History Of Valentines Day For Kids

The History of Valentine's Day...

Every February 14, around the world, candy, flowers and gifts are exchanged between loved ones, all in the name of St. Valentine. Valentine's Day is associated with sending cards and flowers or chocolates to special friends and loved ones. Whatever is sent, the message remains the same: love and friendship. But how did it all begin? We have to go back centuries to find the history and legends of Valentine's Day.

One legend tells of a wonderful priest named Valentine who lived during the reign of the Roman Emperor Claudius II, about 200 A.D. At this time, Rome was in desperate need of an army and Claudius believed that married men would make less reliable soldiers because they wouldn't want to leave their wives and families. So, Claudius forbids young men to get married. However, Valentine secretly defied Claudius and performed marriage ceremonies in the temple. Soon, he became known as the friend of those in love. Eventually, Claudius discovered what the good priest was doing and the Emperor's anger was so great that he had Valentine thrown in jail. During his imprisonment, Valentine is said to have cured the jailer's daughter of blindness. Because of this miracle, he was sentenced to die...on February 14, 270 A.D. On the day he died, Valentine wrote the girl a note in which he spoke of bonds of affection between people. He signed the message, *"From your Valentine"*. According to this legend, it is to honour St. Valentine that we celebrate Valentine's Day on February 14; in turn, we are celebrating love and marriage.

Another legend of St. Valentine exists...In this tale, Valentine was beloved by the village children for him always allowed them to play in his garden. He was placed in prison by the Romans for refusing to worship their gods. During his imprisonment, the children exchanged notes with him, attached to small bouquets of flowers, flung through the prison bars. Valentine was put to death on February 14th and we commemorate his death by sending flowers, chocolates and love notes on this day each year.

Scholars and historians the world over have yet to come up with definitive explanation for this day set aside for lovers. Pope Gelasius in the fifth century named Valentine as the patron saint

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Valentine's Day is a special day celebrated on February 14th every year, where people express their love and affection for one another. But have you ever wondered how this day came to be? The history of Valentine's Day is filled with interesting stories, traditions, and fun facts that kids can enjoy. In this article, we'll explore the origins of Valentine's Day, how it evolved over time, and the various ways people celebrate it today.

Origins of Valentine's Day

The story of Valentine's Day can be traced back to ancient Rome. Here are some key points about its origins:

1. The Roman Festival of Lupercalia

- Lupercalia was a festival celebrated in mid-February in ancient Rome.
- It honored the Roman god of fertility, Lupercus, and involved various rituals to promote fertility and health.
- During this festival, young men would draw the names of young women from a box, and they would pair up for the duration of the festival.

2. St. Valentine

- The name "Valentine" comes from a Christian martyr named St. Valentine.
- The most popular story says that St. Valentine was a priest who lived during the reign of Emperor Claudius II around 270 AD.
- Claudius II believed single men made better soldiers, so he banned marriages for young men. St. Valentine defied this law and secretly married couples in love.
- Eventually, St. Valentine was caught, imprisoned, and executed on February 14th, making him a symbol of love and sacrifice.

Evolution of Valentine's Day

Over the centuries, Valentine's Day transformed from a pagan festival to a Christian holiday and later became a day to celebrate romantic love.

1. The Middle Ages

- By the Middle Ages, February 14th was recognized as St. Valentine's Day.
- It was believed that birds began to pair up and mate around this time, further linking the day to love and romance.
- People started to send love notes and poems to their sweethearts, marking the beginning of Valentine's cards.

2. The Rise of Valentine's Cards

- The first known Valentine card was sent in the 15th century.
- By the 18th century, it became common for lovers to exchange handmade cards and gifts.

- In the 19th century, the production of printed cards began, making it easier for people to share their feelings without needing artistic skills.

Modern Valentine's Day Traditions

Today, Valentine's Day is celebrated all around the world, and it has become a day not just for romantic couples but for friends and family as well. Here are some popular traditions:

1. Sending Cards

- Valentine's Day cards are an essential part of the celebration.
- Cards often feature hearts, flowers, and messages of love and friendship.
- Kids might enjoy making homemade cards for their friends and family.

2. Giving Gifts

- Common gifts include chocolates, flowers, and stuffed animals.
- In schools, children often exchange small gifts or treats with classmates.
- Some people like to surprise their loved ones with special experiences, like a dinner out or a fun activity.

3. Celebrating Love and Friendship

- While Valentine's Day is often about romantic love, it's also a great opportunity to celebrate friendships and family relationships.
- Kids can show appreciation for their friends by writing notes or giving small tokens of affection.
- Classrooms often organize Valentine's Day parties where students can share treats and cards.

Valentine's Day Around the World

Different cultures have unique ways of celebrating Valentine's Day. Here are some examples:

1. Japan

- In Japan, women typically give chocolates to men on Valentine's Day.
- A month later, on March 14th, known as White Day, men return the favor by giving gifts to

women.

2. South Korea

- Similar to Japan, South Korea celebrates Valentine's Day and White Day.
- They also have a special day on April 14th called Black Day, where single people gather to eat black noodles and mourn their single status.

3. Finland and Estonia

- In Finland and Estonia, Valentine's Day is called "Friend's Day" (Ystävänpäivä in Finnish).
- It focuses on celebrating friendships rather than just romantic love.

4. Mexico

- In Mexico, Valentine's Day is known as "Día del Amor y la Amistad" (Day of Love and Friendship).
- People celebrate with gifts, parties, and gatherings with friends and loved ones.

Fun Facts About Valentine's Day

Here are some fun and interesting facts about Valentine's Day that kids might enjoy:

1. Valentine's Day is a multi-billion dollar holiday! People spend a lot of money on gifts, cards, and flowers every year.
2. The heart shape we associate with love has been around for centuries, but it became popular in the 14th century.
3. The first Valentine's Day box of chocolates was created by Richard Cadbury in the 1800s.
4. In 2012, it was estimated that about 145 million Valentine's Day cards were sent in the United States alone!
5. Red roses are a symbol of love because they are associated with the goddess of love, Venus.

Conclusion

Valentine's Day has a rich history that spans centuries, evolving from ancient rituals to a modern celebration of love and friendship. It's a day where people can express their feelings, share kindness, and build connections with others. Whether it's through sending cards, giving gifts, or spending time with loved ones, Valentine's Day is all about celebrating the special bonds we share. So this February 14th, remember the stories behind the day and find a way to show appreciation for those you love!

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the origin of Valentine's Day?

Valentine's Day originated from a Roman festival called Lupercalia, celebrated in mid-February, which honored fertility and love.

Who was St. Valentine?

St. Valentine was a priest in Rome who was martyred for defying Emperor Claudius II's ban on marriages for young men, believing that married men made poor soldiers.

When did Valentine's Day start being celebrated?

Valentine's Day began to be celebrated in the 14th century as a day for lovers, particularly in England and France.

What symbols are associated with Valentine's Day?

Common symbols of Valentine's Day include hearts, roses, Cupid, and the color red, all representing love and affection.

How do people celebrate Valentine's Day today?

People celebrate Valentine's Day by giving cards, chocolates, flowers, and spending time with loved ones, showing appreciation and love.

What are some fun activities for kids on Valentine's Day?

Kids can celebrate Valentine's Day by making handmade cards, decorating cookies, and participating in class parties to exchange valentines with friends.

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