



Worksheet 5. Reading: *Blue Jeans*

Read this passage about the origin of jeans. Then answer the questions on the next page.

Blue Jeans

How and where did jeans originate? They were invented **out of necessity** during the California Gold Rush in 1853. They were invented by a 24-year-old German immigrant who had gone from New York to San Francisco with a large supply of a heavy, rough **canvas** material.

He **intended** to sell this canvas for use as tents and wagon covers. But the gold **miners** told him, "We don't need tents! We need pants, pants that are made of a strong material."

So instead of tents, pants were soon made from the canvas. The miners liked the pants, but complained that they were too **rough** on the skin. Then a softer kind of cloth was substituted. This **cotton** cloth was imported from France, and it was called *serge de Nimes*. (Nimes is a city in France.) The **fabric** later became known as **denim** -- pronounced "de NEEM," and meaning *from Nimes*.



The original color of the pants was brown, but indigo dye was being developed at this time, and the brown color was soon replaced with the now-familiar deep blue. These denim pants were **nicknamed** *blue jeans*.



Although jeans were originally **designed** for heavy physical **labor**, the image of jeans changed **dramatically** in the 1950s. In those years, many western movies were being made with **glamorous** stars like John Wayne and Gary Cooper as cowboys wearing jeans. Jeans **acquired** a glamorous **image**, too. Over the next **decades**, jeans were being worn everywhere, and were even featured in the fashion shows of the designers in Paris.

But, **apart from** the "glamour," jeans became very popular for work, play, and dress because they are comfortable and **durable**. These **versatile** pants are worn by men, women, and children, young and old, all over the world.

The name of the inventor of those first jeans? It was Levi Strauss, and it was by his first name that the original blue jeans were known: Levis.

out of necessity = because of necessity

the California Gold Rush = a time in the mid-1800s when thousands of people rushed to California to find gold

canvas = strong cloth used to make bags, tents, shoes etc:

indigo dye = a dark blue substance that is used to change the color of something

apart from = as well as, in addition to



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Answer the questions according to the information in the reading. Circle a. or b.
In item 9, circle all the choices that are correct.

- Which statement is true?
 - A young man came to California with hundreds of pairs of jeans to sell.
 - A young man came to California with a large supply of canvas to sell.
- What did the young man do with the material he had?
 - He made pants.
 - He made tents.
- Did the miners like the pants at first?
 - Yes, but the pants were too thin.
 - Yes, but the pants were too rough.
- How were the pants improved?
 - They were made with a softer material.
 - They were washed many times.
- What color were the original pants?
 - blue
 - brown
- Which statement is true?
 - Jeans were originally made for miners.
 - Jeans were originally made for cowboys.
- What has happened to the image of jeans since they were invented?
 - Jeans have become historic.
 - Jeans have become more glamorous.
- How were the first jeans known?
 - by the first name of their inventor
 - by the last name of their inventor
- Which words describe the jeans of today?
 - versatile
 - durable
 - comfortable
 - popular
 - thick



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