

Прочитайте текст. Ответьте на вопросы.

§ 1. In the last couple of decades, self-help books have been a publishing phenomenon, often topping the best-seller lists. Readers have lapped up their advice on how to do a wide variety of things, from becoming successful and rich to improving their relationships.

§ 2. Obviously, as in any field of publishing, some self-help books are better than others. Some may be based on actual research and case studies – there's some **substance** to them that suggests they can, at least to some extent, be taken seriously. Others, however, amount to little more than psychobabble – empty nonsense dressed up as serious psychological insight. These books bombard the reader with a mass of meaningless jargon, disguising the fact that they have nothing to say beyond the obvious that you would not need to buy a book to know. It's the latter category that has given self-help books a bad name among critics of the genre.

§ 3. Perhaps the key question on self-help books is: do they work? The answer to this question appears to be 'sometimes'. Research indicates that the kind of book that deals with a particular problem can be effective in helping people with that problem, particularly if the problem in question isn't a severe one, for example mild depression or anxiety. The situation is less clear with books dealing with personal growth or development. Some people do say that these books have helped them but it is by no means certain, and hard to measure.

§ 4. What is clear about all self-help books, however, is that they offer people hope. The actual advice they give and whether or not this is accurate or effective is probably less important than the fact that they tell the reader that change is possible, that there is hope of a better life, that people can overcome difficulties and improve themselves and their situation. While this may sound like a good thing, there is, however, a downside to it. To get people to buy them, these books often make exaggerated claims about what they will do for people. They can raise unrealistic expectations in the reader, suggesting that a better life can quite easily be achieved, that anyone can get what they want out of life. The truth is, of course, that changing yourself and your life may be very difficult indeed and require an **immense** amount of effort, if it is even achievable at all. So self-help books are open to the claim that they present a false picture that can only lead to disappointment in the end.

A25. In the second paragraph, the writer expresses a preference for self-help books which

- 1) don't use any jargon at all
- 2) give examples to support their advice
- 3) contain obvious things

A26. The writer says that self-help books containing a lot of 'psychobabble'

- 1) are seldom popular with readers
- 2) have affected the reputation of all self-help books
- 3) have serious psychological insight

A27. Research into whether self-help books really help people suggests that

- 1) those dealing with personal growth and development are the most useful
- 2) people want to believe that they have helped them a lot
- 3) they are not very useful for serious problems

A28. The writer concludes in that last paragraph that self-help books

- 1) are more influential than is generally thought
- 2) help to overcome difficulties
- 3) may actually be harmful to people

A29. substance (§ 2)

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|---------|-------------|------------|
| 1) base | 2) chemical | 3) content |
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A30. immense (§ 4)

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|--------------|---------|-------------|
| 1) wonderful | 2) huge | 3) exciting |
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