

# Articulate Storyline: Layer Properties

Use this guide to understand what each layer property does, when to use it, and how it shapes the learner's experience.

## How to Use This Guide

This guide supports an online course titled *Storyline Essentials: Triggers, Layers, and Interactive Design*.

Use it throughout your upskilling experience or as a refresher when completing work tasks with layers and triggers.

You can also refer to these Articulate community resources:

[Working with Layers](#)  
[What are Triggers?](#)

## Layer Properties at-a-Glance

### Hide Other Slide Layers

*What it does:* Shows only one layer at a time

*Use it when:* Building tabbed interactions or clean menus

### Hide Objects on Base Layer

*What it does:* Removes all base-layer visuals.

*Use it when:* You need a full pop-up or distraction-free view.

### Prevent User from Clicking on Base Layer

*What it does:* Locks the background.

*Use it when:* You want a [modal](#) or required-action moment.

### Pause Timeline of Base Layer

*What it does:* Freezes audio/animation on the base slide.

*Use it when:* You want learners to focus before the main timeline continues.

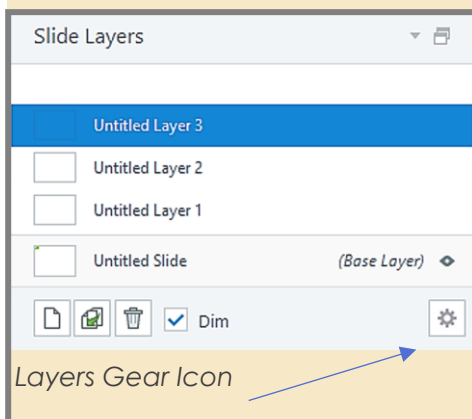
### When Revisiting (Reset/Resume)

*What it does:* Controls whether the layer restarts or saves progress.

*Use it when:* Use reset for practice or re-do moments that support repetition; resume for informational or one-time layers where the learner's previous input should stay put.

## Layer Properties Gear Icon

You'll see the Layer Properties gear icon only when you're working in [Slide View](#). If you don't see it right away, look to the right side of your screen. The "Slide Layers, Triggers, AI Assistant" panel might be collapsed. Just select the panel to open it, and the Layer Properties gear icon will appear in the bottom-right corner.



## Task • Step • Result + Troubleshooting

In this section, we'll walk through each setting together using a simple Task • Step • Result flow, so you can see how to put these tools into practice. We've included a few quick troubleshooting notes to help fine-tune any layers and keep your learning experience quick, clear, and in your control.

### 1. Hide Other Slide Layers

Only one layer at a time stays open. When this layer shows, other layers close. Great for tabs, menus, and step-by-step reveals.

**Task:** Create a clean tabbed interaction where only the active tab's content is visible.

#### Steps:

1. Select your layer in the Slide Layers panel.
2. Click the gear icon (Layer Properties).
3. Check Hide other slide layers.

#### Result:

When the learner clicks a tab button that shows this layer, all other layers close. The screen looks clean and focused, not cluttered with old content.

#### Troubleshooting:

Problem	Likely Cause	What to Do
Two tab layers are showing at the same time—my screen looks messy.	Hide other slide layers is not checked on one or more tab layers.	Open the gear icon on each tab layer and check Hide other slide layers so only one tab layer can be visible at once.
A helpful <a href="#">HUD</a> or menu layer disappears when I open another layer.	Hide other slide layers is turned on for layers that should not close the <a href="#">HUD</a> /menu layer.	Turn off Hide other slide layers on layers that should sit with the <a href="#">HUD</a> /menu. Keep it on only for layers that must replace each other (like tabs).

## 2. Hide Objects on Base Layer

Makes everything on the base slide invisible while the layer is showing. Perfect for full-screen pop-ups, dialog layers, or video overlays.

**Task:** Show a full-screen message or video without distractions in the background.

### Steps:

1. Select the layer and click the gear icon.
2. Check Hide objects on base layer.

### Result:

The layer feels like a fresh slide—no base text, no buttons, no clutter—just the focused content you want the learner to see.

### Troubleshooting:

Problem	Likely Cause	What to Do
My base-layer buttons and text vanish when I open a layer, but I still need some of them.	Hide objects on base layer is turned on, hiding everything instead of just a few items.	Turn off Hide objects on base layer in the gear icon.  Instead, open the layer's timeline and manually hide only the base objects you don't want using the eye icon next to each object.
My 'dimmed background' dialog still shows busy base content behind it.	You didn't check Hide objects on base layer, so all base objects are still there under the dimming effect.	Turn on Hide objects on base layer for that dialog or pop-up layer so the learner only sees the important content.

### 3. Prevent User from Clicking on Base Layer

Locks the base slide so learners can't click anything under the layer. Ideal for [modal](#) dialogs, required steps, and "finish this first" moments.

**Task:** Force the learner to complete a pop-up task before interacting with the rest of the slide.

#### Steps:

1. Open the layer and click the gear icon.
2. Check Prevent user from clicking on base layer.

#### Result:

The learner can't bypass the pop-up by clicking behind it. They must read, respond, or close the layer first—great for critical messages, safety warnings, or focus pop-ups.

