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**Level 6 – 4th August 2025**

## Jeans video sparks race and genetics debate

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

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**Please try Levels 4 and 5 (they are easier).**

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# THE ARTICLE

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

A video from a U.S. fashion retailer has created controversy over its use of the words "jeans" (as in denim) and "genes" (as in genetics). Social media is alight with claims the video is racist. The company, American Eagle, produced the video for its new line of clothes. The video stars denim-clad 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 tagline: "Sydney Sweeney has great jeans." American Eagle said the play on words was part of its ad campaign's "provocative language". It said the words were definitely going to "push buttons".

Many people have criticized the wordplay for having eugenic undertones. Eugenics is a debunked theory that posits that humanity can be improved by encouraging people with certain genes to reproduce, to increase the occurrence of "desirable" racial traits. Critics of the ad highlight the fact that Ms Sweeney is white, blue-eyed, and blonde. They suggest her looks are really "great genes". Former Fox News host Megyn Kelly called the criticism a "leftist meltdown". U.S. Vice President JD Vance called it an overreaction. Meanwhile, the White House communications director said 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>

# WARM-UPS

**1. JEANS AND GENES:** Students walk around the class and talk to other students about jeans and genes. Change partners often and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

video / fashion retailer / controversy / jeans / genes / denim / eye colour / campaign / wordplay / humanity / eugenics / racial traits / criticism / overreaction / cancel culture

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. GENETICS:** Students A **strongly** believe we should not use genetics to change human DNA; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**4. FASHION STORES:** What are the good and bad things about these fashion stores? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	Good Things	Bad Things
Chain stores		
Department stores		
Luxury brand stores		
Online retailers		
Outlet stores		
Market stalls		

**5. DENIM:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "denim". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**6. ESSENTIAL FASHION:** Rank these with your partner. Put the most necessary things at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Jeans
- White T-shirts
- Leather jacket
- Sneakers
- Sunglasses
- Hoodie
- Baseball cap
- A backpack

# VOCABULARY MATCHING

## Paragraph 1

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. retailer     | a. A strong disagreement about something important.                          |
| 2. controversy  | b. Things that show what a person or thing is like (like kind, funny, tall). |
| 3. alight       | c. Wearing clothes.  |
| 4. clad         | d. Spread all around.  |
| 5. traits       | e. A person or store that sells things to people.                            |
| 6. provocative  | f. Make someone feel angry or upset on purpose.                              |
| 7. push buttons | g. Doing or saying something to make people feel strong emotions.            |

## Paragraph 2

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 8. wordplay   | h. A time when someone loses control because of strong feelings. |
| 9. eugenics   | i. Using words in a funny or smart way.                          |
| 10. debunked  | j. To make babies.   |
| 11. posit     | k. Act in a wild or crazy way without control.                   |
| 12. reproduce | l. Shown to be not true.   |
| 13. meltdown  | m. Say that something is true, even if it is not proven.         |
| 14. run amok  | n. The idea of trying to make people have only "better" babies.  |

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

1. A company wants to call Demin jeans "genes". **T / F**
2. An actress in an ad said jeans are passed down through generations. **T / F**
3. The ad said the actress had great genes. **T / F**
4. The jeans company understood its ad might provoke discussion. **T / F**
5. People on social media said the ad encouraged genetic engineering. **T / F**
6. Critics of the ad objected to a white, blonde-haired woman being in it. **T / F**
7. The US vice-president said people were overreacting to the ad. **T / F**
8. The jeans company said the ad was only about jeans. **T / F**

