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Hundreds of millions of men, women, boys and girls have them. In fact, many of you reading this probably have them on right now – and if you don't, there's a good chance that someone nearby does.

You probably wouldn't use them all the time, though. To go to a job interview or a wedding, for example, you would probably choose something less casual.

They have had their name in English for about fifty years: before about 1960 they were called 'overalls'.

Americans probably have more of them than anyone else. In fact, there is an estimate that the average American has seven pairs.

Their name in English comes from the French word for the city of Genoa in northern Italy, where because they are tough and not easy to damage, they used to be part of the uniform for sailors in the navy. They also used to be part of the naval uniform in the United States.

Among the other people who used them for work, especially in the United States, were cowboys, farm workers and prisoners. Today, however, you would probably associate them more with leisure than work.

They are tough because of the special kind of cotton they are made from, called denim. The name comes, again, from French, in this case *de Nîmes* because the city of Nîmes in southern France used to be one of the biggest producers of this kind of cotton.

Although now they are so common around the world that you probably wouldn't associate them with any region or country, during part of the twentieth century they were associated with the West, particularly the United States. And in the United States, in the 1950s and 60s, they were associated with teenagers and young adults who were rebellious. By the 1970s, however, they had become just a normal piece of clothing for Americans.

Some people like them to look older than they really are, which is why some factories use sand to damage the denim slightly. Some people also like them to look damaged in other ways, which is why, unlike almost any other piece of clothing, you can even buy them with holes in.

They come in many different colours, but the most traditional, and still the most popular, is blue. In fact, much of the world's production of a blue dye called indigo goes into making them.

Jeans

WORKSHEET B

Exercise 1

Team A

Here are the answers to some questions about the text on Worksheet A, but what are the questions? When you have prepared the questions, Team B will have to answer them as part of a quiz.

1. It comes from (the French word for) the city of Genoa.
 2. Seven.
 3. They were called 'overalls'.
 4. It is a blue dye.
 5. It is a tough kind of cotton.
 6. It is in southern France.
 7. In the 1950s and 60s.
 8. Because some people like their jeans to look older than they really are.
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Team B

Here are the answers to some questions about the text on Worksheet A, but what are the questions? When you have prepared the questions, Team A will have to answer them as part of a quiz.

1. Sailors in the navy.
2. Denim.
3. They used them for work.
4. They use sand.
5. It is in northern Italy.
6. The West, particularly the US.
7. It comes from (the French word for) the city of Nîmes.
8. To a job interview or a wedding.

