

## VALENTINE'S DAY



February 14th is Valentine's Day. Valentine's Day is a day for romance and love. Valentine's Day is celebrated in many countries around the world, including Japan, the United States, and the United Kingdom.



You see a lot of romantic symbols on Valentine's Day. For example, many couples give each other roses. To give someone flowers at any time of year is romantic, and as roses are a symbol of romance, roses on Valentine's Day are especially popular.

Another symbol of romance that is seen frequently on Valentine's Day is Cupid. In Roman mythology, Cupid was the son of Venus, the goddess of love. Cupid was often shown as a smaller, more playful version of his mother. His golden arrows were magical and even slight contact with one of the arrow tips could make a person fall madly in love.



One understanding of romantic love—called courtly love—dates back to medieval times, and sending cards on Valentine's Day dates back equally far. In 1415, a prisoner in the Tower of London sent a poem to his wife. This is considered to be one of the earliest recorded valentines. For over four hundred years, people made their own valentines by writing poems like this.



In the Victorian era, in the mid-1800s, companies started producing valentines for people to buy. Now many people buy, rather than make, their valentines. Almost one billion valentines are sent every year. According to the Greeting Card Association, 85% of the valentines are bought by women.



Of course, people don't just buy cards. People buy candles and balloons and many other things, often in the shape of a heart. You can find boxes of candy that are shaped like hearts, or candy that is itself in the shape of a heart!



The presents might be something small and sweet or something big and dramatic. Some people *get engaged* (promise to marry each other) on Valentine's Day. Although Valentine's Day is generally romantic, many people like to use the day to celebrate any kind of love—including love of friends and family.

Some schools have valentine parties. The students give each other valentines. They eat heart-shaped candy. Some schools have other valentine celebrations, such as dances.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ABOUT VALENTINE'S DAY:**

1. Valentine's Day is a \_\_\_\_\_ day.
  - a. lonely and fun
  - b. romantic and playful
  - c. roman and greek
  - d. none of the above
  
2. Why is Cupid associated with Valentine's Day?
  - a. He is the son of the goddess of love.
  - b. He has arrows, which are romantic.
  - c. Valentine's Day was originally a Roman holiday.
  - d. Babies are cute and playful.
  
3. What are some symbols of Valentine's Day?
  - a. Eggs, bacon, and roses.
  - b. Candy, roses, and liver.
  - c. Cupid, roses, and hearts.
  - d. None of the above
  
4. What do many people do on Valentine's Day?
  - a. They have heart problems.
  - b. They eat their hearts.
  - c. They look for eggs.
  - d. They give presents and cards.
  
5. According to the article, where do we get the idea of courtly love?
  - a. It dates back to the Victorian Era.
  - b. It dates back to the Middle Ages.
  - c. This idea has always existed.
  - d. We get it from the Greeting Card Association.
  
6. The article specifically mentions three kinds of love. What are these three?
  - a. romantic love, courtly love, and friendly love
  - b. romantic love, family love, and courtly love
  - c. family love, friendly love, and romantic love
  - d. none of the above.

What do you think of Valentine's Day?

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Answers to Valentine's Day (upper elementary)

1. b
2. a
3. c
4. d
5. b
6. c