Students could consider the idea of change of character from rebel to relaxed (as happened with Swinburne). They may choose to attempt an artistic or literary response to this concept.

Students can consider Swinburne's life and write their own fitting elegy for his gravestone.

**Other ideas:** Swinburne wrote the poem 'A Dedication' about the sea. This could be a useful poem for poetry analysis and practice.

### Art

Many opportunities exist for sketches and other creative responses to the location and the output from Hardy and Swinburne linked to Bonchurch.

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## Location 3: Ventnor

Ventnor has been a popular tourist destination for many years.

The town of Ventnor has grown since the mid-19th century, when the warm climate and fresh sea air was considered beneficial to health and several sanatoriums were established, taking patients from all over the country.

By the middle of the 20th century, Ventnor was thriving as a sea-side resort, and is still popular today with holiday-makers.

### KS5 Subject areas:

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**On site ideas:** Students use the prompts on the worksheet resource to take notes about the town: initial impression, location, ambience, facilities, appeal for different groups of visitor, key features, etc. in preparation for the script writing task to be completed later.

Students keep an on-site diary.

**Follow up ideas:** Students write a script for a 15 minute outside documentary broadcast for radio with the purpose of raising public awareness of Ventnor as a holiday destination.

It may be helpful to listen to a BBC Radio outside broadcast first. Students should consider the problems with writing for radio and how the narrative is fundamentally important.

### Media/Photography

#### Pre-visit options:

'Then and now' project. Before students' visit to Ventnor, they complete some background research, looking at Victorian photographs of town scenes. Ideally, they should select some of the Ventnor ones for a possible then and now comparison.

#### On-site:

Take pictures to capture the Victorian character of the town. Take modern pictures in the style of Victorian photographs, using similar studies. Collate/take then and now pictures in monochrome.

**Follow-up:** Display photographs.

## Location 4: Chale

### Background: *Chale Church*

The famous painter JMW Turner completed a sketch of Chale Church during one of his visits to the Isle of Wight.

You will need to source a copy of this sketch on-line for students to use.

This and other sketches and paintings Turner completed of Island locations are available on the internet for teacher use.

There is no record of a watercolour of his Chale sketch, but you can see many other paintings of locations such as Carisbrooke Castle, Bembridge Windmill and Cowes Castle.



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They will need to have looked at some of Turner's work, including his progression work - sketches, pencil drawings and final artworks. The Chale images can be found on-line via an internet search, for educational use.

### CHALE CHURCH

**On-site activities:** At Chale Church, students can see if they can find the perspective from which Turner completed his sketch. They could then complete a sketch from the same place and compare it to Turner's.

**Follow-up options:** Students could either complete a watercolour (in Turner's style) of their own sketch or perhaps reproduce Turner's sketch as a watercolour painting.

**Other ideas:** They could do a sketch and keep some in pencil (like Turner's image of Bembridge Windmill). Students could visit the other locations on the Island to engage with Turner's various studies.

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## Location 5: Brook & Mottistone

### Background:

**J.B. Priestley** was born in Bradford in 1894 and after being educated at Belle Vue Grammar School, he went to work for a wool firm called Helm & Co. It was whilst working here that he started writing at night; he had some of his articles published in newspapers as far as London and he later moved south. He served in the World War I and experienced many injuries. He describes many of these experiences in his autobiography, called *Margin Released*. He moved to the Isle of Wight and resided in Brook Hill House and Billingham Manor (in Chillerton) between 1933 and 1959. Due to the fact that he loved socialising with friends and family, he hosted great parties and was nick-named 'Jolly Jack' for his bubbly character. However, to those who did not know him particularly well, he came across as rather gruff. During his time on the Isle of Wight, he wrote many of his works, including *An Inspector Calls*, which is one of his best-known plays and a classic of the mid-twentieth century.

