

# Arts, Literary & History Trail - KS2 - 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, Literature, Art, History, Music and Photography.
- The following pages contain notes on learning opportunities at each venue - for key stage 2.
- 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:

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Bonchurch

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Ventnor

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Chale & Blackgang

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Brook & Mottistone

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Freshwater Bay

# Arts, Literary & History Trail - KS2 - Teacher Notes

## Location 1: Shanklin

### KS2 Subject areas:

#### English (Poetry/Reading/Writing)

**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. See: <http://www.john-keats.com/briefe/180417.htm>

**Possible pre-visit tasks:** Research Keats and his time spent at Shanklin. Look at some of his poetry.

**On-site:** Complete the nature-inspired tasks on the worksheet and write a short poem.

#### Art (Creative Response)

Possible activities could include: Identify ways of producing different textures. There are some rudimentary sketches by J.M.W. Turner to be found online.

Google search for landscape sketches. Turner's images, techniques could be studied and emulated.

On-site: Sketching activity on worksheet. Resources needed: Soft pencils, paper, clip board, camera (optional).

Follow-up tasks: Sketches could be enhanced with markers, pastels, coal or water colours.

All efforts should be displayed in class. This could be interspersed with copies of artists' sketches and photographs of the subjects. Photographs could be printed in black and white.

**ICT/Computing ideas:** Photographic images could be edited creatively using appropriate software.

#### History (Growth/Transport)

Information is provided on the worksheet about the reasons for the growth of Shanklin, most notably the railway and its impact.

## Location 2: Bonchurch

### KS2 Subject areas:

#### English/Drama (Poetry/Reading/Writing/Spoken Language)

**Background:** Charles Dickens resided in Bonchurch (in Winterbourne House) during the summer months of 1849 and it is believed that he wrote chapters twelve to eighteen of *David Copperfield* here. It has been said by many that the character of David Copperfield (who Dickens described as his 'favourite child') held many similarities to the author himself. They shared difficult childhood experiences and Mr Micawber, like his own father, was imprisoned. "Of all his novels... he put more of himself into it than into any other, and it cost him more in personal courage to write." (<http://iwbeacon.com/articles/charles-dickens-at-bonchurch/>).

The character David Copperfield is born six months after the death of his father and is later sent away to boarding school when his mother remarries Edward Murstone (for whom he has a great dislike). The Head of the boarding school (Salem House) is a cruel individual and Copperfield experiences more distress when he learns of his mother's death. After being sent to work, David later runs away and experiences many different relationships with the variety of characters in the text.

continued on page 3...

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## Bonchurch continued...



Algernon 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.

Poems used are reproduced in this pack.

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On-site ideas: Study of poetry featured in the [www.edudest.uk](http://www.edudest.uk)

**Follow up ideas:** After reading *David Copperfield*, students could think about a difficult personal journey which they have experienced. They can use the experience to compose a piece of writing which reflects on their thoughts and feelings. This could be a poem, a letter, a diary entry, a short story, a chapter for a novel or an article for a magazine.

### Art (Creative Response/History of Art) - with English crossover

**Possible pre-visit tasks:** Study novel illustrations.

**Follow-up ideas:** When back at school, students could read the novel (or sections of the novel) *David Copperfield*. They could then draw some of the characters in the style of John Leech.

### History/R.E./Art

**On-site:** Students can complete the 'features of the churches' part of the resource. Students could sketch both churches on their walk around the old part of Bonchurch. Upon return to school, they could reproduce one of the images using different media. It may, therefore, be wise to photograph the outside of the buildings. They could also sketch any images which they find interesting inside the church or church grounds (such as stained glass windows, different grave stones etc.).

### History/English (Myths and Legends)

**On-site or follow-up ideas:** Local myths and legends are explored and students have an opportunity to create their own.

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## Location 3: Ventnor

### KS2 Subject areas:

#### English/Literature/Drama/History

Teachers will need to source their own copy of the Noyes poems due to copyright restrictions. The poems are accessible via the internet.

**Possible pre-visit tasks:** Research Isle of Wight ghosts. The Isle of Wight has been described as 'The world's most haunted Island' and many books have been written about the ghosts which reside here (see <http://www.redfunnel.co.uk/my-isle-of-wight/features/the-most-haunted-island-in-the-world/> for further information and suggestions for research).

