ISU CENTRAL TÉCNICO
INSTITUTO SUPERIOR UNIVERSITARIO

SIMPLE PAST & PAST CONTINUOUS

Levi Straus (1829-1902)



One of the best-known beneficiaries of California's gold rush economic boom was Levi Strauss. He was born in Bavaria and came to San Francisco in 1850, one of the thousands hoping to strike it rich. Trained as a tailor, he planned to manufacture tents and wagon covers for the Forty-niners, but he couldn't find a market for these items. So he used the stout canvas he had brought with him to make especially durable trousers, which miners found perfect for their difficult work. He began selling these "wonderful pants of Levi's" and they went as fast as he could make them.

Strauss opened a factory at 98 Battery Street in San Francisco, began adding copper rivets at the stress points in his trousers and switched from canvas to a heavy blue denim material called "genes" in France, which became "jeans" in America. Following his quick success in the clothing business, he branched out to serve as a director of an insurance company, a utility company, several banks, and in a variety of charitable organizations.

The company Levi Strauss founded remains one of the nation's leading clothing manufacturers, but even more impressively, the garment he created, still known as "levis," has long since left the diggings to become not only an emblem of the American West but an emissary of the Western lifestyle -- egalitarian, utilitarian, independent -- around the world. Levi Strauss died in San Francisco in 1902.



True or False

a) Levi Strauss was born in San Francisco. ( )
b) He trained to be a tailor in San Francisco. ( )
c) His first plan was to manufacture tents and wagon covers ( )
d) The first trousers he made were for miners. ( )
e) They didn't sell very well. ( )
f) The blue denim material he used came from Spain. ( )
g) After his success in the clothing industry, he did many things. ( )
h) The company he founded is no longer one of the nation's leading clothing manufacturers. ( )
i) His levis are now an emblem of western lifestyle around the world. ( )
j) Levi Strauss died in 1920. ( )

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Put the verbs in brackets into the correct tense, past simple or past continuous

1. Levi Strauss _____ (come) from a small town in the south of Germany.
2. When he _____ (be) a young man, he _____ (fall) in love with the mayor's daughter.
3. The mayor and Levi's parents _____ (not want) them to marry.
4. Levi's parents _____ (send) him away to New York where his brothers _____ (live).
5. They _____ (be) tailors and they _____ (teach) him to sew.
6. In 1850, Levi _____ (take) some sailcloth from New York to San Francisco when he _____ (meet) some men who _____ (dig) for gold in the streams and rivers.
7. The weather was bad. It _____ (rain) and the wind _____ (blow).
8. The men _____ (be) cold because they _____ (wear) only thin trousers.
9. Suddenly Levi _____ (have) an idea. He _____ (use) the sailcloth which he _____ (transport) to make trousers for the men on which he _____ (sew) on copper rivets to make them stronger.
10. The men _____ (love) the trousers but they _____ (not/like) the yellow-grey colour.
11. So when Levi Strauss _____ (open) a tailor's shop in San Francisco, he _____ (import) a special thick blue material from Nimes in France.
12. That's how jeans _____ (became) blue.



LIVEWORKSHEETS