

Valentine's Day



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. When is Valentine's Day?
2. Do you know the origin of Valentine's Day? Share what you know.
3. What do elementary students do for Valentine's Day?
4. Who are Venus and Cupid?

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.
Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on pages 2-4.

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| ___ 1. legend | a) unable to see |
| ___ 2. origin | b) a religious man of the church |
| ___ 3. convenient | c) one hundred years |
| ___ 4. elementary | d) to respect |
| ___ 5. honor | e) to make an illness better |
| ___ 6. custom | f) an old story |
| ___ 7. blind | g) to give out a punishment |
| ___ 8. cure | h) a tradition |
| ___ 9. priest | i) easy |
| ___ 10. century | j) to put to death |
| ___ 11. execute | k) primary |
| ___ 12. sentence | l) the beginning, the source |

Group Work (Student A)

You and your group members each have a short reading passage that includes a legend of Valentine's Day. Read your passage, and then discuss the questions to the right as a group.

A. Reading

Legend #1

1. Valentine's Day is February 14. It is not a holiday, but it is a special day for many people in different countries around the world. Each year on Valentine's Day, friends and lovers exchange valentine cards, chocolates, candy, flowers, and other gifts.
2. In **elementary** schools in North America, children make valentines for their classmates and put them in a large decorated mailbox. On February 14, the teacher opens the box and distributes the cards to the students. Many schools also celebrate Valentine's Day with parties.
3. People in many countries love to send and receive valentines. These days, more people send e-cards than regular cards. The cost of stamps is high and e-cards are more **convenient**.
4. There are many symbols of Valentine's Day, such as hearts, roses, and cupids. The symbol of cupid comes from ancient Roman times. Cupid was the son of the love goddess, Venus. Cupid was a playful child who flew around shooting love arrows into people's hearts, making them fall in love.
5. There are many different stories about the **origin** of Valentine's Day. According to one **legend**, the **custom** of sending a card to a loved one goes back to the days of the Roman Empire. In the third **century**, there was a **priest** named Valentinus. Valentinus was put in jail and **sentenced** to die by Emperor Claudius because of his Christian beliefs. When Valentinus was in jail, he fell in love with the jailer's daughter. According to the story, the jailer's daughter was **blind**, but Valentinus had special abilities and was able to **cure** her. When he was in jail, she brought him food and delivered messages. The night before Valentinus was **executed**, he wrote a goodbye note to the jailer's daughter and signed it "Your Valentine."

B. Discussion

1. Do you celebrate Valentine's Day in your country? If so, what are the customs? If not, do you have any similar celebrations?
2. Do you think Valentine's Day was created for commercial purposes?
3. How do most couples meet in your country?
4. Are arranged marriages common in your country?
5. Is there a formal engagement before marriage in your country?
6. What is the average age for marriage in your country?
7. Do most couples go on a honeymoon in your country?
8. In your country, is it acceptable for couples to live together before marriage?
9. Are there any dates that are considered lucky (or unlucky) for a wedding?
10. Do parents have a big influence on the choice of one's spouse in your country?
11. On which occasions do you send greeting cards in your country?
12. Are you planning to do anything special this Valentine's Day?

Group Work (Student B)

You and your group members each have a short reading passage that includes a legend of Valentine's Day. Read your passage, and then discuss the questions to the right as a group.

A. Reading

Legend #2

1. Valentine's Day is February 14. It is not a holiday, but it is a special day for many people in different countries around the world. Each year on Valentine's Day, friends and lovers exchange valentine cards, chocolates, candy, flowers, and other gifts.
2. In **elementary** schools in North America, children make valentines for their classmates and put them in a large decorated mailbox. On February 14, the teacher opens the box and distributes the cards to the students. Many schools also celebrate Valentine's Day with parties.
3. People in many countries love to send and receive valentines. These days, more people send e-cards than regular cards. The cost of stamps is high and e-cards are more **convenient**.
4. There are many symbols of Valentine's Day, such as hearts, roses, and cupids. The symbol of cupid comes from ancient Roman times. Cupid was the son of the love goddess, Venus. Cupid was a playful child who flew around shooting love arrows into people's hearts, making them fall in love.
5. There are many different stories about the **origin** of Valentine's Day. According to one **legend**, the tradition of Valentine's Day goes back to the days of the Roman Empire. In the third **century**, Emperor Claudius wanted a strong army. Many married soldiers did not want to leave their families to fight in the emperor's wars, so Claudius ordered young men not to marry. A **priest** named Valentinus lived in Rome at that time, and he felt sorry for the young men and their sweethearts. He decided to marry them secretly, but the emperor found out and put him in prison. He was **executed** on February 14. Since that time, Valentine's Day has been celebrated as a special day for sweethearts and romance.

