

Task 4.

Прочитайте текст и выполните задания A15–A21. В каждом задании обведите цифру 1, 2, 3 или 4, соответствующую выбранному вами варианту ответа.

Of all the Elwell family Aunt Mehetabel was certainly the most unimportant member. Not that she was useless in her brother's family; she was expected, as a matter of course, to take upon herself the most tedious and uninteresting part of the household labours. The Elwells were not consciously unkind to their aunt, but she was so insignificant a figure in their lives that she was almost invisible to them. Aunt Mehetabel did not resent this treatment; she took it quite unconsciously as they gave it. It was to be expected when one was an old maid dependent in a busy family. She had been the same at twenty as at sixty, a mouselike little creature, too shy for anyone to notice or to wish for a life of her own.

Even as a girl she had been clever with her needle in the way of patching quilts which consisted of several layers of cloth sewn together to make an attractive pattern or a picture. More than that she could never learn to do. The garments which she made for herself were lamentable affairs, and she was humbly grateful for any help in the bewildering business of putting them together. But in patchwork she enjoyed some importance. During years of devotion to this one art she had accumulated a considerable store of quilting patterns. Sometimes the neighbours would send over and ask her for a loan of her sheaf-of-wheat design, or the double-star pattern.

She never knew how her great idea came to her. Sometimes she even wondered reverently, in the phraseology of the weekly prayer-meeting, if it hadn't been "sent" to her. She never admitted to herself that she could have thought of it without other help. It was too great, too ambitious a project for her humble mind to have conceived. Even when she finished drawing the design with her fingers, she gazed at it incredulously, not daring to believe that it could indeed be her handiwork.

Now her nimble old fingers reached out longingly to turn her dream into reality. She began to think adventurously of trying it out – it would perhaps be not too selfish to make one square – just one unit of her design to see how it would look. She dared do nothing in the household where she was a dependent without asking permission. With a heart full of hope and fear thumping furiously against her old ribs she approached her sister-in-law, who listened to her absently and said, "Why, yes, start another quilt if you want to". Mehetabel tried honestly to make her see that this would be no common quilt, but her limited vocabulary and her emotion stood between her and expression.

Mehetabel rushed back up the steep attic stairs to her room, and in joyful agitation began preparations for the work of her life. She had but little time during the daylight hours filled with the incessant household drudgery. After dark she did not dare to sit up late at night lest she burn too much candle. She was too conscientious to shirk even the smallest part of her share of the housework, but she rushed through it now so fast that she was panting as she climbed the stairs to her little room. It was weeks before the little square began to show the pattern.

Finally she could wait no longer, and one evening ventured to bring her work down beside the fire where the family sat, hoping that good fortune would give her a place near the tallow candles on the mantelpiece. She had reached the last corner of that first square and her needle flew in and out with nervous speed. To her relief no one noticed her. As she stood up with the others, the square fell from her trembling old hands and fluttered to the table. Up to that moment Mehetabel had laboured in the purest spirit of selfless adoration of an ideal. The emotional shock given to her by her sister's-in-law cry of admiration as she held the work toward the candle to examine it, was as much astonishment as joy to Mehetabel.

As she lay that night in her narrow hard bed, too proud, too excited to sleep, Mehetabel's heart swelled and tears of joy ran down from her old eyes.

A15 Living with her brother's family Aunt Mehetabel

- 1) could hardly do any household chores due to her old age.
- 2) suffered from not having a family of her own.
- 3) had got accustomed to her humble existence.
- 4) expected to be left alone to live a life of her own.

A16 Since her youth Aunt Mehetabel had been good at needlework and

- 1) was known for making nice dresses for herself.
- 2) was eager to help other people with sewing.
- 3) humbly accepted people's admiration of her skills.
- 4) made nice bedcovers from pieces of fabric.

A17 Aunt Mehetabel's new quilt followed the complicated pattern which

- 1) one of the neighbours had given her.
- 2) she herself had happened to invent.
- 3) she had copied at the weekly prayer-meeting.
- 4) had been sent over to her.

A18 Aunt Mehetabel took her time about starting her new quilt because she

- 1) wanted to make sure that the family wouldn't object to it.
- 2) wanted to think over every detail of the pattern carefully.
- 3) was afraid that other members of the family would find her selfish.
- 4) was too old to start a new quilt with such a difficult pattern.

A19 As Aunt Mehetabel wanted to find some time to work on her quilt she

- 1) started to get up earlier to use the early hours of the morning.
- 2) tried to do her regular chores as quickly as possible.
- 3) skipped some of her minor household chores.
- 4) worked in her room at night by candlelight.

A20 One evening Aunt Mehetabel came down to the room where the family sat in order to

- 1) boast about the splendid intricate pattern of the quilt.
- 2) show them the first square of the quilt she had made.
- 3) demonstrate how skillfully she could use her needle.
- 4) have enough light to proceed with her work.

A21 When Aunt Mehetabel started her new quilt, she was driven by

- 1) a sudden flash of inspiration of an artist.
- 2) an urge to get rid of her monotonous existence.
- 3) her wish to win everybody's admiration.
- 4) her desire to become a rightful member of the family.