**The Long Stone** is a good name for this site in Mottistone. It stands 3.9 m tall and is made from a local stone called greensand. The site was excavated by C.N. Hawkes in 1956. The results from this suggested that this stone could have

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### KS5 Subject areas:

#### English Language / Media / Creative Writing

**Possible pre-visit activities:** Priestley made a number of radio broadcasts. Explore the use of radio as a major source of communication during Priestley's working life. Students should also consider how, without images, the emphasis was purely on words and sound to convey meaning.

Listen to parts of Priestley's 'Delight': <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtclGy2IINA> Students can write about their own delights. This could be narrowed down to 'Delights of my Childhood', or 'Regrets'. These could be written to be read out and recorded like radio broadcasts.

**On-site activities:** You could walk the students up to the Long Stone in Mottistone which Priestley's wife, Jacquetta, worked to excavate. Students use what they see as inspiration for a creative response.

Students write up notes on their impressions of the Isle of Wight so far. Include descriptions of locations in an entertaining style that could be published on a tourism website like [www.myisleofwight.com](http://www.myisleofwight.com) or broadcast on radio without the luxury of images.

**Follow-up ideas:** Students can look at the tradition of letter writing for airing thoughts and opinions and compare with the blogs of today. Read the following quote from <http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/39110/>

**'Focusing on the 1930s, it shows how Priestley travelled widely in the United States and came to admire the democratic and collective aspects of American culture, whilst also developing a critique of what he saw as the lack of individuality and creativity in other elements of the 'mass' society, anticipating arguments he would develop after 1945'.**

Discuss this idea of a 'lack of individuality and creativity in a mass society'. Do you think there is a lack of individualism among the youth of today? Is this the same in Britain and overseas? Use the quote as a statement for a discursive essay.

# Arts, Literary & History Trail - KS5 - Teacher Notes



## Location 6: Freshwater Bay & Tennyson Down

**Background:** Tennyson was born in Lincolnshire in 1809 and attended Trinity College, Cambridge in 1827 where he received The Chancellors Gold Medal (a prestigious award given for poetry) in 1829. His first solo collection of poems were published soon after.

When Tennyson's poem *Maud* (written in 1854-55) became a firm favourite with British Society, Alfred Lord Tennyson was able to buy Farringford, on the Isle of Wight, which he initially rented with his wife from 1853. In 1850, he was made

Poet Laureate and he held this post for forty years. Heralded as one of the greatest poets in British History, he died, at the age of 83, in 1892. The monument which stands at the top of Tennyson Down (renamed in his honour) was erected after his death.

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exhibition of Cameron's work, alongside exhibitions from global artists. You may visit the museum to discover more about Cameron and her pioneering work.

### KS5 Subject areas:

English Literature / Creative Writing (History skills crossover)

**On-site:** Students could craft some poetry using the monument or Freshwater Bay as a stimulus.

**Possible pre-visit or follow up tasks - students can do any of the following:**

- Find out about Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Group. V.W. wrote a satirical comedy play in 3 acts called 'Freshwater'. It was the only play she wrote and was written for her friends' enjoyment.
- Look at some of Tennyson's poetry. Tennyson lived on the Island in Farringford House until forced to move away as his fame led to intrusive public curiosity.
- Using the sea as a subject, try writing verse with a strong rhythm and rhyme.
- Walk up to the Tennyson Monument.
- Use Freshwater Bay as inspiration for free written work, poetry or prose.
- Visit Dimbola Lodge, the former home of the 19th century pioneer photographer Julia Margaret Cameron. Make notes for a subjective review of her work, and write this up on return to school/college.
- Write a one act play which satirises the meeting up of a group of unlikely friends, this could link to going on a trip.
- Make a study of prominent women in the 19th century. Compare their difficulties with those of women today.

continued overleaf...

# Arts, Literary & History Trail - KS5 - Teacher Notes

## Location 6: Freshwater Bay & Tennyson Down (continued...)

### Art/Photography (if visiting Dimbola Lodge)

#### On-site or follow-up activities:

- Look at the Victorian photographs at Dimbola Lodge.
- Take some pictures of the area that could be used to promote Freshwater Bay, making links to its heritage.
- Experiment with different methods of editing the photographs taken.
- Use the photographs in a package of promotional material that makes links with the heritage of Freshwater Bay.

