

Students at UTCs across the country have the unique opportunity to specialise their education early to subjects they enjoy and excel at, but as you start looking outward to university, employment and beyond, many find that having a broad knowledge is just important as a specialist knowledge.

We have put together this “Arts Byte” as a starting point to an area not as often explored at the Watford UTC, the Arts; literature, fine art, music, photography, theatre, find the highlights here and indulge in some history and culture.

## Music:

However far removed it may sound, classical music is the basis for everything we love on the radio today. Like all forms of artistic expression, music charts the history of the world and the trends and culture of the day: click the buttons to play the pieces (they will open in an internet browser tab) and listen to a snapshot of time.

Chances are you have heard some of this selection before in film and TV, **what do you recognise and where have you heard it?**

1812 Overture, 1880

**Tchaikovsky**

Goldberg Variations, 1741

**Bach**

The Rite of Spring, 1913

**Stravinsky**

Hedwig's Theme, 2001

**John Williams**

Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, 1787

**Mozart**



Sleep, 2000

**Eric Whitacre**

Canticum Canticorum, 1584

**Palestrina**

Music for 18 Musicians, 1976

**Steve Reich**

Rhapsody in Blue, 1924

**George Gershwin**

Carmen, 1845

**Bizet**

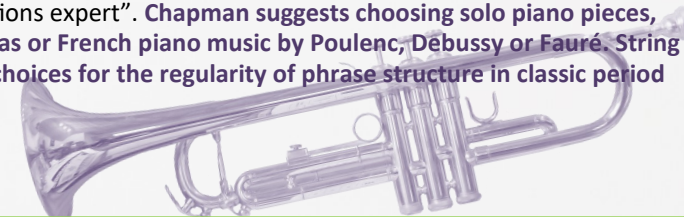
## Classical Music and the Classroom:

**Plenty of research has found that students who listen to classical music while studying perform better than control groups who study in silence.** Researchers speculate that the music puts students in a heightened emotional state, making them more receptive to information.

According to research from the Duke Cancer Institute, classical music can also lessen anxiety. Researchers gave headphones playing Bach concertos to men undergoing a stressful biopsy and discovered they had no spike in blood pressure during the procedure and reported significantly less pain.

**But not all classical music has this effect!** The best results come from pieces that are more restrained with less variation in tempo and volume. USC professor and radio host Alan Chapman says “the 1812 Overture would not be a good study aid, unless you were studying to be a demolitions expert”. **Chapman suggests choosing solo piano pieces, perhaps Mozart's sonatas or French piano music by Poulenc, Debussy or Fauré. String quartets are also good choices for the regularity of phrase structure in classic period pieces.**

Using our selection as a starting point, explore which genres and styles you like and put your own study playlist together to use while preparing for the new academic year. You could add in contemporary songs with lyrics to act as all important study breaks.

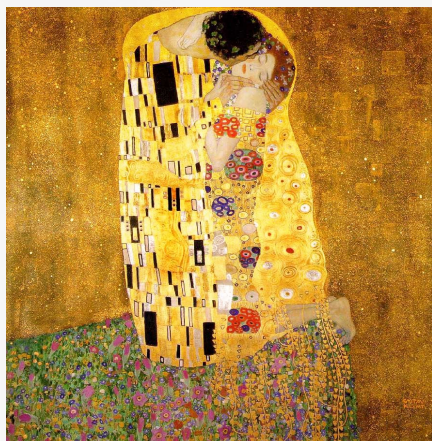




# Fine Art:

When you think of the word “art”, this is what usually comes to mind first: paintings, drawings, sculpture and visual work. Humans have been recreating the world around them and in their imaginations since Palaeolithic times, and as materials improve and technology progresses, the boundaries of what fine art can be continue to widen infinitely.

These are just a tiny selection of the worlds influential and universally loved pieces. **Which ones challenge your notion of “art”? Does your response align with the creators intention for the piece? Does that matter?**



**Gustav Klimt:**

## **The Kiss**

- Oil paint and gold leaf on canvas
- 180cm x 180cm
- Currently at the Österreichische Galerie Belvedere museum, Vienna



**Jackson Pollock: Number 5**

- Grey, brown, white and yellow synthetic resin paint on fibreboard
- 240cm x 120cm
- Was owned by various wealthy collectors, but its current whereabouts are unconfirmed

