

# The Layer Method

How Grade 9 Students Develop Perceptive Analysis

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## PRECISION POINT

Dickens presents Scrooge as a character who is not only isolated but one whose hard exterior prevents him from experiencing the world.

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## EMBEDDED QUOTATION

Initially, Scrooge is presented as someone who is "solitary as an oyster"

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## METHOD PURPOSE PIVOT

Dickens uses this visual simile to immediately build the impression...

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## SURFACE LAYER

...that Scrooge is a lonely character who lives in a bubble of isolation – like an oyster in its shell – and doesn't interact with others around him.

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## DIVEABLE LAYER

The connection to an oyster is particularly significant as oysters form their own shells as protective barriers suggesting that Scrooge's isolation may be a result of past perceived harm – a defence he has built around a softer interior to protect him from damage.

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## INTENTION & IMPLICATIONS

Through this introduction, Dickens strongly implies a character who appears hardened and tough, but who has the potential to open up and reveal a softer more human side.

Perhaps Dickens is subtly suggesting to the reader here that appearances can be misleading and to not accept his miserly initial portrayal of Scrooge to be finite and absolute: that when you scratch the surface of any man, what you find inside might surprise you.