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**Algernon Charles Swinburne 5 April 1837 – 10 April 1909**

1775	1780	1785	1790	1795	1800	1805	1810	1815	1820	1825	1830	1835	1840	1845	1850	1855	1860	1865	1870	1875	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905	1910	1915	1920	1925	1930	1935	1940	1945	1950	1955	1960	1965	1970
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### Birth and influences

Algernon Charles Swinburne was born on 5 April 1837 at East Dene in Bonchurch, Isle of Wight. He went to school at Eton and spent his holidays at his grandfather's home in Northumberland. Swinburne thought of Northumberland as his spiritual home.

He then went to Balliol College Oxford where he began writing poetry and met the Pre-Raphaelites, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones.

In the 1860s he travelled southern France and Italy.

### Why they chose the Isle of Wight

The choice of East Dene was Swinburne's parents', not his. They were very fond of Bonchurch and played a part in the building of the new church which opened in 1849.

Swinburne did not live at the house during the most rebellious and scandalous part of his life. However after 25 years of unproductive obscurity in London it was felt right to return his body to the church his family had been so closely connected with.

Algernon Swinburne is buried next his brother Edward and sisters Alice, Charlotte and Isobel.

### What else was happening at that time?

The 1840s saw railway mania - the enthusiastic building of railways across the world. The beginning of a national time zone. In 1848 there were revolutions in France, Germany, Italy, Austria, and Denmark.

Britain remained relatively peaceful and therefore tolerant of different religions, ways of living and political views. In Europe manufacturing and trade were severely disrupted. This helped Britain and by 1850 British factories and mines were producing more than all the rest of the world put together.

The consequence of this was wealth on a scale never seen before. However it was spread very unequally, the rich were very rich and the poor dying before they reached the age of fifty. Although elementary education was made compulsory in 1870 so literacy levels increased. This made newspapers, books and poems popular, so it was a golden age for authors and journalists.

### Their work on the Isle of Wight

East Dene was Swinburne's home from 1841 until 1865. This covers the most productive and highly acclaimed period of his life. His poem *Atalanta in Calydon* was published 1865 and it is likely that his most acclaimed publication, *Poems and Ballads* (1866) owes something to East Dene. These established Swinburne as the Britain's greatest living poet - the successor to Tennyson.

However Swinburne lived life to excess and from 1879 to his death he was cared for by Theodore Watts in Putney London. It has been said of Watts that he saved the man but killed the poet. Stained glass windows designed by his pre-Raphaelite friends can be found at the churches of St Lawrence and St Mildred's in Whippingham on the Island.

# Arts, Literary & History Trail - KS5 - Teacher Notes

Joseph Mallord William Turner - baptised 14 May 1775 – 19 December 1851

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## Birth and influences

There is no official record of the date Turner was born, but it will have been in the first half of 1775. His father was a barber and his mother was the daughter of a butcher, so while he will have had enough to eat, his family would not have been wealthy. He was stayed with an uncle in Margate and painted the scenery there and his father sold his sketches from his barber's shop. So

people were buying his work purely on merit and not because of his name.

In the years that followed Turner worked for a number of architects, the most famous of whom was Bonomi, who is referred to in Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*. In 1789, aged 14, he was enrolled at the Royal Academy of Art, his place being awarded by the most important artist of the time, Sir Joshua Reynolds. In term time at the Royal Academy he was taught the full range of artistic skills and the holidays were spent travelling around the country making sketches for what would become paintings.

## Why they chose the Isle of Wight

Before the development of railways in the 1840s, travelling more than a hundred miles was seen as exotic but not alien. Thus places like the Lake District and the Isle of Wight were of great interest.

Before the development of photography in the 1860s, painting was the only method of recording what people saw. Turner had great joy in representing the atmospheric effects of the sea and the sky; the Isle of Wight gave him considerable scope in these areas as well as allowing him to keep clear of the wars raging in Europe.