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** (The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. <b>retailer</b>    | a. suggestions     |
| 2. <b>controversy</b> | b. characteristics |
| 3. <b>offspring</b>   | c. manifestation   |
| 4. <b>traits</b>      | d. offensive       |
| 5. <b>provocative</b> | e. condemnation    |
| 6. <b>undertones</b>  | f. debate          |
| 7. <b>debunked</b>    | g. out of control  |
| 8. <b>occurrence</b>  | h. store           |
| 9. <b>criticism</b>   | i. disproved       |
| 10. <b>run amok</b>   | j. children        |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. a U.S. fashion                        | a. to reproduce       |
| 2. Social media is alight                | b. offspring          |
| 3. from parents to                       | c. "leftist meltdown" |
| 4. determining traits                    | d. with claims        |
| 5. part of its ad campaign's provocative | e. eugenic undertones |
| 6. criticized the wordplay for having    | f. language           |
| 7. Eugenics is a debunked                | g. retailer           |
| 8. encouraging people with certain genes | h. amok               |
| 9. Kelly called the criticism a          | i. like hair colour   |
| 10. the ad was cancel culture run        | j. theory             |

# GAP FILL

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

A video from a U.S. fashion (1) \_\_\_\_\_ has created controversy over its use of the words "jeans" (as in (2) \_\_\_\_\_) and "genes" (as in genetics). Social media is alight with claims the video is racist. The company, American Eagle, produced the video for its new (3) \_\_\_\_\_ of clothes. The video stars denim-clad actress Sydney Sweeney. She tells the camera: "Genes are (4) \_\_\_\_\_ down from parents to offspring, often determining (5) \_\_\_\_\_ like hair colour, personality and even eye colour. My jeans are blue." The video closes with the (6) \_\_\_\_\_: "Sydney Sweeney has great jeans." American Eagle said the play on words was part of its ad campaign's "(7) \_\_\_\_\_ language". It said the words were definitely going to "push (8) \_\_\_\_\_".

*passed*  
*denim*  
*buttons*  
*retailer*  
*tagline*  
*line*  
*provocative*  
*traits*

Many people have criticized the (9) \_\_\_\_\_ for having eugenic undertones. Eugenics is a debunked theory that (10) \_\_\_\_\_ that humanity can be improved by encouraging people with certain genes to (11) \_\_\_\_\_, to increase the occurrence of "desirable" racial traits. Critics of the ad highlight the fact that Ms Sweeney is white, blue-eyed, and blonde. They suggest her (12) \_\_\_\_\_ are really "great genes". Former Fox News host Megyn Kelly called the criticism a "(13) \_\_\_\_\_ meltdown". U.S. Vice President JD Vance called it an (14) \_\_\_\_\_. Meanwhile, the White House communications director said attacking the ad was "cancel culture run (15) \_\_\_\_\_". American Eagle says its ad "is and (16) \_\_\_\_\_ was about the jeans."

*reproduce*  
*leftist*  
*always*  
*wordplay*  
*amok*  
*looks*  
*posits*  
*overreaction*

# LISTENING – Guess the answers. Listen to check.

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

- 1) A video from a U.S. fashion retailer \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. has created contra version
  - b. has created controversy
  - c. has created contra verses
  - d. has created controversial
- 2) Social media is alight with claims the \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. video is bassist
  - b. video is latent
  - c. video is racist
  - d. video is latest
- 3) She tells the camera: "Genes are passed down from \_\_\_\_\_"
  - a. parent to off sprung
  - b. parents two offspring
  - c. parents to oft spring
  - d. parents to offspring
- 4) often determining traits like hair colour, personality and \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. ever eye colour
  - b. event eye colour
  - c. even eye colour
  - d. evens eye colour
- 5) It said the words were definitely going \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. to push buttons
  - b. to pull buttons
  - c. to polish buttons
  - d. to brush buttons
- 6) humanity can be improved by encouraging people with certain \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. genes for reproduce
  - b. genes to reproduce
  - c. genes by reproduce
  - d. genes so reproduce
- 7) to increase the occurrence of \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. despicable racial traits
  - b. describable racial traits
  - c. decibel racial traits
  - d. desirable racial traits
- 8) They suggest her looks are \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. really "great gins"
  - b. really "great gems"
  - c. really "great jeans"
  - d. really "great genes"
- 9) Former Fox News host Megyn Kelly called the criticism \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. a "left-right meltdown"
  - b. a "leftist meltdown"
  - c. a "left wrist meltdown"
  - d. a "loftiest meltdown"
- 10) attacking the ad was cancel \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. culture run amok
  - b. culture run agog
  - c. culture run awol
  - d. culture run a lot

# LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

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

A video from a U.S. fashion retailer has created (1) \_\_\_\_\_ use of the words "jeans" (as in denim) and "genes" (as in genetics). Social media is (2) \_\_\_\_\_ the video is racist. The company, American Eagle, produced the video for its new line of clothes. The video stars (3) \_\_\_\_\_ Sydney Sweeney. She tells the camera: "Genes are passed down from parents to offspring, often (4) \_\_\_\_\_ hair colour, personality and even eye colour. My jeans are blue." The video closes (5) \_\_\_\_\_: "Sydney Sweeney has great jeans." American Eagle said the play on words was part of its ad campaign's "provocative language". It said the words were definitely going (6) \_\_\_\_\_.

Many people have criticized the wordplay (7) \_\_\_\_\_ undertones. Eugenics is a debunked theory that posits that humanity can be improved by encouraging people with certain genes to (8) \_\_\_\_\_ the occurrence of "desirable" racial traits. Critics of the ad (9) \_\_\_\_\_ that Ms Sweeney is white, blue-eyed, and blonde. They suggest her looks are really "great genes". Former Fox News host Megyn Kelly called the criticism (10) \_\_\_\_\_. U.S. Vice President JD Vance called it an overreaction. Meanwhile, the White House communications director said attacking the ad was "cancel (11) \_\_\_\_\_". American Eagle says its ad "(12) \_\_\_\_\_ was about the jeans."

# COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

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

1. What does the article say the jeans ad created?
2. What did the company make the ad for?
3. What does the ad say are passed down through the generations?
4. What does the ad say the actress has?
5. What did the company say language in its ad would push?
6. What did critics criticize the ad for having?
7. What did the article say Eugenics was as a theory?
8. What did a former Fox News host call the criticism of the ad?
9. What did the White House say had happened to cancel culture?
10. What did the fashion company say the ad was always about?

# MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ

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

- 1) What does the article say the jeans ad created?
  - a) a new denim
  - b) controversy
  - c) increased order
  - d) new computer graphics techniques
- 2) What did the company make the ad for?
  - a) to try to double sales
  - b) its shareholders
  - c) a new denim colour
  - d) its new line of clothes
- 3) What does the ad say are passed down through the generations?
  - a) fashion sense
  - b) jeans
  - c) genes
  - d) style
- 4) What does the ad say the actress has?
  - a) great jeans
  - b) blue jeans
  - c) great genes
  - d) unusual genes
- 5) What did the company say language in its ad would push?
  - a) sales
  - b) buttons
  - c) limits
  - d) demand
- 6) What did critics criticize the ad for having?
  - a) eugenic undertones
  - b) too much blue
  - c) a poor tagline
  - d) bad music
- 7) What did the article say Eugenics was as a theory?
  - a) a must read
  - b) still in development
  - c) debunked
  - d) dodgy
- 8) What did a former Fox News host call the criticism of the ad?
  - a) a leftist meltdown
  - b) woke
  - c) politically overcorrect
  - d) bemusing
- 9) What did the White House say had happened to cancel culture?
  - a) It disappeared.
  - b) It was cultured.
  - c) It was cancelled.
  - d) It had run amok.
- 10) What did the fashion company say the ad was always about?
  - a) passing jeans down to children.
  - b) denim
  - c) its jeans
  - d) style

# ROLE PLAY

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

## **Role A – A Pair of Jeans**

You think a pair of jeans is the most essential fashion item. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their items. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): a white T-shirt, a pair of sunglasses or a baseball cap.

## **Role B – A White T-shirt**

You think a white T-shirt is the most essential fashion item. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their items. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): a pair of jeans, a pair of sunglasses or a baseball cap.

## **Role C – A Pair of Sunglasses**

You think a pair of sunglasses is the most essential fashion item. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their items. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): a white T-shirt, a pair of jeans or a baseball cap.

