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Level 4 – 4th August 2025

Jeans video sparks race and genetics debate

FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2508/250804-jeans-genes-wordplay-4.html>

Contents

The Reading	2
Phrase Matching	3
Listening Gap Fill	4
No Spaces	5
Survey	6
Writing and Speaking	7
Writing	8

Please try Levels 5 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2508/250804-jeans-genes-wordplay-4.html>

A video from the jeans maker American Eagle has created a storm. Social media users say the company's use of the words "jeans" and "genes" in a video is racist. The company's new jeans video stars actress Sydney Sweeney. She tells the camera: "Genes are passed down from parents to offspring, often determining traits like hair colour, personality and even eye colour. My jeans are blue." The video closes with the line: "Sydney Sweeney has great jeans."

Critics of the say the wordplay is eugenic. Eugenics is a theory that suggests humanity can be improved by focusing on "desirable" genes. The critics say Ms Sweeney is white, blue-eyed, and blonde. A former Fox News host called the criticism a "leftist meltdown". The White House called it an overreaction, and that attacking the ad was "cancel culture run amok". American Eagle says its ad "is and always was about the jeans."

Sources: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/entertainment/celebrities/2025/08/01/jd-vance-sydney-sweeney-jeans-ad-controversy/85474100007/>
<https://apnews.com/article/american-eagle-sydney-sweeney-jeans-dunkin-e4d0cfade207d3b1e1b4e93531bfc082>
<https://www.vox.com/culture/422121/sydney-sweeneys-american-eagle-ad-jeans-genes-eugenics-trump>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2508/250804-jeans-genes-wordplay-4.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. A video from | a. of the words |
| 2. American Eagle has created | b. like hair colour |
| 3. the company's use | c. jeans video |
| 4. The company's new | d. line |
| 5. Genes are passed | e. to offspring |
| 6. from parents | f. a storm |
| 7. determining traits | g. the jeans maker |
| 8. The video closes with the | h. down |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Critics of | a. meltdown |
| 2. Eugenics is a | b. culture |
| 3. white, blue-eyed, and | c. was about the jeans |
| 4. a leftist | d. theory |
| 5. The White House called | e. the ad |
| 6. cancel | f. it an overreaction |
| 7. run | g. blonde |
| 8. its ad "is and always | h. amok |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2508/250804-jeans-genes-wordplay-4.html>

A video from (1) _____ American Eagle has
(2) _____. Social media users say the company's
use of the words "jeans" and "genes" in a
(3) _____. The company's new jeans video stars
actress Sydney Sweeney. She tells the camera:
"(4) _____ down from parents to offspring, often
(5) _____ hair colour, personality and even eye
colour. My jeans are blue." The video closes
(6) _____: "Sydney Sweeney has great jeans."

Critics of the say (7) _____ eugenic. Eugenics is a
theory that (8) _____ be improved by focusing on
"desirable" genes. (9) _____ Ms Sweeney is white,
blue-eyed, and blonde. A former Fox News host
(10) _____ a "leftist meltdown". The White House
called (11) _____, and that attacking the ad was
"cancel culture run amok". American Eagle says its ad "is
(12) _____ about the jeans."

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2508/250804-jeans-genes-wordplay-4.html>

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JEANS AND GENES SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2508/250804-jeans-genes-wordplay-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about jeans and genes in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