## What else was happening at that time?

In 1775 George III had been on the throne for 15 years and was successful and trade boomed. The population grew and this pushed up the price of food, making farming profitable, in turn the agricultural revolution was underway. The Regency period was remodelled with elegant Georgian squares and terraces which gave rise to an interest in architecture.

Both of these themes appealed to Turner and so his work was perfectly attuned to the times. Turner did with painting what the Romantics did with poetry. The French Revolution of 1789 sent shockwaves across Europe. Firstly, beheading a king was appalling in itself, but secondly the instability that ensued was highly unnerving for the governing classes.

This curtailed travel to Europe and so the wealthy developed an interest in sea bathing in places like Brighton, Weymouth and the Isle of Wight.

## Their work on the Isle of Wight

Unlike poets and authors, there is very direct proof of the influence of place upon painters. Turner visited the Isle of Wight in 1791 and again 1796; this trip gave rise to *Fishermen at Sea* depicting a fishing boat off The Needles.

On this trip he also did sketches of Godshill, Colwell and Totland bays, Brading Harbour, Chale Farm, Mottistone Mill, Steephill Cove and Appuldurcombe. This book of his sketches is now held at the Tate Britain. Turner visited again in 1827, this time to stay with the exuberant regency architect John Nash, who had built East Cowes Castle, now demolished.

This trip gave Turner full scope to display his talent in showing light and cloud in his depiction of Carisbrooke Castle, which is now on display in the Carisbrooke Castle Museum.

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**John Boynton Priestley 13 September 1894 – 14 August 1984**

1775	1780	1785	1790	1795	1800	1805	1810	1815	1820	1825	1830	1835	1840	1845	1850	1855	1860	1865	1870	1875	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905	1910	1915	1920	1925	1930	1935	1940	1945	1950	1955	1960	1965	1970
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### Birth and influences

John Priestley was born in Bradford in 1894 and Yorkshire life features frequently in his work. His father was a headmaster and Priestley was educated at a boarding school. At sixteen he began work as a clerk in a wool firm, which brought him into contact with the other end of the economic spectrum and laid the foundations for his socialist standpoint. His evenings were spent writing and he had articles published both locally and in London. When Priestley volunteered to go to war on 7th September 1914 he was part of the first wave to do so.

He was seriously injured in June 1916 but was nursed back to health and was sent back to the front in January 1918. This meant that he had direct experience of all the horrors of trench war and laid the foundations for his work in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

After the war Priestley went to university in Cambridge and this brought him into contact with the literary circles there.

### Why they chose the Isle of Wight

Of all the houses owned by famous people on the island, Brook Hill House is by far the most imposing and Priestley lived there from 1948 until 1959.

Like Tennyson before him, Priestley was attracted by the beauty of the area but also the seclusion of the house: we can see it from afar but not get close enough to intrude. This was important to Priestley and his guests who included Compton Mackenzie, A J P Taylor, John Betjeman, Iris Murdoch, Judy Campbell and her daughter Jane Birkin. Priestley left the Island to be closer to his friends but regretted leaving.

### What else was happening at that time?

Compulsory education and mass production reduced the cost of books, increasing the size of the reading public. This made popular authors richer than ever before because these were the days before most people had a radio or a television and people read more.

In the aftermath of World War One there was a desire to avoid war and this idea was reborn with greater vigour after the nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. In 1948 India gained its independence and by the end of the 1960s most of the other countries in the British Empire were also governing themselves, reducing Britain's importance in world affairs. 1960 saw the introduction of the combination contraceptive pill; it was available on the NHS to all women without regard to their marital status, giving sexual freedom. It was at this time that people's aspirations changed, until this point fashion showed that girls copied their mothers, from then on mothers wanted to be like their daughters and the cult of youth was born.

### Their work on the Isle of Wight

The work produced in the second half of Priestley's life did not achieve the popularity of his earlier work.

