

Student's Name _____

Date _____

St. Valentine's Day

1. Do people celebrate St. Valentine's Day in your country? If they do, how does it compare to Ireland?
2. Read this short article about the history of St. Valentine's Day and answer the questions at the end.

There are varying opinions as to the origins of Valentine's Day. Some experts say that it started from St. Valentine, a Roman who was killed for refusing to give up Christianity. He died on February 14, 269 A.D., the same day that had been devoted to love lotteries. Legend also says that St. Valentine left a farewell note to the jailer's daughter who had become his friend and signed it "From your Valentine". Other aspects of the story say that Saint Valentine served as a priest at the temple during the reign of Emperor Claudius. Claudius put Valentine in prison for not obeying him. In 496 A.D. Pope Gelasius set aside February 14 to honour St. Valentine.

Gradually February became the date of exchanging love messages and St. Valentine became the patron saint of lovers. The date was marked by sending poems and simple gifts such as flowers. There was often a ball or a party.

In the United States, Miss Esther Howland is given credit for sending the first Valentine's cards. Commercial valentines were introduced in the 1800s and now the date is very commercialised. The town of Loveland, Colorado, does a large post office business on February 14. In North American elementary

schools pupils often give a card or small gift to everyone in the class in which they say what they like about each other.

In Japan and Korea many women give candy, chocolate or flowers to people they like. It can be very expensive for example in an office where the women have to buy for everybody.

And what about Ireland? Well many people believe that St. Valentine is buried in Whitefriar Street Church in the city centre. According to the story the saint's remains were brought to Dublin from Rome in 1835.

Consumers in the U.S. will spend \$13.7 billion on Valentine gifts this year and in Ireland a third of the population will spend as much as €100 on gifts.

TRUE or FALSE

1. Everybody agrees about the origins of Valentine's Day.
2. The Americans were the first to send Valentine cards.
3. St. Valentine was born in Dublin.
4. The Emperor Claudius made St. Valentine's Day the patron saint of lovers.
5. In Japan men give presents to the women in their office that they would like to marry.
6. In American elementary schools they have love lotteries.

1	2	3	4	5	6

Find words in the text that mean the same as:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Different | 5. Slowly over time |
| 2. People with specialist knowledge | 6. Sweets |
| 3. Presents | 7. Students |
| 4. Jail | 8. A dead body |

Romantic Valentine's Day Ideas

Read this article from www.love-smart.com/valentines-day and decide which you think are the five most romantic suggestions . When you've finished compare your answers with a partner.

Here we are again approaching February 14th, Valentine's Day and you don't have a clue what to give or where to take the one you love. Here's what we suggest:

- Take her/him to a very expensive exclusive restaurant.
- Memorize a romantic poem and recite it to her/him.
- Take a hot air balloon ride.
- Hire a horse drawn carriage.
- Bake a cake in a heart- shaped tin.
- Hire a violinist to play outside your bedroom window.
- Have a candlelight dinner on the roof of your building if you live in apartment or in your garden if you live in a house.
- Bring her/him breakfast in bed.

- Make your own Valentine Card including writing your own poem.
- Go for a moonlight picnic on a beach.
- Go to a Valentine's Ball.
- Give all the money you would have spent on flowers chocolates etc to charity.
- Hire a helicopter to fly over your building flying a big banner telling her/him you will always love.
- Get matching tattoos.

The Five Most Romantic Suggestions

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Which suggestions depend on the weather?

Which suggestions are the most expensive?

Which suggestions are the cheapest?

Which suggestions are the most creative?

Language Focus

"The most romantic" "the most expensive" "the cheapest" and "the most creative" are all examples of **superlative adjectives**.

With short words, usually one syllable we make the superlative by putting "the" before the adjective and adding "est"

Example: **cheap** **the cheapest**

With long words we put "the most" before the adjective.

Example: **expensive** **the most expensive**

Answer these questions and then compare your answers with a partner:

1. What is the biggest city in your country?
2. What is the biggest county in Ireland?
3. What is the longest river in Ireland?
4. What is the smallest county in Ireland ?
5. What is the most expensive city in Europe?
6. Who is the youngest in the class?
7. What's the most difficult thing about English?
8. What's the most unusual thing about Irish culture?
