



The Open
University

50
YEARS

A GALLERY OF 'MULTIPOTENTIALITES'

**Celebrating 50 years of multidisciplinary
study at The Open University**

Wednesday 22 May 2019

Plato



Plato was a famous philosopher in classical Greece and founder of the first institution for higher learning in the Western world. He laid the foundations for Western philosophy, science, and maths, along with being one of the founders of Western religion and spirituality, a very early adopter of interdisciplinary studies.

Aristotle



Plato's student, Aristotle, was also a philosopher and scientist. His writings cover many areas, including physics, biology, zoology, poetry, theatre, music, psychology, and politics and government.

Abu Rayhan Al-Biruni



Abu Rayhan Al-Biruni, a Persian polymath regarded as one of the greatest scholars of the mediaeval Islamic era, and was well versed in physics, mathematics, astronomy, and a natural scientist, and also distinguished himself as a historian, chronologist, and linguist.

Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo da Vinci, regarded by many historians and scholars as a universal genius. His areas of interest spanned a wide range of subjects, from invention, painting, and sculpting, to architecture, science, music, mathematics, and engineering. The list goes on...



Beatrix Potter

Beatrix Potter's inspiration was drawn from a range of different disciplines, from recording observable data, art, and she was a student of natural history from a young age. She was also interested in geology, archaeology, entomology, and mycology.



Albert Einstein

Albert Einstein, the most famous scientist from the 20th century, was a theoretical physicist who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1921 for his work contributing to the evolution of quantum theory. He wrote over 150 scientific works, including writing about socialism. Einstein was also a lover of music and a keen violinist.



ABOUT THE GALLERY

Throughout history, there have been a number of well-known individuals who have applied a multi-subject, and/or interdisciplinary approach to their work. Our **Gallery of 'Multipotentialites'** showcases a range of people throughout history who have been involved with interdisciplinary study.

The term 'multipotentialite', coined by Emilie Wapnick, the founder and Creative Director of Puttylike, is one way to describe someone with many interests and creative pursuits. Multipotentialites tend to need variety in their lives, but how much variety depends on the individual. Multi-subject study can therefore help satisfy the need for variety which multipotentialites tend to have, and is something that we have encouraged students to consider through our free, badged open course, *Multidisciplinary study: the value and benefits*.

The original artwork displayed in the gallery was designed and produced by Claire Stringer and Holly Langley from More than Minutes to create the animations being shown on the large screen, with direction and guidance from the Open Programme Student and Engagement Manager, Rehana Awan.

Find out more: <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/education-development/multidisciplinary-study-the-value-and-benefits/content-section-0>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Emilie Wapnick is a writer, career coach, blogger, and community leader. She is the founder and creative director at Puttylike.com, where she helps multipotentialites integrate all of their interests to create dynamic, fulfilling, and fruitful careers and lives. We are very grateful to Emilie for allowing us to use her brilliant ideas to help us create some exciting new resources for our Open Programme students.



MORE THAN MINUTES

More than Minutes work with progressive organisations to develop their ideas through visuals. We are very grateful to Claire and Holly for turning Emilie's content into such beautiful artwork and animations!