While at Brook Hill House he wrote nine plays, the most successful of which was *Dragon's Mouth* in 1952. His novel *The Magicians* came out in 1954. In 1955 he published *Journey Down the Rainbow* a second instalment in his autobiography.

His main efforts were directed toward the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament which was formally launched in 1958.

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**Alfred, Lord Tennyson - 6 August 1809 – 6 October 1892**

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### Birth and influences

Alfred Tennyson was born on 6 August 1809 in Steventon, East Angles. His father was a vicar and his mother the daughter of a vicar, so he was born into a respectable middle class. He was educated at a local school and finally at Trinity College, Cambridge. Here his closest friends were Arthur Hallam, a poet and Henry Brookman, whose literary talents showed in his sermons.

At Trinity they were members of The Cambridge Apostles, a secret society given to discussing controversial topics on Saturday evenings while sharing food and wine. Tennyson's prodigious talent was recognised while at Cambridge when in 1829 he was given 'The Chancellor's Gold Medal' for his poem, *Timbuktu*. His style had been influenced by Keats and the other romantic poets as can be seen from the rhythms and music of his verses.

### Why they chose the Isle of Wight

Tennyson rented the Farringford Estate in 1853 and bought it in 1856. It had the space and he had the money to alter the house and gardens to make it his adored home on the island. He had been made Poet Laureate in 1850 succeeding from William Wordsworth, he published *Charge of the Light Brigade* in 1855 and these successes made him as big a celebrity as any today. Therefore he needed somewhere to escape from his adoring but nose fans.

Tennyson became close friends with Julia Margaret Cameron, the pioneer photographer, and Geoffrey Watts the painter who lived a few miles away in Freshwater. Tennyson was buried in Westminster Abbey but there is a memorial to him in All Saints Church, Freshwater, where his wife and son Hallam are buried.

### What else was happening at that time?

In Europe, manufacturing and trade were severely disrupted and by 1850 British factories and mines were producing more than all the rest of the world put together. The consequence of this was wealth on a scale never seen before. However it was spread very unequally: the rich were very rich and the poor dying before they reached the age of fifty. There were some improvements for the poor: elementary education was made compulsory in 1870 so literacy levels increased. This made newspapers, books and poems popular, so it was a golden age for authors and journalists.

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### Their work on the Isle of Wight

Tennyson's reputation was well-established when he arrived on the island but poems like *Charge of the Light Brigade* really caught the mood of the nation in 1855.

According to Robert Browning, another poet from that time, Tennyson was obsessive about re-writing and refining his poems so that the metre and rhythm were perfect. For this he needed the time and the peace found on the island.

So many of the poems in the second half of Tennyson's life would have been written or refined on the island, poems like *Maud*, *Enoch Arden* and *Idylls of the King* about King Arthur, which he had been working on since 1833.

# Arts, Literary & History Trail - KS5 - Teacher Notes



**Julia Margaret Cameron - 11 June 1815 – 26 January 1879**

1775	1780	1785	1790	1795	1800	1805	1810	1815	1820	1825	1830	1835	1840	1845	1850	1855	1860	1865	1870	1875	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905	1910	1915	1920	1925	1930	1935	1940	1945	1950	1955	1960	1965	1970
JMW Turner										JB Priestley																													
Alfred, Lord Tennyson																																							
Charles Dickens										Alfred Noyes																													
Julia Margaret Cameron																																							
Algernon Swinburne																																							

## Birth and influences

Julia Margaret Cameron was born on 11 June 1815. Her father worked for the East India Company and her mother was the daughter of a wealthy merchant. Julia was educated in France, but returned to India in 1830.

## What else was happening at that time?

The British government controlled the whole of India. The company controlled the whole of India. The company controlled the whole of India. The company controlled the whole of India.

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married Charles Cameron.