B. Discussion

1. Do you celebrate Valentine's Day in your country? If so, what are the customs? If not, do you have any similar celebrations?
2. Do you think Valentine's Day was created for commercial purposes?
3. How do most couples meet in your country?
4. Are arranged marriages common in your country?
5. Is there a formal engagement before marriage in your country?
6. What is the average age for marriage in your country?
7. Do most couples go on a honeymoon in your country?
8. In your country, is it acceptable for couples to live together before marriage?
9. Are there any dates that are considered lucky (or unlucky) for a wedding?
10. Do parents have a big influence on the choice of one's spouse in your country?
11. On which occasions do you send greeting cards in your country?
12. Are you planning to do anything special this Valentine's Day?

Group Work (Student C)

You and your group members each have a short reading passage that includes a legend of Valentine's Day. Read your passage, and then discuss the questions to the right as a group.

A. Reading

Legend #3

1. Valentine's Day is February 14. It is not a holiday, but it is a special day for many people in different countries around the world. Each year on Valentine's Day, friends and lovers exchange valentine cards, chocolates, candy, flowers, and other gifts.
2. In **elementary** schools in North America, children make valentines for their classmates and put them in a large decorated mailbox. On February 14, the teacher opens the box and distributes the cards to the students. Many schools also celebrate Valentine's Day with parties.
3. People in many countries love to send and receive valentines. These days, more people send e-cards than regular cards. The cost of stamps is high and e-cards are more **convenient**.
4. There are many symbols of Valentine's Day, such as hearts, roses, and cupids. The symbol of cupid comes from ancient Roman times. Cupid was the son of the love goddess, Venus. Cupid was a playful child who flew around shooting love arrows into people's hearts, making them fall in love.
5. There are many different stories about the **origin** of Valentine's Day. One **legend** goes back to the days of the Roman Empire. At that time, the Romans celebrated the festival of Lupercalia in the middle of February. This festival **honored** the god Lupercus, keeper of the crops and farm animals. As time passed, the Romans began to honor another goddess during this festival. Her name was Juno, guardian of women and marriage. During this festival, all of the young women in a village would write their names on a piece of paper and drop them into a box. Every young man would pick a paper from the box and the woman whose name he had chosen would become his sweetheart. Since those early days, mid-February has been remembered as a special time for love.

B. Discussion

1. Do you celebrate Valentine's Day in your country? If so, what are the customs? If not, do you have any similar celebrations?
2. Do you think Valentine's Day was created for commercial purposes?
3. How do most couples meet in your country?
4. Are arranged marriages common in your country?
5. Is there a formal engagement before marriage in your country?
6. What is the average age for marriage in your country?
7. Do most couples go on a honeymoon in your country?
8. In your country, is it acceptable for couples to live together before marriage?
9. Are there any dates that are considered lucky (or unlucky) for a wedding?
10. Do parents have a big influence on the choice of one's spouse in your country?
11. On which occasions do you send greeting cards in your country?
12. Are you planning to do anything special this Valentine's Day?



Comprehension

Practice asking and answering the following questions with your group. Then write the answers in your notebook. Use full sentences.

