



Monsters in the Sand

By David Harris

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This is a portrait, by an anonymous artist, of Austen Henry Layard in his later years. Layard, the main character in 'Monsters in the Sand', discovered the lost city of Nineveh.

What type of man would go through so much, in a difficult environment, among warring tribes?

What does this portrait say about him?

- Name six personality traits you feel are visible in Layard's face.
- How does the artist portray these?
- Why do you think Layard is looking to one side, rather than directly to the front?
- When was Layard's portrait painted? What clues led you to this conclusion?
- What is Layard thinking in this portrait?
- Imagine the artist's studio and sketch it.
- How do you feel about the portrait?
- In past times, why do you think portraits were so important?
- What is the value of portraits like this now?
- Is there any part of this portrait that you don't understand? Why?
- What is the message of the painting?
- Judging by the painting, do you feel Layard was important in his society, and why?
- Did the artist like Layard? How do you know this?
- What would Layard have thought of his portrait?
- If you had your portrait painted, what characteristics would you like to be shown?
- What medium would you use for a self-portrait: oils, water colours, charcoal, pen?
- Against what background would you like to be painted?