

Informational text passage written at two reading levels!

Name: _____

Valentine's Day

When we think of Valentine's Day, we often think of candy, cards, Cupid and love. Most people who observe the holiday probably do not even think about how it began. Although Valentine's Day is now a holiday centered around gift-giving and romance, it actually has a long and interesting history. The history of the day has little to do with the holiday from text today. In fact, some experts even disagree about how the holiday began and who it is named after.

The origin of Valentine's Day is obscure. Some experts trace the holiday to Ancient Rome and the feast of Lupercalia. This festival took place from February 13th to the 15th each year. It was very different from modern celebrations and it was not considered a time to celebrate love. Some researchers argue that Lupercalia has no connection to Valentine's Day. Valentine's Day got its name from a man named Valentine who were executed because of their religious beliefs. Saint Valentine's Day was instituted to honor them.

St. Valentine's Day has its association with a celebration of love for hundreds of years. Valentine's Day became correlated with romantic love in the medieval period. Geoffrey Chaucer was a famous author who wrote *The Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer wrote in a 1382 poem that St. Valentine's Day was the day when birds choose their mates. Although the day of love has been associated with love before this, there is no record.

People in Europe likely began celebrating Valentine's Day years later. One of the earliest valentines was written by a Frenchman who had been imprisoned in the 1400s. The author was a Frenchman who sent a note to his wife. Valentine's Day is referenced by Shakespeare in the 1600s. As years went by, Valentine's Day was more widely celebrated.

Modern celebrations of Valentine's Day, with the recognizable cards and gift-giving, were happening in the late 1700s. Paper valentines had become popular by the early 1800s. Newspapers were producing poems centered on the holiday. Paper lace cards were first mass-produced in America in the 1840s. They soon became popular throughout the country and began to replace personal notes. Chocolates as a Valentine's Day gifting tradition had also soon appeared. An industry devoted to the holiday was born.

Modern celebrations often include notes, letters or emails to loved ones. Flowers, chocolates and candy hearts are also popular icons of Valentine's Day. Gift-giving between couples, friends and children is part of the holiday. Despite the unclear history of the day, many people enjoy celebrating it.

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Name: _____

Valentine's Day

When we think of Valentine's Day, we often think of candy and cards. Most people who observe the holiday probably do not even think about how it began. Valentine's Day has a long and interesting history. The history of the day has little to do with the holiday that exists today. There is even disagreement about how the holiday began.

The beginning of Valentine's Day is obscure. Some people trace the holiday to Ancient Rome and the festival Lupercalia. This festival took place from February 13th to the 15th each year. It was very different from modern celebrations. Some experts argue that Lupercalia has no connection to Valentine's Day. Valentine's Day got its name from two men named Valentine. They were executed because of their religious beliefs. Saint Valentine's Day was instituted to honor them.

St. Valentine's Day is not connected with love for hundreds of years. Valentine's Day became correlated with love in the 1400s. Geoffrey Chaucer was a famous author. He wrote in a 1382 poem that Valentine's Day was the day when birds choose their mates.

People in Europe likely began celebrating Valentine's Day years later. One of the earliest valentines was written by a Frenchman. The author was a Frenchman who sent a note to his wife while he was in prison. Shakespeare wrote about Valentine's Day in the 1600s. As years went by, Valentine's Day was celebrated by more people.

Modern celebrations of Valentine's Day were happening by the late 1700s. Paper valentines had become popular by the early 1800s. Newspapers were producing poems about the holiday. Paper lace cards were first made in America in 1847. They soon became popular throughout the country. Chocolates as a Valentine's Day gifting tradition had also soon appeared. An industry devoted to the holiday was born.

Modern celebrations often include notes, letters or emails to loved ones. Flowers, chocolates and candy hearts are also popular icons of Valentine's Day. Gift-giving between couples, friends and children is part of the holiday. Despite the unclear history of the day, many people enjoy celebrating it.

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Differentiated context clues activity!

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Context Clues

Look back in the passage and use context clues to determine the meaning of each word. Circle the answer, then write down the context clues from the text that helped you determine the answer.

1. observe
a. plan b. celebrate c. remember
context clues: _____
2. obscure
a. unclear b. important c. dramatic
context clues: _____
3. trace
a. find b. track c. sketch
context clues: _____
4. instituted
a. started b. happened c. opposed
context clues: _____
5. correlated
a. separated b. compared c. connected
context clues: _____
6. devoted
a. give b. loyal c. dedicated
context clues: _____
7. icons
a. symbols b. stars c. idols
context clues: _____

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Name: _____

Context Clues

Look back in the passage and use context clues to determine the meaning of each word. Determine what each word means based on the way it is used in the passage, then write down the context clues from the text that helped you.

1. observe: _____
context clues: _____
2. obscure: _____
context clues: _____
3. trace: _____
context clues: _____
4. instituted: _____
context clues: _____
5. correlated: _____
context clues: _____
6. devoted: _____
context clues: _____
7. icons: _____
context clues: _____

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Writing assignment and comprehension questions also included!!

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Comprehension Questions

Answer the following questions using evidence from the text to support your answer.

1. What is the central idea of the passage? List two supporting details and explain how they support the central idea.

2. The passage states that the history of the holiday is obscure. What evidence in the passage supports this claim?

3. How are early celebrations of Saint Valentine's Day different from the way the holiday is celebrated today?

4. What role did Chaucer play in the modern-day version of Valentine's Day?

5. William Shakespeare is a well-respected and very famous author. Why would the author mention him in the passage?

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Writing Assignment

Many people use Valentine's Day to celebrate all of the friendships and other relationships in their life. In a well-written paragraph, please describe someone who is very important to you. In your writing, be sure to include the following:

- Explain who the person is.
- Explain why the person is important to you.
- Include specific details that make that person unique.
- Make sure you proofread your writing to check for spelling and grammar issues.

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