When he died in 1848 she returned to London and spent time with her sister, Sarah Princep, whose house in Kensington was the focus of literary and artistic talent of the age. In 1863, when photography was in its infancy, Julia's daughter gave her a camera. At this stage it was a very hands-on affair and its success depended on the talents of the photographer. Cameras had to be prepared and then the plates developed using toxic chemicals. Julia joined the photographic society in London and was taught by David Wynfield.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, that fact that wealth was concentrated in the hands of so few meant that those who were rich found it easy to make contact with people who were also powerful or influential. So Julia Margaret Cameron quickly made contact with a whole range of people who shared her interest in new technologies and enjoyment of the things they made possible.

Julia's work was clearly influenced by leading artistic movement at that time: the pre-Raphaelites who romanticised the medieval period.

## Why they chose the Isle of Wight

In 1860 Julia Margaret Cameron visited Tennyson at his home on the Isle of Wight and was taken with the scenery. West Wight has always been much less developed than the East, yet the distance between the two is short, making it easily accessible.

The Cameron family bought an estate near Tennyson's and named it Dimbola after their tea plantation in Ceylon, now Sri Lanka. At Dimbola, Julia had the space and the money to develop her photography. Her well known neighbour was an attraction for the great and the good.

Soon Julia and her house became an attraction in themselves which meant that she was not short of subjects.

## Their work on the Isle of Wight

Julia was a perfectionist and Dimbola was set up to help her get the results she desired. With the technology of the age, this could take a long time, much to the irritation of some of her subjects. Julia liked soft focus portraits and with her careful composition she was able to create the atmosphere which the Romantic poets had done in words.

She captured what we would now call celebrities, some of whom sat for no one else. So through her work, we know what Charles Darwin, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Robert Browning, John Everett Millais, William Michael Rossetti, Edward Burne-Jones, Ellen Terry, and George Frederic Watts looked like. Another aspect of her work was to photographic illustration. In this she attempted to recreate scenes from the past but she also work with Tennyson to depict his 'Idyll of the King'.



# Arts, Literary & History Trail - KS5 - Teacher Notes

## Background Information: A very short history of photography

### When it began

The earliest photographs were taken in the 1820s but the images were not very clear. The first successful method was developed by Louis Daguerre and became known as the Daguerreotype. It was commercially available from 1839. Shortly after this Fox Talbot developed a different method that was called calotype. With both of these methods, the back of the camera was an oblong plate covered with chemicals that were sensitive to light. The shutter had to be open for a few minutes, so people had to sit perfectly still. You sometimes see pictures that were partly blurred faces, this is because the people or the trees had moved.

### How it was done

Most of the earliest photographs were taken outdoors because there was not enough light inside. Magnesium wire was developed in the 1870s and this allowed photography to move indoors.

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### Why did it become popular?

Several things worked together to make photography a major industry. Firstly it was new. Secondly, very rich and famous people had their photographs taken and the less well-off copied them. Thirdly, the Crimean War 1854-1855 was the first to grip the British public, but the last to which soldiers could take their wives. The war was covered by the world's first war-correspondent, William Russell. The telegraph meant that Russell's reports on the war could be printed in The Times the day after the event. This gave them an immediacy that gripped the public and there were queues outside the newspaper offices waiting for the news.

The other thing about the Crimean War that gripped the public were the photographs taken by Roger Fenton. His photographs were staged but they gripped the public nevertheless. The fourth thing that helped the rise of photography was the economic boom of the nineteenth century that made the rich richer. This is linked to the fifth factor that helped photography: by 1865 the national rail network was mostly complete. These allowed more people to go on holiday and then after 1871 bank holidays meant that even the poorer sorts could get away even for a day. Then having gone on holiday people wanted to record it. In 1884 George Eastman found a way of putting the chemicals onto a roll; film was born. By this time cameras were smaller and easy to use, even to carry with you on a day out, there are plenty on display to see.

### What did they photograph?

The early photographs were not in colour so landscape was often better served by painting. Portraiture was popular because of photography's inherent accuracy. However what photography excelled at were the things that had never been the subject of painters and sculptors - day to day life, accurate pictures of the poorer sorts (for example, look for the holes in the apron of the fish woman), things that were not staged and not managed, just ordinary.