1. What are some of the symbols of Valentine's Day?
2. What do people exchange on Valentine's Day?
3. What do elementary school children do to celebrate Valentine's Day?
4. Who was Valentinus?
5. There are two legends about Valentinus. Tell why Valentinus was put in jail, according to each legend.
6. Why did Emperor Claudius not want young men to marry?
7. How did Valentinus help the jailer's daughter?
8. How did Valentinus sign his goodbye note to the jailer's daughter?
9. What festival did the Romans celebrate in mid-February?
10. Who was Cupid?

Vocabulary Review

Choose the correct words from the vocabulary list on page 1 to complete the following sentences.

1. Television was invented in the 20th _____.
2. Many scientists are trying to discover a _____ for cancer.
3. Using a shopping cart at the grocery store is _____.
4. He helped the _____ man cross the street.
5. He is retiring next week. The company is going to have a party to _____ him.
6. Is it a _____ in your country to shake hands when you first meet someone?
7. The judge _____ the robber to two years in jail.
8. The young couple wanted to be married by a _____.
9. Children learn to read and write in _____ school.
10. There are many different _____ about the origin of Valentine's Day.
11. He was _____ for killing the policeman.
12. There are different beliefs about the _____ of our planet.

Idioms & Expressions

A. Reference

IDIOM OR EXPRESSION	DEFINITION
love at first sight	falling in love the first time you meet someone
blind date	a social meeting or date with someone you have never met before (the date has been arranged by a friend or family member)
fall / be head over heels in love	to love someone very much
be madly in love	to love someone very much
be crazy about someone	to like someone very much
be heartbroken	to be very sad, usually because of a romantic loss
puppy love	young love between children or teenagers
pop the question	to ask someone to marry you
love is blind	people do not see the faults in their lovers
a bed of roses	a very easy or pleasant situation
love conquers all	love is strong enough to overcome all problems
go out with someone	to have a steady, romantic relationship with someone



Idioms & Expressions cont.

B. Complete the Sentences

Choose the correct idiom or expression from Part A on page 6 to fill in the blanks.

1. _____ is very sweet.
It is the first kind of romantic love a young person experiences.
2. John and Mary have been going out together for two years. Last week, he bought a ring and now he is going to _____.
3. Susan doesn't like to go out on a _____.
She prefers to meet the boy first and then decide if she wants to have a date with him.
4. Robert's girlfriend left him. He still loves her very much.
He is _____.
5. Marriage is not always _____.
There are lots of difficult times.
6. The first time Ken met Ann, he knew he wanted to marry her.
It was _____.

Class Activity

Walk around the classroom and ask your classmates questions. Write the questions in the spaces provided below, and write your classmate's name on the right if he/she answers "yes."

#	Find someone...	Question	Classmate
1	who is planning to buy flowers for someone today.		
2	who doesn't like chocolate.		
3	who has been on a blind date.		
4	whose favorite flower is a rose.		
5	who has fallen in love at first sight.		
6	who likes the idea of arranged marriages.		
7	who celebrates Valentine's Day in his/her country.		
8	who has sent someone a valentine card.		
9	who went on a honeymoon.		
10	who can explain the festival of Lupercalia.		
11	who has been head over heels in love.		
12	who is planning something special for Valentine's Day.		



Listening

 <http://blog.esllibrary.com/2014/02/11/podcast-valentines-day/>

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

1. Valentine's Day is February 14. It is not a holiday, but it is a _____ day for many people in different countries around the world. Each year on Valentine's Day, friends and lovers _____ valentine cards, chocolates, candy, flowers, and other gifts.
2. In elementary schools in North America, children make valentines for their classmates and put them in a large _____ mailbox. On February 14, the teacher opens the box and distributes the cards to the students. Many schools also celebrate Valentine's Day with parties.
3. _____ love to send and receive valentines. These days, more people send e-cards than regular cards. The cost of stamps is high and e-cards are more convenient.
4. There are many symbols of _____, such as hearts, roses, and cupids. The symbol of cupid comes from ancient Roman times. Cupid was the son of the love _____, Venus. Cupid was a playful child who _____ shooting love arrows into _____ hearts, making them fall in love.

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students read about traditions and legends related to Valentine's Day. This lesson includes vocabulary and idiom tasks, comprehension questions, a group information gap activity, and a class survey.

