READING (ЕГЭ задание 12)

*Прочитайте текст и выполните задания **12–18**. В каждом задании запишите в поле ответа цифру **1**, **2**, **3** или **4**, соответствующую выбранному Вами варианту ответа.*

What I learned about Russians

People's first question when they hear that I've just returned from a winter in Moscow is usually: "What on earth drove you to go there?" The answer is not an easy one. I landed at Sheremetyevo Airport in January with dreams of balalaikas, samovars and golden domed churches. It did not take me long to realize that living in Moscow was less about folklore and literary romanticisms and more about surviving a harsh climate and an arduous routine.

When I, looking for work, contacted Dasha, our family friend, she instantly wrote back saying that her family would love to take me on as an au pair. An au pair is someone, usually a young woman, who lives with a family in a foreign country and helps with the children and housework in exchange for the opportunity to learn the language. So for 3,000 rubles a week, I was to care for Dasha's children, Sonya, 3, and Lyova, 2, and teach her husband Valera English.

The family lived in a small apartment in Zheleznodorozhny, an industrial town 21 kilometers east of Moscow. The apartment was also home to Dasha's elder brother and a dog and a rabbit. The place was never quiet, and there's certainly no room for secrets.

With so many families wanting their children to learn English, native English teachers are very much in demand and are paid handsomely. Subsequently, I soon found myself braving the commuter trains into the Moscow outskirts to teach a group of Dasha's colleagues. But for a young family living off a modest salary in Zheleznodorozhny, employing an English girl was a real innovation.

Au pairing was a novelty for me, too. My attitude toward children has never been particularly positive, but Sonya and Lyova were adorable. I instantly fell for their miniature hands, infectious laughter and funny little walks.

The arrival of an English nanny in the area did not go unnoticed. People's reactions at my lack of comprehension were mixed. Some were impatient, others were kind and helpful. Indeed, the language barrier was an obstacle for some time.

This irritation, however, did not exist with the children. They accepted me, with my funny accent and tea-and-milk quirks, for what I was: their nanny. They didn't care if it took me 10 minutes to read them a sentence from their favorite storybook. Nor did they particularly mind if I gave them sausages when they'd asked for ice cream.

On the surface, living with a Russian family was quite different from living with an English one. Together, we celebrated the spring festival of Maslenitsa and other national holidays such as Women's Day. I ate copious amounts of pelmeni, caviar and blini. My Russian family interacted like any other family. They had their arguments and conflicts and squabbles. But they also loved each other unconditionally and worked tirelessly to provide and protect. It was such a privilege to be welcomed into such a lovely and generous family.

I left them in April in heavy tears and with promises to join them next summer. Through them, I was able to experience the real Moscow region, not the shiny version of Moscow that most people see within the limits of the Garden Ring. I witnessed the daily hardships that normal people endure with indifference.

Most important, I had the chance to separate stereotype from reality. I concluded that Russia has its share of absurdities but that the typical Russian is not that different. He's just a little stronger.

12. When the author told people about her Russian experience, they …

1) got interested in the Russian culture.

2) asked about the transport she used.

3) were rather indifferent.

4) expressed great surprise.

13. The town where the author stayed in Russia is described as …

1) comfortable.

2) manufacturing.

3) exciting.

4) peaceful.

14.The apartment where the author stayed is described as …

1) overpopulated.

2) comfortable.

3) peaceful.

4) spacious.

15.The author considered the language barrier to be …

1) impossible to overcome.
2) irrelevant when dealing with the children.
3) irritating during her whole stay.
4) completely unnoticed.

16.The word *"braving"* in paragraph 4 ("… I soon found myself braving the commuter trains …") is closest in meaning to …

1) trying.
2) missing.
3) having to deal with.
4) avoiding.

17. Which of the following is NOT true about the author's host family?

1) They were overprotective of the author.
2) They introduced the author to the local culture.
3) They quarreled from time to time.
4) They did their best to earn a living.

18. What conclusion does the author come to?

1) Russians are mostly indifferent.
2) She had a lot of stereotypes about Russia.
3) Moscow region is very beautiful.
4) She had a glimpse of the true Russia.