#### Troubleshooting:

Problem	Likely Cause	What to Do
Learners can still click things on the main slide behind my pop-up.	Prevent user from clicking on base layer is not checked, so the base layer is still interactive.	Turn on Prevent user from clicking on base layer for that pop-up or dialog layer to make it truly <a href="#">modal</a> .
My navigation feels stuck. Users say they can't click anything on the base slide anymore.	You left the layer open and set Prevent user from clicking on base layer but forgot to add a Close / X button and/or a trigger to hide the layer.	<p>Add a Close or Continue button to the layer.</p> <p>Add a trigger: Hide layer → This Layer → When user clicks that button.</p>

#### 4. Pause Timeline of Base Layer

Freezes the base layer's timeline and audio while your layer is open. Great for knowledge checks, explanations, or any moment where you don't want narration or other audio to keep playing over the pop-up.

**Task:** Pause the slide's narration while a learner answers a question or reads extra info.

#### Steps:

1. Open the layer and click the gear icon.
2. Check Pause timeline of base layer.

#### Result:

When the layer shows, the base audio and animation stop. They resume exactly where they left off when the learner closes the layer. This also lets the player seekbar represent the layer's timeline instead of the base layer, if needed.

#### Troubleshooting:

Problem	Likely Cause	What to Do
The narration keeps talking while a pop-up is open and it's distracting.	Pause timeline of base layer is not enabled, so the base slide keeps playing.	Turn on Pause timeline of base layer for any layer where you want the learner's full attention.
The seekbar doesn't line up with what's happening on my layer.	The base layer timeline is still running, so the seekbar follows the base, not the active layer.	Enable Pause timeline of base layer so the seekbar and timeline match what learners see and hear on the layer.

## 5. When Revisiting (Reset vs Resume)

Controls what happens if the learner comes back to this layer later:

- Reset to initial state – the layer starts fresh, like it's never been seen (e.g., to retake a quiz).
- Resume saved state – the layer returns exactly as they left it (e.g., saves changes from last time the layer was visited).

**Task:** Decide if the layer should start over or remember progress when revisited.

**Steps:**

1. Open the layer's gear icon.
2. Under When revisiting, choose:
  - a. Reset to initial state for practice or repeatable tasks.
  - b. Resume saved state to view quiz answers previously entered on the layer that can't be retaken.

**Result:**

You either give learners a fresh try (great for practice and repetition) or preserve their work and progress, reinforcing control and independence.

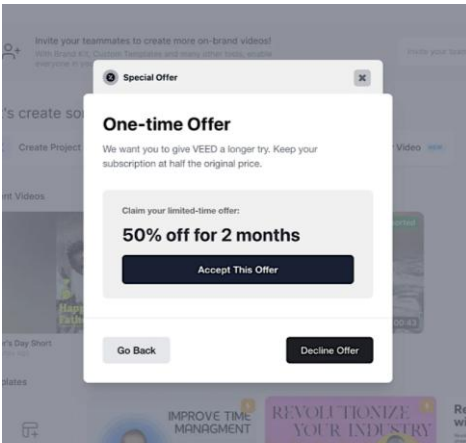
**Troubleshooting:**

Problem	Likely Cause	What to Do
When I come back to the layer, my answers are gone.	When revisiting is set to Reset to initial state.	Change it to Resume saved state if you want Storyline to remember their previous responses.
Learners say they can't retry the activity—the layer is stuck in a finished state.	It's set to Resume saved state, so it keeps their previous attempt.	For practice activities, set When revisiting → Reset to initial state so learners can start over each time.

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*Thoughtful layer properties turn a busy slide into a guided experience—learners know where to look, what to do, and when to move on. Use them well to replace confusion with confidence.*

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Example of a modal



Example of a HUD

## Modal (in Storyline)

A modal is a special type of layer, called a dialog layer in Storyline, that:

- dims the rest of the screen,
- prevents the learner from clicking anywhere else, and
- forces the learner to focus on the content in the pop-up window, sometimes called a “dialog box.”

In other words, a modal layer takes over the screen until the learner closes it. It's great for important messages, decisions, or moments where the learner needs to pause and pay attention.

## HUD (Heads-Up Display)

A HUD is a visual overlay in a user interface that shows key information right on the screen without blocking the main view. It lets users stay focused on the primary content while quickly checking details like status, progress, or stats.

The term comes from aviation (info projected on windshields) but is widely used in video games and apps for things like health bars or mini-maps. In e-learning tools, a HUD might display a learner's score or progress persistently on a slide.

## Slide View vs. Story View

In Articulate Storyline, Slide View and Story View represent two different, complementary workspace perspectives.

**Slide View** is the "workspace editor" used to design, build, and customize individual slides, layers, and interactive objects.

**Story View** is the "architectural map" that provides a bird's-eye view of your entire project, showing how scenes and slides are organized and connected.

## Contact Us

**LoveLearningPlanet**

+1 (323) 537-3337

[hello@lovelearningplanet.com](mailto:hello@lovelearningplanet.com)

[www.lovelearningplanet.com](http://www.lovelearningplanet.com)