## **Role D – A Baseball Cap**

You think a baseball cap is the most essential fashion item. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their items. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): a white T-shirt, a pair of sunglasses or a pair of jeans.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look online / in your dictionary to find collocates, information on, synonyms for... the words 'jeans' and 'genes'.

<b>jeans</b>	<b>genes</b>
--------------	--------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• use</li><li>• claims</li><li>• stars</li><li>• closes</li><li>• play</li><li>• definitely</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• theory</li><li>• highlight</li><li>• suggest</li><li>• former</li><li>• director</li><li>• always</li></ul>
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# JEANS AND GENES SURVEY

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

# JEANS AND GENES DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'jeans'?
3. What do you think of jeans?
4. Why are jeans so popular?
5. What's your favourite jeans ad?
6. What do you think of the jeans-genes controversy?
7. Why do people think the video might be racist?
8. What do you think the future of genetics will be like?
9. Why might people think the ad's tagline might be provocative?
10. When was the last time someone pushed your buttons?

*Jeans video sparks race and genetics debate – 4th August 2025*  
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# JEANS AND GENES DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'genes'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. What do you know about genes?
15. What do you know about eugenics?
16. Why do people think there is a most desirable way of looking?
17. What do you know about cancel culture?
18. What's the best jeans brand?
19. How important are jeans to you?
20. What questions would you like to ask the CEO of American Eagle?

# DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

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# DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

# LANGUAGE - CLOZE

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

A video from a U.S. fashion (1) \_\_\_\_\_ has created controversy over its use of the words "jeans" (as in denim) and "genes" (as in genetics). Social media is (2) \_\_\_\_\_ with claims the video is racist. The company, American Eagle, produced the video for its new (3) \_\_\_\_\_ of clothes. The video stars denim-clad actress Sydney Sweeney. She tells the camera: "Genes are (4) \_\_\_\_\_ 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 tagline: "Sydney Sweeney has great jeans." American Eagle said the (5) \_\_\_\_\_ on words was part of its ad campaign's "provocative language". It said the words were definitely going to "(6) \_\_\_\_\_ buttons".

Many people have criticized the wordplay for having eugenic undertones. Eugenics is a (7) \_\_\_\_\_ theory that posits that humanity can be improved by encouraging people with (8) \_\_\_\_\_ genes to reproduce, to increase the occurrence of "desirable" racial traits. Critics of the ad highlight the (9) \_\_\_\_\_ that Ms Sweeney is white, blue-eyed, and blonde. They suggest her looks are really "great genes". Former Fox News host Megyn Kelly called the criticism a "leftist (10) \_\_\_\_\_". U.S. Vice President JD Vance called it an overreaction. Meanwhile, the White House communications director said attacking the ad was "cancel culture (11) \_\_\_\_\_ amok". American Eagle says its ad "is and always was about the (12) \_\_\_\_\_."

**Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.**

- |     |              |                 |              |               |
|-----|--------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1.  | (a) image    | (b) launderer   | (c) retailer | (d) tailors   |
| 2.  | (a) alight   | (b) upend       | (c) down     | (d) rigid     |
| 3.  | (a) line     | (b) circle      | (c) squiggle | (d) zone      |
| 4.  | (a) passed   | (b) parsed      | (c) pasted   | (d) past      |
| 5.  | (a) say      | (b) write       | (c) spell    | (d) play      |
| 6.  | (a) wear     | (b) pull        | (c) break    | (d) push      |
| 7.  | (a) debunked | (b) banked      | (c) balked   | (d) debauched |
| 8.  | (a) sure     | (b) zero        | (c) gold     | (d) certain   |
| 9.  | (a) fact     | (b) knowledge   | (c) post     | (d) look      |
| 10. | (a) defrost  | (b) meltdown    | (c) wither   | (d) burst     |
| 11. | (a) paced    | (b) run         | (c) managed  | (d) drip      |
| 12. | (a) jeans    | (b) geneticists | (c) genes    | (d) DNA       |