## Galleries to visit:

### **The Victoria and Albert Museum: Cromwell Road, London**

The V&A houses 3000 years of art and design from all over the world. Current special exhibitions include Rachael Kneebone's intensely emotional porcelain sculptures and a feature on fashion giant, Balenciaga, alongside all their full time collections from Modernism to the Ancient Asia. [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)

### **Tate: Millbank, London**

Tate is an institution that houses the UK's national collection of British and international modern and contemporary art. Current exhibitions include the first dedicated Queer British Art exhibit as well as all its permanent collections and various tours, talks and workshops open to the public. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

### **Uni of Herts Art & Design Gallery: College Lane, Hatfield**

The University of Hertfordshire Art Collection is a rich and eclectic collection of over 500 works that plot the University's history and development over the past 60 years. The collection now boasts a portfolio of large outdoor sculptures, paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, textiles, ceramics and mixed-media.

[www.herts.ac.uk/art-collection](http://www.herts.ac.uk/art-collection)



THE WATFORD UTC ARTS BYTE

Click the titles below to see full images and details and descriptions of the piece.

### My Bed, 1998

**Tracey Emin**

### A Bigger Splash, 1967

**David Hockney**

### The Birth of Venus, 1480s

**Botticelli**

### Sunflower Seeds, 2010

**Ai Weiwei**

### Girl with a Pearl Earring, 1667

**Vermeer**

### Number 5, 1948

**Jackson Pollock**

### The Physical Impossibilities of Death in the Mind of Someone Living, 1991

**Damien Hirst**

### The Kiss, 1907

**Gustav Klimt**

### Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, 1940

**Frida Kahlo**

### Ophelia, 1852

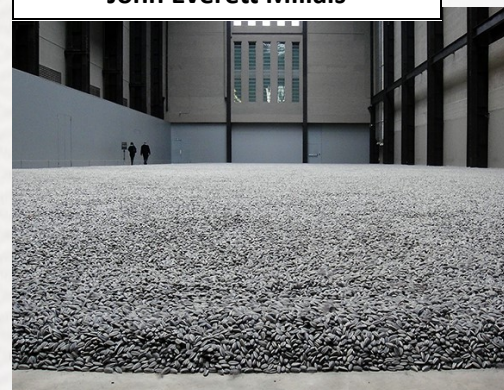
**John Everett Millais**



**David Hockney: A Bigger Splash**

- Acrylic paint on canvas
- 242 x 243 cm
- Currently at the Tate, London

People can be put off trying to create art because they feel they cannot draw something as they see it in life. Take inspiration from Pollock, Basquiat or Kandinsky and attempt something more abstract: try not to think literally, hone in on shapes, colours and textures separately, focus on mark making rather than drawing a picture.



**Ai Weiwei: Sunflower Seeds**

- Art installation
- Consists of millions of handcrafted porcelain sunflower seeds
- Originally at the Tate, London, Oct 2010 to May 2011



# Photography:

In relation to other areas explored in this Byte, Photography is a relatively modern process that combines science and technology with art. Photographers have become vital documentarians helping to share news and culture across the world. But with modern smartphones anyone can be a photographer, **so what makes a good photograph?** Click the titles to the right to explore our selection.

## Galleries:

### **The Photographers' Gallery: Ramillies St, Soho, London**

The Photographers' Gallery is the largest public gallery in London dedicated to photography. From the latest emerging talent, to historical archives and established artists, this is the place to see photography in all its forms. [thephotographersgallery.org.uk](http://thephotographersgallery.org.uk)

### **Photofusion: Electric Ln, Brixton, London**

Photofusion houses some of London's most exciting upcoming artists work alongside offering workshops, masterclasses and artist talks and all kinds of photography services from darkroom processing to negative printing. [www.photofusion.org](http://www.photofusion.org)

## Websites:

[www.masters-of-photography.com/](http://www.masters-of-photography.com/)  
[www.autograph-abp.co.uk/](http://www.autograph-abp.co.uk/)  
[www.ilfordphoto.com](http://www.ilfordphoto.com)



In March 1936, Lange (whilst working for the US Resettlement and Farm Security Administration to bring the plight of migrant workers to public attention) found a family setting up camp on Highway 101. Lange's field notes of the 10 images she took read: "Seven hungry children. Father is native Californian. Destitute in pea pickers' camp... because of failure of the early pea crop. These people had just sold their tires to buy food." This intense image has become symbolic of the Great Depression in the US. [Find out more about the image and its subjects here.](#)