Listen to a reading such as Alfred Noyes' 'The Highwayman' poem by Audio Productions on *YouTube*.

Focus on ballad form i.e. story telling with rhythm, rhyme and repetition. Look at the imagery which enriches the story



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**On-site options:** Completion of the poetry reading and creative composition tasks as featured on the worksheet.

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Students can draft their own ghost story, using the features of this type of genre. If you prefer, they could perhaps just draft a story opener, describing some of the features of the older houses which they see.

Students could also try to create their own ballad, based on a story which they have researched, which is linked to the Isle of Wight. Then then try to use the same structure as Noyes (note how he uses repetition and rhyme).

Students could perform their choral version of the poem while travelling over the downs out of Ventnor. Perhaps these were the very roads ridden by the highwayman in the poem! Perhaps teachers could find a place to stop on St Catherine's Down where the pupils can act out parts of the poem or present freeze frames of different verses.

Students read the historical information on health history in Ventnor and respond with a diary entry as a patient.

**Follow up ideas:** Students could complete a class project that included research into the history of Ventnor as a health resort.

Students can refine their draft ballads/stories, taking on board advice from their peers/teacher.

Teachers could look at the animation of the poem with them - look for 'The Highwayman Year 5' and 'The Lego Highwayman' on *YouTube*.

Students could also:

- produce a static linear strip cartoon of the poem
- set the words of a stanza to music as many ballads were in folk songs. Limit notes to the pentatonic scale (GACDEG).

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## Location 4: Chale & Blackgang

### KS2 Subject areas:

#### History (with English crossover)

**Possible pre-visit tasks:** Research the history of St Catherine's Oratory, the Blackgang chine area (in particular its smuggling history) and the village of Chale.

Find out what the main myths and legends are for this part of the Island.

**Possible on-site or follow-up task:** Students imagine they are a wrecker, smuggler or pirate. They write an account called 'One Night at Blackgang...'

Back at school students could research smuggling and piracy in more depth and complete a project with their classmates.

Using the 'Smuggling Guide' on page 3 of the resource, they could design and produce their own 'Smuggler's Handbook & Diary'.



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**Possible pre-visit tasks:** Show students the JMW Turner sketch of Chale Church (available via the Internet) and examples of other sketches he completed on the Isle of Wight during his time here.

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

St Catherine's Oratory: Take photographs of the Pepperpot from different angles (students could lie down and point the camera upwards for a different perspective). Complete sketches of the Pepperpot in pencil. Students may want to focus in on specific parts of the building or complete a sketch which also incorporates the landscape.

**Follow-up ideas:** When back at school, students could use different media to reproduce the images which they have photographed or sketched (e.g. charcoal, pastel, watercolours). They could either complete a watercolour (in Turner's style) of their own sketch or reproduce Turner's sketch as a watercolour painting. They could complete a sketch and keep some in pencil (like Turner's image of Bembridge Windmill).



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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 – in 1916 he was buried alive by a trench mortar after being seriously wounded. 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. 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 been the entrance

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According to the local myth, there was a competition between St Catherine and the Devil, with the winner of this contest gaining control of the Isle of Wight. St Catherine allegedly threw the tall stone the furthest and the Devil's smaller stone fell short, resulting in her winning the challenge, demonstrating that good can defeat evil.

The playwright J.B. Priestley was married to Jacquetta Hawkes, who was a renowned archaeologist. She helped excavate the long barrow at the Long Stone.

### KS2 Subject areas:

**History (with English crossover)**

#### Possible pre-visit or follow up tasks:

**Brook:** research the life of J.B. Priestley and produce a timeline of Priestley's works. On this timeline, students could also include some of his major, personal life-events (e.g. his involvement in the war, the birth of his children, his marriages etc.)

**Mottistone:** research the Long Stone at the National Trust Website at

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/mottistone-estate/features/the-long-stone-at-mottistone>.

It is suggested that teachers complete research on other barrows with students so they can see what kind of things are found in them, to help with the writing task.