# SPELLING

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

## Paragraph 1

1. created oervytncors
2. algtih with claims the video is racist
3. denim-dlca actress Sydney Sweeney
4. passed down from parents to oirgfpfns
5. determining satrti like hair colour
6. its ad campaign's vtpveicaoor language

## Paragraph 2

7. having inugcee undertones
8. a budkdene theory
9. reproduce, to increase the rocreccneu
10. Kelly called the criticism a istleft meltdown
11. JD Vance called it an eovctonarier
12. cancel culture run omak

# PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

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

**Number these lines in the correct order.**

- ( ) (as in denim) and "genes" (as in genetics). Social media is alight with claims the video is
- ( **1** ) A video from a U.S. fashion retailer has created controversy over its use of the words "jeans"
- ( ) blue-eyed, and blonde. They suggest her looks are really "great genes". Former Fox News host Megyn Kelly called the
- ( ) clad actress Sydney Sweeney. She tells the camera: "Genes are passed down from parents to
- ( ) criticism a "leftist meltdown". U.S. Vice President JD Vance called it an
- ( ) culture run amok". American Eagle says its ad "is and always was about the jeans."
- ( ) Many people have criticized the wordplay for having eugenic undertones. Eugenics is a debunked
- ( ) of its ad campaign's "provocative language". It said the words were definitely going to "push buttons".
- ( ) offspring, often determining traits like hair colour, personality and even eye colour. My jeans are blue." The video closes
- ( ) overreaction. Meanwhile, the White House communications director said attacking the ad was "cancel
- ( ) racist. The company, American Eagle, produced the video for its new line of clothes. The video stars denim-
- ( ) reproduce, to increase the occurrence of "desirable" racial traits. Critics of the ad highlight the fact that Ms Sweeney is white,
- ( ) theory that posits that humanity can be improved by encouraging people with certain genes to
- ( ) with the tagline: "Sydney Sweeney has great jeans." American Eagle said the play on words was part

# PUT THE WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER

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

1. A from controversy video created fashion a retailer .
2. It's with alight the claims video is racist the .
3. Genes from to are down passed parents offspring .
4. The was wordplay ad its of campaign part .
5. The going were buttons "push" to words definitely .
6. People the criticized undertones for wordplay eugenic having .
7. It genes with people encourages certain reproduce to .
8. It occurrence the "desirable" of increases traits racial .
9. Attacking ad cancel the culture run was amok .
10. It was is and jeans always about the .

# CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD (20 PAIRS)

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

A video from a U.S. fashion retailer has *creative / created* controversy over its *usefulness / use* of the words "jeans" (as in denim) and "genes" (as in genetics). Social media is *light / alight* with claims the video is racist. The company, American Eagle, produced the video for its new *line / life* of clothes. The video stars denim-*clad / clap* actress Sydney Sweeney. She tells the camera: "Genes are passed down from parents to *upswing / offspring*, often determining *plaits / traits* like hair colour, personality and even eye colour. My jeans are blue." The video closes with the *punchline / tagline*: "Sydney Sweeney has great jeans." American Eagle said the play *in / on* words was part of its ad campaign's "provocative language". It said the words were definitely going to "*pull / push* buttons".

Many people have criticized the wordplay for having eugenic undertones. Eugenics is a *debunked / banked* theory that posits that *humanely / humanity* can be improved by encouraging people with *certainly / certain* genes to reproduce, to increase the *occurs / occurrence* of "desirable" racial traits. Critics of the ad highlight the fact *that / what* Ms Sweeney is white, blue-eyed, and blonde. They suggest her *locks / looks* are really "great genes". Former Fox News host Megyn Kelly called a */ the* criticism a "leftist meltdown". U.S. Vice President JD Vance called it an *overreaction / reaction*. Meanwhile, the White House communications director said attacking the ad was "cancel culture *run / paced* amok". American Eagle says its ad "is and always was about the *jeans / genes*."