Migrant Mother, 1936

Dorothea Lange

Tank Man, 1989

Jeff Widener

V-J Day in Times Square, 1945

Alfred Eisenstaedt

Ali, 1965

Neil Leifer

Oscars Selfie, 2014

Bradley Cooper

Untitled, 1835

Henry Fox Talbot

Fallen Soldier, 1936

Robert Capa

Children Playing, 1937

Henri Cartier Bresson

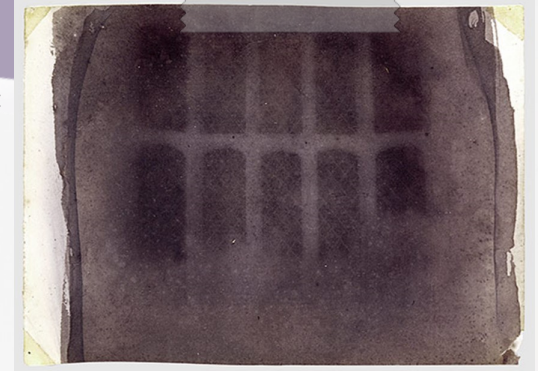
A Man on the Moon, 1969

Neil Armstrong

Mali, 1985

Sebastião Salgado

The image to the right may be the oldest camera negative in existence; it was taken by Henry Fox Talbot who invented the first process for creating reasonably light-fast and permanent photographs that was publically accessible, though not the first ever invented. It depicts the lattice windows of his home in Lacock, Wiltshire.



This image depicting a couple kissing in Times Square after WWII was won by the Allies became an overnight icon. The two subjects were strangers; according to Eisenstaedt the sailor was kissing every girl on the street in celebration and, being drawn to her white dress, he snapped this image in the heat of a moment which was over before he could take their names. Several people came forward claiming to be the sailor and the nurse in the image and extensive research has been conducted by forensic anthropologists and facial recognition specialists to verify them.



In the middle of the 2014 Oscars, host Ellen DeGeneres gathered some of the world's biggest stars to squeeze in for a selfie which became the most retweeted image of all time. The selfie is characterised by the subject/creators control over what can be seen in the image. Because of this, selfies have been praised and condemned for their supposed artificiality's effect on young people's self-esteem.



Document this years summer break with a photo a day. You could try the A - Z challenge, photographing something that represents each letter of the alphabet, or pick a view or subject and capture how its changes each day (e.g. a plant, the sunset, yourself)



# Literature:

Broadly, Literature refers to any written work, but what we often mean is writing that is considered to be an art form, deemed to have artistic or intellectual value due to deploying language in ways that differ from ordinary usage. That isn't to say all literature has to be high-brow and far-removed from our everyday experiences. The most popular works become so for their relatability to audiences across time and location. **Have you read any of the novels or poems our lists?** Click the titles to find out why these have stood out amongst the masses.

Catch-22, 1961  
**Joseph Heller**

Rebecca, 1938  
**Daphne Du Maurier**

Great Expectations, 1861  
**Charles Dickens**

To Kill a Mockingbird, 1960  
**Harper Lee**

Frankenstein, 1818  
**Mary Shelley**

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo, 2005  
**Stieg Larsson**

Nineteen Eighty-Four, 1949  
**George Orwell**

The Great Gatsby, 1925  
**F. Scott Fitzgerald**

Moby Dick, 1851  
**Herman Melville**

The Catcher in the Rye, 1951  
**J. D. Salinger**



We all judge books by their covers. Google image search the novels on our list and look at the vastly different ways they have been packaged over the years. **Why do publishers make the choices they do? What kind of cover would draw you in to a book?**

The Catcher in the Rye, originally published for adults, has since become popular with adolescent readers for its themes of youthful angst and alienation, its protagonist Holden Caulfield becoming an icon for teenage rebellion. The novel deals with complex issues of innocence, identity, belonging, loss, and connection.



[Find your nearest library and its opening times here.](#)

If you find concentrating on reading difficult, try [audible.co.uk](https://www.audible.co.uk)'s free trial, download an audiobook and listen to your literature instead.

Click the titles to open the poem in a browser tab

Poetry Slams are competitions at which oral poets read or recite original work. Originating in 1980's Chicago, the aim was to move poetry recitals from academia to a popular audience. Now Poetry Slams happen all over the world showcasing work by all kinds of writers, but most notably for those writing for societal and political change. Susan Sommers-Willett notes; "Whether for scores, applause, or mere power of persuasion, slam poets actively attempt to engage and elicit a reaction from their audiences" which in a live environment can be instant—differing hugely to the often individual reaction that written poetry and literature evokes.

