1 How did the company begin?
Levi Strauss was born in Bavaria in 1829 but when he was 17, he and his family emigrated to the USA. In 1853, he set up his first clothing business in Battery Street, San Francisco.

Some years later, Levi received a letter from a local tailor named Jacob Davis. Davis had a plan for a new design of men's trousers with metal 'rivets' on the pockets and he wanted to know if Levi was interested in producing them. The two men went into partnership and production began in 1873. At that time, the trousers were called 'overalls'.

2 How did they continue after Levi's death?
Levi Strauss died in 1902, but his nephews inherited the company and carried on the business. In 1915, they won an award for their 'overalls' at an international exhibition in San Francisco.

There was a brief decline in sales during the 1930s depression, but the company continued to expand during the following decades. In 1960, they finally stopped using the name 'overalls' and started calling their trousers 'jeans'.

3 Why were they so successful?
One reason why the company grew so rapidly was that they spent a lot of money on advertising. Even in their early days, Levi Strauss & Co. ran a strong advertising campaign for their products. Walter Haas, who took over the presidency of the company in 1928, made sure that the name "Levi Strauss & Co." was always on posters and billboards. Later they advertised on the radio and in 1966, they made the first Levi Strauss & Co. TV commercial. In 1985, they launched their famous laundrette commercial in which a young man takes off his jeans in a public laundrette and puts them in the washing machine.

In 2003, the company celebrated the 150th anniversary of its founding and the 130th anniversary of blue jeans. They are one of the biggest success stories in the clothing business with a name that is known worldwide.

The answers to the questions below are all in the Levi Strauss & Co. text. Scan the passage to find the information, then write the missing questions in the past simple.

1. _____

   When he was seventeen.

2. _____

   In Bavaria

3. _____

   In Battery Street, San Francisco.

4. _____

   In 1873.

5. _____

   In 1960.

6. _____

   In 1966.

7. _____

   Their 150th anniversary.

8. _____

   Perhaps because of their strong advertising.

Where was Levi Strauss born?

When did he begin producing jeans/overalls?

When did the first Levi Strauss & Co. TV commercial appear?

When did they start calling their trousers "jeans"?

When did Levi Strauss's family emigrate to the USA?

Why were they so successful?

What did they celebrate in 2003?

Where did he set up this first clothing business?

LIVEWORKSHEETS