“Grand Allusion”

Discussion Questions

1. Why do allusions that fail to convey their intended meaning or are not understood by the audience “leave us all exposed,” as Ms. Samet contends?
2. How is the “Vronsky’s horse” anecdote an example of this?
3. Why does the classroom have “its own special dangers” when it comes to allusions?
4. How, according to the essay, has the Internet affected people’s abilities to use and verify allusions?
5. How does your experience with allusions support or challenge the author’s statement that “In trying to illuminate an allusion in class, I sometimes feel as if I’m opening one nesting doll after another until there’s nothing left at all.”