

Valentine's Day

February 14

Most people believe that Valentine's Day got its name from one or more men who lived in the 3rd century A.D. They were put in prison and then put to death for being Christians. They were later both named saints. One of them may have written a letter that he signed "your Valentine." However, it is more likely that both of them may have died on February 14th, a date associated with a Roman festival having to do with love.

At first, lovers probably spoke or sang their valentines to one another because very few people could read and write. What seems to have been the first written valentine was sent in 1415 by the Duke of Orleans who was imprisoned in the Tower of London. People continued to write their valentines by hand for centuries. The first printed cards were sold in the early 1800's, beginning a custom that continues today. It has been estimated that 900 million valentines are sent in the United States and Canada every year.

Making It Work

Decorate a bulletin board with hearts and other valentine symbols together with the words "I Love You" in various languages.

<i>Je t'aime</i>	Jeh TE-mm	French
<i>Ich liebe dich</i>	eeksh Lee-bah deeksh	German
<i>Ani ohev otach</i>	ah-Nee o-HEV 0-tach	Hebrew
<i>Io ti amo</i>	e-o tee A-moh	Italian
<i>Yo te amo</i>	yoh te A-moh	Spanish

Distribute a list of the names of students in your class for each student to take home. Ask them to give a card to each one of their classmates.

Make and decorate a large classroom valentine mailbox. Have students deposit their cards in it to be delivered on Valentine's Day. Appoint a few delivery people. Or, have each child make an individual valentine folder or mailbox to display in the classroom. Give students time each day, during the week before Valentine's Day, to deliver their cards. Open the folders or boxes on Valentine's Day.

Plan a party with heart-shaped cookies and pink punch.

Play "Pin the Arrow on the Heart" (like "Pin the Tail on the Donkey").

Make Valentines.

Do a Valentine's Day Wordsearch.