LEVEL: High Int

TIME: 2–3 hours

TAGS: holidays, Valentine's Day, legend, valentine, cards, heart, romance, love, myth, find someone who

Warm-Up / Introduction

You can begin by bringing hearts, chocolates, cards, flowers, or pictures and symbols of Valentine's Day to class. Ask the students to share any information they may already have about this celebration.

end of the sharing session, you may wish to distribute the different legends to all of the students to read.

You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading (paragraphs 1–4) is available on page 9.

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

1. Valentine's Day is February 14.
2. Answers will vary. Students will read about three legends in this lesson.
3. Elementary students exchange cards and treats for Valentine's Day.
4. Venus is the goddess of love and Cupid is her son.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

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

Group Work

Break the class into groups of three. The students are each given a short reading describing the meaning, symbols, and customs associated with Valentine's Day, as well as one of the legends regarding its origin. Each student in the group has a different legend (paragraph 5). You may choose a few students to read the first four paragraphs of the reading aloud to the class. Have the students read the legends (paragraph 5) silently. Then each student will relate his/her legend to the others in the group. The students will then follow up with the discussion questions in Part B. At the

Comprehension

1. Some Valentine's Day symbols include hearts, roses, and cupid.
2. People exchange valentine cards, chocolates, candy, flowers, and other gifts.
3. In elementary schools, children make valentines for their classmates and put them in a large decorated mailbox.
4. Valentinus was a priest during the Roman Empire.
5. According to one legend, Valentinus was put in jail and sentenced to die by the Emperor Claudius because of his Christian beliefs. According to another legend, Valentinus was put in prison because he was secretly marrying young men who would otherwise have to go fight in wars.
6. Emperor Claudius wanted a strong army, and since many married soldiers did not want to leave their families to fight in the emperor's wars, Claudius ordered young men not to marry.
7. Valentinus was able to help the jailer's daughter by curing her of her blindness with his special powers.
8. He signed it "Your Valentine."
9. The Romans celebrated the festival of Lupercalia in the middle of February.
10. Cupid was the son of the love goddess, Venus.

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Vocabulary Review

- | | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. century | 5. honor | 9. elementary |
| 2. cure | 6. custom | 10. legends |
| 3. convenient | 7. sentenced | 11. executed |
| 4. blind | 8. priest | 12. origin |

Idioms & Expressions

A. REFERENCE

Teach these idioms and expressions related to love or symbols of Valentine's Day. Explain the meanings, use them in context, have the students complete the sentences, and then get them to write their own sentences using the idioms.

B. COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Puppy love | 4. heartbroken |
| 2. pop the question | 5. a bed of roses |
| 3. blind date | 6. love at first sight |

Class Activity

First, have the students write out the questions they will be asking their classmates. Then have the students circulate around the class asking the questions on the sheet. When the student finds a classmate who can answer the question, he/she will then write the student's name next to the question and follow up with one more question of his/her own. E.g., "Have you ever been on a blind date?" If the student answers "yes," the second question might be: "Who introduced you?" Try to encourage the students to engage in real conversation during this activity. Follow up by sharing the information with the whole class.

Listening

1. special, exchange
2. decorated
3. People in many countries
4. Valentine's Day, goddess, flew around, people's

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the words *Honor*, *Favorite*, and *Practice*. Most other English-speaking countries spell these words this way: *Honour*, *Favourite*, and *Practise* (when used as a verb; *Practice* when used as a noun). Make it a challenge for your students to find these words in the text and see if they know the alternate spellings.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

1. When we write the holiday, we must use capital letters (*Valentine's Day*). When we're referring to a gift, greeting, or a person, we don't use capital letters (*valentine* [with or without the word "card"], *valentines* [usually refers to cards], *valentine gift*, *be my valentine*, etc.). You will find a useful post on our blog: <http://blog.esllibrary.com/2013/02/07/valentines-day-capitalization-and-punctuation-rules/>
2. We capitalize *Cupid* when referring to the Roman god of love (Venus's son), but we use *cupid* when referring to the figure of a winged boy holding the bow and arrow.