**Talk about the connection between each pair of words in italics, and why the correct word is correct. Look up the definition of new words.**

# INSERT THE VOWELS (a, e, i, o, u)

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\_ v\_d\_\_ fr\_m \_ .S. f\_sh\_\_n r\_t\_\_l\_r h\_s cr\_\_t\_d  
c\_ntr\_v\_rsy \_v\_r \_ts \_s\_ f th\_ w\_rds "j\_\_ns" (\_s \_n  
d\_n\_m) \_nd "g\_n\_s" (\_s \_n g\_n\_t\_cs). S\_c\_\_l m\_d\_\_  
\_s \_l\_gh\_t w\_th cl\_\_ms th\_ v\_d\_\_ \_s r\_c\_st. Th\_  
c\_mp\_ny, \_m\_r\_c\_n \_\_gl\_, pr\_d\_c\_d th\_ v\_d\_\_ f\_r \_ts  
n\_w l\_n\_ \_f cl\_th\_s. Th\_ v\_d\_\_ st\_rs d\_n\_m-cl\_d  
\_ctr\_ss Syd\_n\_y Sw\_\_n\_y. Sh\_ t\_lls th\_ c\_m\_r\_: "G\_n\_s  
\_r\_ p\_ss\_d d\_wn fr\_m p\_r\_nts t\_ \_ffspr\_ng, \_ft\_n  
d\_t\_rm\_n\_ng tr\_\_ts l\_k\_ h\_\_r c\_l\_\_r, p\_rs\_n\_l\_ty \_nd  
\_v\_n \_y\_ c\_l\_\_r. My j\_\_ns \_r\_ bl\_\_." Th\_ v\_d\_\_ cl\_s\_s  
w\_th th\_ t\_gl\_n\_: "Sydn\_y Sw\_\_n\_y h\_s gr\_\_t j\_\_ns."  
\_m\_r\_c\_n \_\_gl\_ s\_\_d th\_ pl\_y \_n w\_rds w\_s p\_rt \_f  
\_ts \_d c\_mp\_\_gn's "pr\_v\_c\_t\_v\_ l\_ng\_\_g". \_t s\_\_d th\_  
w\_rds w\_r\_ d\_f\_n\_t\_ly g\_\_ng t\_ "p\_sh b\_tt\_ns".

M\_ny p\_\_pl\_ h\_v\_ cr\_t\_c\_z\_d th\_ w\_rdpl\_y f\_r h\_v\_ng  
\_\_g\_n\_c \_nd\_r\_t\_n\_s. \_\_g\_n\_cs \_s \_ d\_b\_nk\_d th\_\_ry  
th\_t p\_s\_ts th\_t h\_m\_n\_ty c\_n b\_ \_mpr\_v\_d by  
\_nc\_\_r\_g\_ng p\_\_pl\_ w\_th c\_rt\_\_n g\_n\_s t\_ r\_pr\_d\_c\_,  
t\_ \_ncr\_\_s\_ th\_ \_cc\_rr\_nc\_ \_f "d\_s\_r\_bl\_" r\_c\_\_l  
tr\_\_ts. Cr\_t\_cs \_f th\_ \_d h\_ghl\_gh\_t th\_ f\_ct th\_t Ms  
Sw\_\_n\_y \_s wh\_t\_, bl\_\_-y\_d, \_nd bl\_nd\_. Th\_y  
s\_gg\_st h\_r l\_\_ks \_r\_ r\_\_lly "gr\_\_t g\_n\_s". F\_rm\_r F\_x  
N\_ws h\_st M\_gyn K\_lly c\_ll\_d th\_ cr\_t\_c\_sm \_ "l\_ft\_st  
m\_ltd\_wn". .S. V\_c\_ Pr\_s\_d\_nt JD V\_nc\_ c\_ll\_d \_t \_n  
\_v\_rr\_\_ct\_\_n. M\_\_nwh\_l\_, th\_ Wh\_t\_ H\_\_s\_  
c\_mm\_n\_c\_t\_\_ns d\_r\_ct\_r s\_\_d \_tt\_ck\_ng th\_ \_d w\_s  
"c\_nc\_l c\_lt\_r\_ r\_n \_m\_k". \_m\_r\_c\_n \_\_gl\_ s\_ys \_ts \_d  
"\_s \_nd \_lw\_ys w\_s \_b\_\_t th\_ j\_\_ns."

