



1. Over the course of the book, we see Nell grow and change with each chapter of her life. How did her experiences shape her outlook? What were the similarities and differences between Nell when we meet her at the Rockin' A and how we see her in the present day (as Ellen)?
2. Sandra Dallas creates an authentic sense of place through her rich historical detail of the American West. How does setting play a role in this story? How did the time period influence Nell's actions throughout the story?
3. Nell runs away from each of the three men she's engaged to for various reasons. What are some of the characteristics that drew Nell to them? How are they similar?
4. More than just finding a husband to settle down with, Nell is looking to find true love—part of her hesitation about marrying Wade, though he's a "good catch," is that "she hadn't felt a tug at her heart." How do you define true love? Do you think Nell found it?
5. Were you surprised by June's decision at the end of the book? What would you have done in her shoes?
6. Nell's romances are a focal point of the book, but she also forms strong female friendships, particularly with Betty and Claire. What value does Nell gain from these relationships that differs from what her romantic relationships provide?
7. Betty, Claire, and Nell all experience or witness violence at the hands of a man. How do these experiences shape each of them and inform their perspectives on men and dating?
8. How did quilting serve as a connection between the generations of women in Ellen's family? Would you ever consider "ruining" a wedding dress to make it into a quilt? Why or why not?

Discussion Questions



9. One of the qualities that draws Nell to James is his kindness to children—did you view this differently after his “secret” was revealed? How does it serve as foreshadowing?
10. What does Ellen’s reluctance to give up the ranch represent? How does it relate to Nell’s story?
11. When June comes to Ellen after running away from her fiancé, how does Ellen’s reaction compare with that of her own grandparents when she returned to Kansas after breaking off her engagements? How do their reactions reflect changing cultural values?