

English 11/AP English Language and Composition
“Bartleby the Scrivener” Reading 2 (pp. 116–129)

1. As the narrator meets the passive resistance of Bartleby, what is his response? Specifically, how does his language reflect his frustration at Bartleby’s first refusal (114)?
2. As the reading continues, trace the changes in the narrator’s thinking.
3. What do Turkey, Nippers, and Ginger Nut think about Bartleby’s refusal? What would you think?
4. Early in the reading, what will Bartleby do/not do? As the reading goes on, how do Bartleby’s preferences change?
5. How does the narrator respond to the revelation that Bartleby’s been living at the office? How would you respond?
6. How do the narrator’s emotions echo those of Turkey and Nippers (122)?
7. Explore the symbolism of the bust of Cicero.
8. How does the resistance of Bartleby affect the language choices of the others? What does this shift say about the effect of Bartleby’s resistance on others?
9. How do you interpret Bartleby’s glazed expression (126)? Does your interpretation correspond with or differ from that of the narrator?
10. When the narrator is considering what to do with Bartleby, how does the environment reflect his preoccupations?
11. Given readings 1 and 2, what is the knowable purpose of this story? What possible themes arise?