# PUNCTUATE THE TEXT AND ADD CAPITALS

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

a video from a us fashion retailer has created controversy over its use of the words jeans as in denim and genes as in genetics social media is alight with claims the video is racist the company american eagle produced the video for its new line of clothes the video stars denimclad 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 tagline sydney sweeney has great jeans american eagle said the play on words was part of its ad campaigns provocative language it said the words were definitely going to push buttons many people have criticized the wordplay for having eugenic undertones eugenics is a debunked theory that posits that humanity can be improved by encouraging people with certain genes to reproduce to increase the occurrence of desirable racial traits critics of the ad highlight the fact that ms sweeney is white blueeyed and blonde they suggest her looks are really great genes former fox news host megyn kelly called the criticism a leftist meltdown us vice president jd vance called it an overreaction meanwhile the white house communications director said attacking the ad was cancel culture run amok american eagle says its ad is and always was about the jeans

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

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

A video from a U.S. fashion retailer has created controversy over its use of the words "jeans" (as in denim) and "genes" (as in genetics). Social media is alight with claims the video is racist. The company, American Eagle, produced the video for its new line of clothes. The video stars denim-clad 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 tagline: "Sydney Sweeney has great jeans." American Eagle said the play on words was part of its ad campaign's "provocative language". It said the words were definitely going to "push buttons". Many people have criticized the wordplay for having eugenic undertones. Eugenics is a debunked theory that posits that humanity can be improved by encouraging people with certain genes to reproduce, to increase the occurrence of "desirable" racial traits. Critics of the ad highlight the fact that Ms Sweeney is white, blue-eyed, and blonde. They suggest her looks are really "great genes". Former Fox News host Megyn Kelly called the criticism a "leftist meltdown". U.S. Vice President JD Vance called it an overreaction. Meanwhile, the White House communications director said attacking the ad was "cancel culture run amok". American Eagle says its ad "is and always was about the jeans."





# HOMework

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about this news story. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. JEANS AND GENES:** Make a poster about jeans and genes. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. NO AD CONTROVERSY:** Write a magazine article about not allowing any ads that might be even a little controversial. Include imaginary interviews with people who are for and against this.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?** Write a newspaper article about the next stage in this news story. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

**6. LETTER:** Write a letter to an expert on jeans and genes. Ask him/her three questions about jeans and genes. Give him/her three of your ideas. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## VOCABULARY (p.4)

1. e    2. a    3. d    4. c    5. b    6. g    7. f  
8. i    9. n    10. l    11. m    12. j    13. h    14. k

## TRUE / FALSE (p.5)

- 1 F    2 F    3 F    4 T    5 F    6 T    7 T    8 T

## SYNONYM MATCH (p.5)

1. h	2. f	3. j	4. b	5. d
6. a	7. i	8. c	9. e	10. g

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (p.9)

1. Controversy
2. Its new line of clothes
3. Genes
4. Great jeans
5. Buttons
6. Eugenic undertones
7. Debunked
8. A leftist meltdown
9. It had run amok
10. Its jeans

## WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER (p.19)

1. A video from a fashion retailer created controversy.
2. It's alright with claims the video is racist.
3. Genes are passed down from parents to offspring.
4. The wordplay was part of its ad campaign.
5. The words were definitely going to "push buttons".
6. People criticized the wordplay for having eugenic undertones.
7. It encourages people with certain genes to reproduce.
8. It increases the occurrence of "desirable" racial traits.
9. Attacking the ad was cancel culture run amok.
10. It is and always was about the jeans.

## MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ (p.10)

1. a    2. c    3. b    4. d    5. a    6. d    7. b    8. d    9. c    10. b

## ALL OTHER EXERCISES

Please check for yourself by looking at the Article on page 2.  
(It's good for your English ;-)