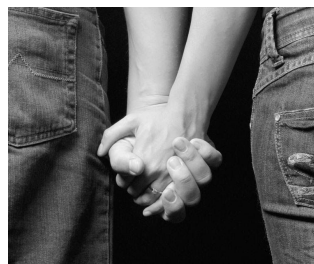


EPISODE 83
LEVEL B2

READING COMPREHENSION



DEATH OF DENIM

They are an **essential** (= crucial, important) item in every wardrobe. Jeans- practical, **hardwearing** (= it lasts for a long time and looks good even if it is used a lot), timeless and classless –are worn by everyone from the **humblest** (= poor, ordinary) worker to the American president.

But there are tough times for the denim industry. 43 million people have bought jeans this year which is fewer than last year. Levi Strauss has been forced to **lay off** (= fire, make redundant) 1000 workers because of falling sales. It seems that jeans have fallen victim to the worst possible fate for a fashion item; they have become respectable. The first pairs were made in the 1850s for San Francisco gold **prospectors** (=a person or company whose job is searching for gold, oil, or other valuable substances on or under the surface of the Earth) by Levi Strauss, a Bavarian immigrant. For 100 years only cowboys and prisoners wore them until Hollywood adopted them and they became fashionable **overnight** (= for or during the night, very quickly). A generation of young men **yearned** (=to wish very strongly, especially for something that you cannot have or something that is very difficult to have) to be rebels without a cause like a film star James Dean. In Communist countries jeans meant Western decadence and during the 60-s, they were banned in East Germany. In recent years the highest proportion of sales have been to the 45-54 age group. Sales to young people are falling. Wearing jeans is no longer cool. Denim **is out** (= unfashionable). And while actresses like Goldie Hawn may look more fantastic at 50 in skin-tight denims, that isn't the point. The point is that she is +50 and no 20-year-old wants to dress like her mother. So, having enjoyed unique status for nearly 40 years, jeans now seem **destined** (= intended for a particular purpose) for the museum. Ancient pairs sell at auction for thousands of dollars. In

March Levi Strauss paid over \$30000 for a 100-year-old pair found in an old mine in Colorado. They are believed to be the oldest in existence.



EXERCISE 1

Decide if the sentences below are true or false. Correct the false ones.

1. The first jeans were made by a man called Levi Strauss.
2. Jeans were originally made for American cowboys.
3. The word denim means blue.
4. Jeans became fashionable in the 1950s.
5. Most jeans are bought by young people.
6. The oldest pair of jeans is about 100 years old.

ENGLISH IN USE



EXERCISE 2


Use the words below and categorise them into the following groups and later describe the people below in the pictures:


Clothes	
Accessories	
Materials	
Pattern	

Parts of clothes	

belt, wallet, tie, earring, smart, bra, sleeve, tight, leather, skirt, button, boots, spotted, trousers, casual, cotton, flip-flops, purse, checked, denim, wool, scarf, velvet, loose, tights, cord, plain, linen, hood, striped, jacket, pocket, zip, baggy, socks, coat, knickers, waistcoat , vest, briefs, hat, cap, anorak, slippers, scruffy, gloves, mittens, shirt, suit, t-shirt, singlet, polka-dotted, necklace, brooch, bracelet



PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP 

EXERCISE 3 

PUT ON jeans / TAKE OFF jeans

DO UP a button / UNDO a button
ZIP / UNZIP clothes

NEWS



“No item of clothing is more **quintessentially** American than the blue jeans invented and perfected in the mid-19th century by Levi Strauss.

In 1853, the 24 year old Strauss left New York for San Francisco, hoping to **cash in on** the Gold Rush that began in 1849. Along with his sister and brother-in-law, he opened a dry goods store that sold supplies to miners as well as fancy linens, etc., to the growing city.

In 1872, Levi received a letter from Jacob Davis, a Nevada tailor. Davis was one of Levi Strauss' regular customers; he **purchased** bolts of cloth from the company to use for his own business. In his letter, Davis told about the interesting way he made pants for his customers: he placed metal **rivets** at the points of strain-pocket corners and the base of the fly. He didn't have the money to patent his process so he suggested that Levi pay for the paperwork and that they take out the patent together. The patent was granted on May 20, 1873, and the first blue jeans were born.

The first jeans came in two styles, indigo blue and brown cotton "duck." Unlike denim, the duck material never became soft and comfortable so it was eventually dropped from the line.

Strauss' **utterly** practical blue jeans were even **embraced** by the fashion industry. Levi's® jeans for women were first featured in Vogue magazine in 1935. "Designer jeans" eventually became so popular that in the mid-1970s Calvin Klein® jeans were garnering \$12.5 million per week. Abroad, American jeans (especially Levi's® jeans) were in such demand that in Eastern Bloc countries they became an underground standard of currency.”

Quintessentially = being the most typical example or most important part of something

Cash in on = to get money or another advantage from an event or situation, often in an unfair way

Purchased = bought

Rivets = a metal pin used to fasten flat pieces of metal or other thick materials such as leather

Utterly = totally

Embraced = to accept sth

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex. 1

1. True
2. False
3. False
4. True
5. False
6. True

Ex. 2

belt, wallet, tie, earring, smart, bra, sleeve, tight, leather, skirt, button, boots, spotted, trousers, casual, cotton, flip-flops, purse, checked, denim, wool, scarf, velvet, loose, tights, cord, plain, linen, hood, striped, jacket, pocket, zip, baggy, socks, coat, knickers, waistcoat, vest, briefs, hat, cap, anorak, slippers, scruffy, gloves, mittens, shirt, suit, t-shirt, singlet, polka-dotted, necklace, brooch, bracelet

Clothes	Tie, bra, skirt, boots, trousers, flip-flops, scarf, tights, hood, jacket, socks, coat, knickers, waistcoat, vest, briefs, hat, cap, anorak, slippers, gloves, mittens, shirt, suit, t-shirt, singlet
Accessories	Belt, wallet, earrings, button, purse, necklace, brooch, bracelet
Materials	Leather, cotton, denim, wool, velvet, cord, plain, linen,
Pattern	Smart, tight, casual, loose, baggy, scruffy, spotted, striped
Parts of clothes	Sleeve, pocket, zip,