Websites:

[slam.poetrysociety.org.uk](https://slam.poetrysociety.org.uk)  
[poetryslam.com](https://poetryslam.com)



The Last Word Festival 2017 - Poetry Slam Final - Jet Sweeney

Roundhouse 1,040 views

Click the image above to view recordings of *The Last Word Poetry Slam Final* held at the Roundhouse this year.

Not waving but drowning  
**Stevie Smith**

Sonnet 18  
**William Shakespeare**

Invictus  
**William Earnest Henley**

Little Gidding  
**T.S.Elliot**

A Birthday Present  
**Sylvia Plath**

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner  
**Samuel Taylor Coleridge**

The Road not Taken  
**Robert Frost**

Caged Bird  
**Maya Angelou**

To Autumn  
**John Keats**

Dis Poetry  
**Benjamin Zephaniah**





# Theatre:

Theatre brings literature to life and does so often by combining all the disciplines explored in this Byte. Unlike other art forms, we experience theatre as part of an audience, reacting live amongst other people and their own reactions. This differentiates it from the way we consume other forms of art which is often more individual and introspective. **Do you think you would laugh at a joke you didn't understand just because the people around you are laughing? Have you felt differently watching something live than you did watching it on TV?**



Hamlet is arguably one of Shakespeare's most famous works and the most quoted in the English language: the play dramatises Hamlet's quest for revenge upon his uncle who murdered his father, the King, and seized the throne, also marrying Hamlet's mother. The play has been produced on stage and screen countless times and inspired many

generations of artists and writers (including a painting you can find on the Fine Art page of this Byte). The title role has been played by many esteemed actors including Richard Burbage in its early productions, John Kemble, Sarah Bernhardt, Peter O'Toole, Richard Burton and Ralph Fiennes. The play is currently running at the Harold Pinter Theatre in the West End with Andrew Scott as the titular lead. [Click here for tickets and information.](#)

Lin-Manuel Miranda's musical reworking of the life of American Founding Father, Alexander Hamilton, has invigorated a new generation's interest in both history and the stage since its debut in 2015. It sets the key points of Hamilton's life to a decidedly modern soundtrack of rap, hip-hop and RnB and has been highly praised for the link this makes between the issues its protagonists debated during the American Revolution and the current political and social climate in the US. The Broadway production continues to prove a huge success with audiences, as a US tour and Chicago production begins and a West End version opens this winter.



Amadeus, 1979  
**Peter Shaffer**

Hamlet, 1599-1602  
**Shakespeare**

Hamilton, 2015  
**Lin-Manuel Miranda**

Death of a Salesman, 1949  
**Arthur Miller**

Waiting for Godot, 1953  
**Samuel Beckett**

The Threepenny Opera, 1928  
**Bertolt Brecht**

The Cherry Orchard, 1904  
**Anton Chekov**

Love and Information, 2012  
**Caryl Churchill**

The Importance of being Earnest, 1895  
**Oscar Wilde**

The Rover, 1677  
**Aphra Behn**

Click the titles above to view clips from each piece. Explore the related videos to learn more

Situated so close to London we have a wealth of globally acclaimed theatre right on our doorstep, and it doesn't have to be expensive. The [National Theatre offers discount prices for under 25's](#), and the [Donmar Warehouse offers tickets for free if you sign up](#). You can experience true Elizabethan theatre-going at the [Globe Theatre with a £5 Groundling ticket](#) and there are plenty of smaller playhouses that offer cheaper matinees that you can catch this summer.

Check out [www.timeout.com](http://www.timeout.com)

Closer to home we have the Watford Colosseum, The Palace Theatre, St. Albans Arena and the Hertford Theatre where you can catch touring shows or local amateur companies.



THE WATFORD UTC ARTS BYTE



Waiting for Godot is a play by Samuel Beckett in which two characters, Valdimir and Estragon, wait for the arrival of someone named Godot who never arrives. While waiting they engage in a variety of discussions and encounter three other characters. Because the play is so stripped down, it invites various social, political and religious interpretation, though Beckett has rejected many of these interpretations, saying "why people have to complicate a thing so simple I can't make out.". The play has a long a varied production history with Ian McKellen and Patrick Stewart famously taking the lead roles on Broadway in 2013.

