



Student's Name

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Course

Date

### History of Valentine's Day

Specific dates in our calendars signify events that hold a special place for us. On the 14th of February, lovers unite to share their affection with their romantic partners through gifts, heartfelt Valentine's cards, and other passionate gestures. Even though Valentine's Day is fit for people of any age because it does not necessarily have to be romantic, it is another reason to express gratitude and love to our friends and family. It all started with exchanging Valentine's cards full of genuine emotions crafted in poems back in the eighteenth century. Nowadays, it has grown into grand presents like jewelry, candy bars, roses, etc. To answer the question about where the romantic connotation of Valentine's Day comes from, we need to dig deeper into the history of Saint Valentine.

The ambiguity about the identity of the original Saint Valentine, after whom the holiday is named, leads back to ancient Rome under the reign of Emperor Claudius II. Different stories tell us about various Valentines residing in Rome at that time. According to one of the narratives, Valentine used to be a Catholic priest in the third century who resisted the order of the emperor Claudius as he banned young men from marriage since he found married men to be unworthy in terms of national military service (Kithcart). The priest strongly opposed the new rule and started giving holy matrimony ceremonies to young men and women willing to get married. After a while, Valentine was exposed to wrongdoings and got punished with the death penalty on the 14th of February. That is why we have been celebrating romantic love on the exact Day under the



name of Saint Valentine, who was sacrificed simply because he loved to see people in love. One of the first persons to connect Valentine's experience to romantic love was the Medieval poet Chaucer. Apparently, Valentine's story inspired Chaucer to start writing poetry about love.

An alternative version of the story suggests that Valentine used to be a liberator of Christians in the prisons of Rome, after which he got punished and spent years in prison himself. During his captivity, he fell in love with the woman who often came to check up on him (Combs). As they got to know each other better, Valentine started to write down his feelings in small notes for her, always ending them with the phrase - 'From your Valentine.' That is why small notes and cards exchanged specifically on the 14th of February are called Valentines.

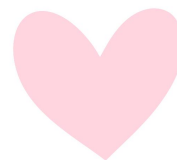
Greeks came up with their unique narrative and connected the origins of Valentine's Day to the most famous of all gods and goddesses, Zeus and Hera. Ancient Greeks perceived the end of long winters as Valentine's season and the 14th of February as the Day when Zeus and Hera got married. However, assigning their marriage to one of the year's most romantic days would not have been the best idea because of their lack of devotion.

In the modern world, most countries have chosen different dates and ways of celebrating Valentine's Day. People around the US openly share their love and affection to their significant others, romantic partners, or distant crushes in the form of sincere greetings and poems on Valentine's Cards on the 14th of February. Japanese men and women have separate days to project their love for one another in February and March (Koyfman). They also tend to make their Valentines as white as possible, meaning they give each other white chocolate, white roses, and everything romantic that might come in white. Last but not least, each city has its own date assigned for Valentine's in Spain.



As we can see, there are myriads of traditions and different approaches to celebrating Valentine's Day worldwide. However, what unites them all is our willingness to share our innermost feelings with the dearest people in our lives. It's the opportunity to appreciate our closest friends, parents, and, most importantly, people we romanticize and adore. Whether in small notes or grand gifts, the most important thing is to make people around us feel loved and appreciated on Valentine's Day.

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