



THE BEST BAKER IN THE WORLD

I. BEFORE YOU READ.

You are going to read an extract from a book about a successful baker. Before you read, match the words from the text in A to their definitions in B. Use a dictionary to check your answers.

A

B

pioneered

amount of bread, shaped and baked in one piece

organic

part of a cooker used for baking

flour

employ

yeast

so strong that you cannot resist

oven

established

hire

powder made from grain used for making bread

daring

not produced by machines

overwhelming

was the first to do something

loaf (pl. loaves)

very big

huge

fungus used to make bread rise

founded

produced without using artificial chemicals

handmade

risky because it is unconventional



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2. NOW READ THE TEXT AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BELOW.

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Lionel Poilane, son of a French baker, inherited the family bakery when he was a young man. However, rather than sitting still and continuing to make bread in the traditional family way, Lionel became obsessed with producing the most exceptional bread money can buy. He did extensive research, interviewing more than eight thousand French bakers about their techniques. He pioneered the use of organic flour in France. He refused to bake baguettes, pointing out that they were fairly tasteless and not at all French (they're a fairly recent import from Vienna). He acquired the largest collection of bread cookbooks in the world and studied them.

His bread is made with just flour, water, yeast and sea salt, and it's baked in a wood-fired oven. Poilane refused to hire bakers as they had acquired too many bad habits. Instead, he hired young men who were willing to be apprentices with him for years. At first, the French establishment rejected his products, considering them too daring and different. But the overwhelming quality of the loaves and Poilane's desire to do things well finally won them over.

Virtually every fancy restaurant in Paris now serves Poilane's bread. People come from all over the world to wait in line in front of his tiny shop on Rue de Cherche Midi to buy a huge loaf of his bread – or more likely, several loaves. The company he founded now ships loaves all over the world, turning handmade bread into a global product, one worth talking about. Last year, Lionel sold bread to a value of \$10million.

Adapted from *The Purple Cow* by Seth Godin (Michael Joseph)



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a. Which four ingredients does Poliane use to make bread?

b. What two reasons does Poliane give for refusing to bake baguettes?

c. What do the following figures relate to:

eight thousand?

10 million?

3. READ THE TEXT AGAIN.

Look at the sentences below and choose the correct word from the choices in *italics*.

- a. Lionel was very interested in *improving* / *maintaining* the quality of bread produced in the family bakery.
- b. Lionel was one of the *first* / *last* bakers in France to use organic flour.
- c. Lionel wanted to employ *experienced* / *inexperienced* bakers to work with him.
- d. At first, the French establishment rejected Lionel's bread because it was too *unusual* / *conservative*.
- e. Lionel's bread is now sold *nationally* / *globally*.



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4 EXPRESSION.

According to the extract, Lionel Poilane "pioneered the use of organic flour in France". How popular is organic produce in your country? What do you think are the advantages / disadvantages of buying organic ingredients?