#### English (Writing)

**On-site or post-visit ideas:** Students can draft a letter about feeling isolated, as Priestley did.

They can invent their own myth or legend for the Long Stone. They could make notes on-site about the key characters and events before refining their writing back at school, ensuring that they have included the correct features of this style of writing.

They could also invent a myth or legend for a building/monument of significance in their local area.

#### Art (Creative Response)

**Possible on-site tasks:** Sit and sketch the Long Stone. Photograph the monument with people alongside, showing its size.

**Follow-up ideas:** When back at school, students could attempt to represent the Long Stone as a monument with mystical powers - how could they use media to represent this?

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## Location 6: Freshwater Bay & Tennyson Down

### KS2 Subject areas:

#### History / English

**Possible pre-visit or follow up tasks:** Students can find out about Alfred Lord Tennyson and his link with the Isle of Wight. They can create a timeline showing important events and where he lived.

Suggested poems to look at: *The Lady of Shalott*; *The Eagle*; *Break, Break, Break*; *The Charge of the Light Brigade*. N.B. A study of ballads could include *The Lady of Shalott* and *The Highwayman* by Alfred Noyes (see Ventnor resource).



Students can imagine they are Tennyson, plagued by fame and harrassed by admirers of their work. They can consider the negatives of this situation and associated feelings (e.g. frustration, being crowded, being constantly pestered etc).

They can jot their down then draft a diary entry from Tennyson's perspective, expressing the negative side of being a famous individual.

They could visit this research project focusing a modern-day celebrity.

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#### English (Writing)

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**On-site activities:** Tennyson liked writing verse with a strong rhythm and rhyme pattern. Students could sit on the beach at Freshwater Bay and compose a few lines of poetry inspired by the sea and the sound of the water moving the pebbles.

**Follow-up ideas:** If students visited Dimbola Lodge, they could write a review for a tourism website. They'll need to research the features of this style of writing prior to embarking upon this task. They may want to use quotations from visitors (look on review websites such as *TripAdvisor* for this type of content).

#### Art (Creative Response)

**Possible on-site tasks:** Walk up to, and sit by the Tennyson Monument. Students could sketch the monument itself, or focus on parts of it. They could also sit on one of the benches and sketch the views which they see from this point.

There are a number of other places suitable for sketching: on or above Freshwater Bay, St Agnes thatched church, etc.

**Follow-up ideas:** Students can use the internet to research different photos of the Tennyson Monument. Some create very different moods. They could recreate the images using different media, showing how weather affects the mood of a piece of art work.

They can also continue to develop any literary or artistic ideas started on site. They could perhaps set up a Freshwater Bay display.

If students have visited Dimbola Lodge, they could recreate one of Cameron's photographs using media of their choice.

#### Music

**Follow-up ideas:** Students could compose a piece of music in three parts on percussion instruments entitled *The Bay in a Storm*. Alternatively, they could use vocal sounds only.

# Arts, Literary & History Trail - KS2 - Teacher Notes



**Charles John Huffam Dickens 7 February 1812 – 9 June 1870**

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

Charles Dickens was born in Portsmouth in 1812. His father worked in the Navy Pay Office, his mother's family worked in the Navy. Dickens was the second of ten children and his father was sent to debtors' prison in 1822, where he was joined by his wife. Although only age 10, Charles was forced

to work and so did not join his parents, but worked in a factory sticking labels on tins of boot polish. From this Dickens learned what most rich people never knew: the horrors and the hardships of daily life for the working classes. This is why the theme of social justice runs through all of his work. Thankfully Dickens had been taught to read and write so he gradually moved from labouring work to jobs that required education.

By 1827 he was working in an attorney's office in London, where to counteract the boredom of the work, he mimicked colleagues and customers. It was this capacity for human observation that gave his work their appeal. His literary talent, hard work and social background allowed him to make rapid progress. In 1836 he married Catherine Hogarth, whose father owned the paper Dickens contributed to. By this time his literary output was so prodigious he had not problem in earning enough to support himself and his growing family.

## Why they chose the Isle of Wight

Dickens came to the Island with his family in July 1849. At that time it was quite common for people with Dickens' wealth to rent a house for several months for a holiday. The timeline above shows he was not alone in his appreciation of the Island.

