

Group 1

LANGUAGE + POWER

Discuss the power of words in this story.

Dissect Bartley's key phrase.

What other ways could he have said it?

What is the source of his power? (p. 17)

(p. 25)

Compare the words + language of other characters in the story.

(p. 37)

What does the narrator's writing style betray about him?

Bartley's profession is writing (scrivener).

Group 2

HUMOR / COMEDY

Where are there elements of comedy + humor?

(Find passages + examples.)

What effect does this have on the story and its characters?

Group 3

Bartleby as a ghost figure. (p. 26)
(p. 31)

Bartleby as a mirror / opposite to
the narrator.

Bartleby as a gothic "double" or other
half to the narrator.

Who is the problematic character? Bartleby or the narrator?

Group 4

SOCIAL READINGS - PROTEST

- Bartleby as a model of passive protest / non-action / peaceful protest?
- "Occupy Wall Street"
Bartleby occupies space
- How does one combat/deal with non-violent protest?

Group 5

RELIGIOUS READINGS

What Christian values are reinforced or undercut in this story?

- Love thy neighbor (p.30)
- You are your brother's keeper (p.31)
- Charity (p.47)

Can you read Bartleby as a sort of Jesus Christ figure? (p.57, 60)

Bartleby as Buddhist - hunger, asceticism,

Is he suffering? (p.34) ^{non-action}