

Lesson 17 – Dip B1 – 3rd July, 2026

Homework: there is no homework but...

- Keep on working towards the end of course test/conversation. Please feel free to add a drawing or some art work to your portfolio if you would like to.
- Last but not least, for our end of course celebration on the 31st, **each of you will be asked to present an object to put on the table.** The object must represent you in some way. It can be a photo, a drawing, a souvenir, anything. Be prepared to state in one sentence what the object is and why you chose it.

Notes from our lesson and transcript from the listening

There is some bread

There is bread

She is pouring milk

There is a jug

There is a tablecloth on the table

There is a bread basket

He has a tea-towel on/over his shoulder

Transcript:



Johannes Vermeer was a 17th-century painter from the city of Delft in Holland. He mainly painted the people and things he saw around him: the rooms in his house, the people who lived or worked there (usually women), and the things they did every day. For example, in his work you will see women who are playing music, reading or writing letters, or working in the kitchen. Vermeer was especially good at painting light coming into a room through windows. Partly for this reason, people often describe his work as being like photography or film – his paintings can seem very ‘real’.

This painting, *The Milkmaid*, is one of these very 'photographic' images. The woman, a maid or a servant, is pouring milk into a bowl. Perhaps she's making a bread and milk pudding, because there are pieces of broken bread on the table. Nobody knows if the woman he painted was a real servant or a model. However, most people think Vermeer usually painted his wife, his daughter, and his servant, not models. A famous book and film, called *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, inspired by one of his best-known paintings, is an imaginary story about Vermeer and his relationship with his young servant.

People admired Vermeer's paintings a lot in his lifetime, but he was never rich. There are two reasons for this. First, because he painted very slowly. Today there are only 34 paintings which we can be sure are by him. Second, because he used very expensive paints. The blue paint he used for the milkmaid's apron was made of lapis lazuli, which was a very expensive stone.

People loved this painting from the very beginning, and although it is very small, only 46 by 41 centimetres, 20 years after Vermeer died, somebody bought the painting for 175 Dutch guilders. That was an enormous amount of money for the time.

4 LISTENING

a You're going to listen to an art expert talking about Vermeer and *The Milkmaid*. Look at the painting again. With a partner, try to answer the questions.

- 1 What century did Vermeer live in?
 a 15th b 17th c 19th
- 2 Where was he from?
 a Holland b Germany c Russia
- 3 What kind of things did he usually paint?
 a everyday scenes b rich people c nature
- 4 What is the milkmaid probably making?
 a butter b bread c a pudding
- 5 How many of Vermeer's paintings exist today?
 a 4 b 34 c 304
- 6 Why was the painting expensive to make?
 a Because it's very big.
 b Because the paints cost a lot.
 c Because he rented an expensive studio.
