

LESSON PLAN

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Exercise 1

Read about St Valentine's Day.

A

Saint Valentine's Day, 14th February, is all about romantic love and is celebrated throughout the world by lovers everywhere. On this day millions of cards and gifts are exchanged, red roses delivered and romantic words whispered. Boxes of chocolates, flying cupids and fluffy bears saying 'I love you' have all become symbols of modern love, along with romantic dinners, and even diamond rings and marriage proposals. Sometimes people feel shy and send anonymous cards to the person they secretly love. Others are lazy and send emojis or virtual cards. Whatever your style, 14th February is a day for romance. But where did it all begin?

B

It's difficult to pinpoint the precise origins of Saint Valentine's Day because they can be found in a mixture of ancient fertility rites, pagan myths and Christian traditions. Spring has always been associated with love, fertility and re-birth. One theory links the day to an ancient Roman festival called Lupercalia which celebrated the beginning of spring. Part of the celebrations, which took place in February, involved boys pulling girls' names from a box and then they would be 'boyfriend and girlfriend' during the ceremony. This tradition might be linked to the Valentine's day tradition.

C

There were various saints called Valentine; one was a Roman priest who lived in the third century BCE. Emperor Claudius II needed soldiers to protect his vast empire and made an unusual law which banned marriage. He thought that married men made bad soldiers because they were too focused on their families. Valentine went against the law and organised marriages in secret. Claudius threw Valentine into prison where he stayed for twenty years. While he was there, he fell in love with the jailer's daughter. Before he was executed, on February 14th, he sent her a love letter, apparently signed "from your Valentine.". Not a typically romantic situation but it was enough to inspire lovers, who eventually took the name of the saint.



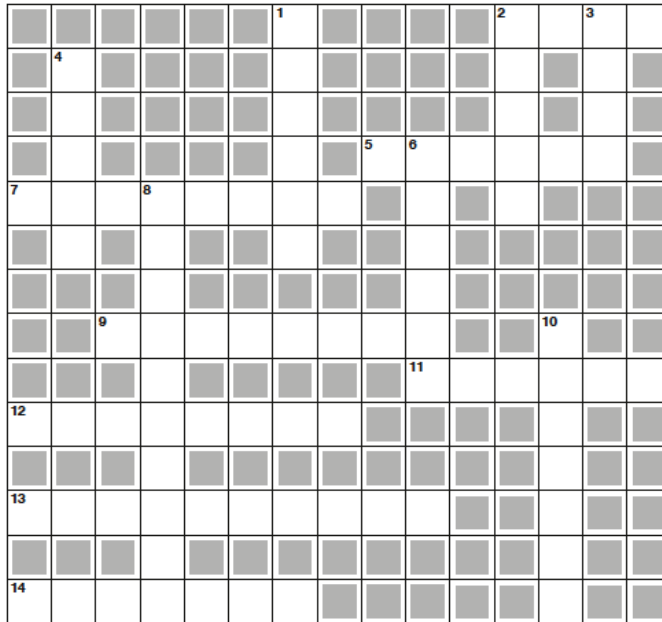
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Exercise 2

Read the texts again carefully. Then do the crossword.



Across

- 2 You can send one on St Valentine's day
- 5 The season of re-birth and growth
- 7 Your son's sister is your
- 9 He didn't approve of marriage
- 11 An idea to explain how or why something happens
- 12 On 14th February you might receive a proposal of
- 13 An ancient Roman spring festival
- 14 Someone who fights in a battle

Down

- 1 Nobody knew about the marriages Valentine organised because they were....
- 2 The angel of love
- 3 Jewellery often given as a gift of love
- 4 A religion based on nature worship
- 6 Valentine's job before he was executed
- 8 "Jenny is my I love her very much."
- 10 Saint Valentine's Day is all about love and



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Exercise 3

Which of these statements expresses the way you feel about St Valentine's Day?

St Valentine's day is...

- A a commercial trap to make people spend money
- B a great opportunity to see if you have a secret admirer
- C a day I hate. I never receive any cards
- D a lovely time to tell someone you love them
- E another day just like the others

Write 30-40 words to explain your choice.

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