

LIRA TOWN COLLEGE

S.3 ENGLISH 112 /2

1. Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

The Self-reliance worker

In Africa, there has been an enormous influx of young people into artisan activities. This has been possible for a number of reasons, the chief of which has been the nearly insatiable demand for cheap artifacts of various kinds: braziers (jiko), fence post nails, ladies debes, buckets, hinges and bolts for doors, wood – working tools – the list is endless. However, the boom in artisan activity would not have been possible without the readiness of those artisans already in trade to accept trainees for “on the job” training they needed them to cope with the work; and the speed at which these trainee artisans very soon became masters themselves. Within a year, trainees might in his turn take on fresh trainees himself for the training process to continue.

Gacuiiri comes from a family of black smiths. From a very early age, Gacuiiri was familiar with metal, wood and bits of machines. He used to make wooden models; once he used to make wooden carts for children to play on, and to carry debes of water some of these carts he would sell, others he would rent out. Later, in school vacations, he began to construct jikos out of scrap-metal to supplement the family income.

On leaving primary school, Gacuiiri set about finding employment. His first venture, mending bicycles, was unsuccessful, and he got a job picking coffee on one of the estates. A vacancy occurred in the farm workshop, and he convinced the manager that he would carry out most of the metal – working practices.

Gacuiiri now had what many would regard as a great job; but he wanted to be independent – he wanted to be his own boss. Within a short time he moved nearer Nairobi where he proceeded to make, full time, and the *jikos* and water cans that he had previously made in his school holiday. He would purchase a scrap metal in Nairobi for a few shillings, and take it back to his place on a borrowed bicycle.

Unfortunately the bicycle was simply not strong enough to carry the scrap-metal he wanted, and this gave him an idea. Why not make bicycle carriers; not those expensive, light-weight imported ones, but carriers strong enough to manage the weight of an adult, or sacks of charcoal, or debes of water?

To make such a carrier, especially strong tools were necessary. Gacuiiri bought a drill and bits for about 6/=, improvised a handle for hacksaw blades, and made a small bellows from bits and pieces. With these implements he was able to make his first metal cutter. Within a short time he has made a sample bicycle which he carries round to the main Nairobi cycle stores to get orders. Very soon he had orders for dozens of these strong carriers. How did he manage it?