He rented Winterbourne House in Bonchurch and wrote to his wife, "I have taken a most delightful and beautiful house, cool, airy, private bathing, everything delicious. I think it is the prettiest place I ever saw in my life."

## What else was happening at that time?

Britain was a very rich country in the mid-19th century. The wealth was spread very unequally: the rich were very rich but more than half of children born in working class areas died before they were six and adults rarely 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.

trade, some of it in African slaves.

This was very significant because on the surface Britain was a very civilised country but if you walked behind the fashionable streets you stepped into slums as deadly as any in India and Brazil today. This was because the wealth was spread very unequally: the rich were very rich but more than half of children born in working class areas died before they were six and adults rarely 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.

## Their work on the Isle of Wight

While in Winterbourne House Dickens wrote chapters 12 to 18 of *David Copperfield*.

This is a novel which drew strongly on his own childhood and has some of the action taking place in Yarmouth.

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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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

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**Alfred Noyes - 16 September 1880 – 25 June 1958**

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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Exeter College, Oxford, where he failed to be awarded his degree because in 1902, he went to meet his publisher, rather than sit the exams. It was not unusual for men to come down without a degree.

Noyes' work is clearly influenced by the Romantic poets like Wordsworth and Tennyson. It therefore struck a chord with the mood for nostalgia in the opening decade of the twentieth century. Noyes was a pacifist by nature but the circumstances around the two world wars meant that he supported the Allies as the best way of achieving the good he wished for. Noyes' first wife was American and he spent time in both countries lecturing at Princeton, a prestigious appointment.

women chained themselves to railings, burnt down churches and even went on hunger strike. All of this was deeply shocking and made many people feel that the way society was developing was distasteful and disquieting. It is unclear why, but poetry experienced a massive rise in popularity during World War One.

As an established poet Noyes became more famous and therefore wealthier. Trench war and the millions of deaths meant that, after World War One finished in 1918, there was a widespread dislike of militarism and a desire to avoid war - something Noyes had always felt. With hindsight we can see that this sentiment played a part in the policy of appeasement toward the Nazis in the 1930s.

### Why they chose the Isle of Wight

In 1929 he moved to Lisle Combe with his second wife and had three children. It was a total contrast to the life he had lead at Princeton, New Jersey, a life so vigorously described by one of his pupils - F. Scott Fitzgerald.

There is no evidence that Noyes read *Black's Guide to the Isle of Wight*, but he agreed, 'The Isle of Wight is an ideal place to unwind after the stress and strain of the war years.' He travelled the Americas giving lectures and writing from 1940 returning to the Island in 1949.

His grandson Robert Noyes continues the Noyes connection with Lisle Combe where he lives with his family.

### Their work on the Isle of Wight

The most significant literary piece that Noyes wrote on the Island was the last part of his *Torch Bearers Trilogy* which is an investigation of the progress of science through the ages. The first part, *Watchers of the Sky* had been published in 1922, the second *The Book of Earth* in 1925. The final part, *The Last Voyage*, came out in 1930. Contemporary reviewers considered it to be better constructed and executed than the other two.

*Two Worlds for Memory* (1953) was probably the most significant to Noyes himself, it was an autobiography detailing his conversion to Catholicism.

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

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

There is no official record of the date Turner was born, but it will have been in 1775. His father 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 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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# Arts, Literary & History Trail - KS2 - Teacher Notes



**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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Alfred, Lord Tennyson																																							
Charles Dickens										Alfred Noyes																													
Julia Margaret Cameron																																							
Algernon Swinburne																																							

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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.

# Arts, Literary & History Trail - KS2 - Teacher Notes



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

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

Alfred Tennyson was born on 6 August 1809 in Steventon, East of London. His father was a vicar and his mother the daughter of a vicar, so he was born into a respectable middle class family. He was educated at 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 the 18th century Britain was a world power because of the wealth Britain got from trade, some of it from African slaves. In 1848 there were revolutions all over Europe, but Britain remained relatively peaceful.

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.

### 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 - KS2 - 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
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## Birth and influences

Julia Margaret Cameron was born in 1815. Her father worked for the East India Company and her mother was the daughter of a wealthy family. 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 - KS2 - 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.