

Valentine's Day Reading (A2+/B1)

Ex1: Ask and answer the questions below with a partner or in small groups.

1. Is Valentine's day celebrated in your country? What date is it on?
2. Do you know anything about the history of Valentine's day?



Introduction:

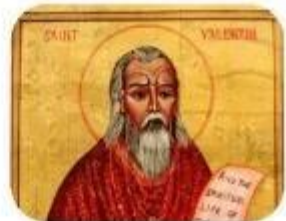
Valentine's day occurs every year on the 14th of February. It is commonly celebrated in the United States, Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, France and Australia and is popular in other parts of the world too.

It's not a public holiday, but people often celebrate this 'day of love' by giving or sending Valentine's cards to their partners, or someone they fancy. Some couples also exchange gifts such as flowers, chocolates or jewellery. On the night of the 14th they often spend special time together by cooking a romantic meal at home or going to a restaurant for a candlelit dinner.

Ex 2: Read the text once and complete it with the missing words below.

The Origins of Valentine's Day

Valentine's day is named after Saint Valentine. **According to** most accounts, he lived during the 3rd century in Rome at a time when many Romans were **converting** to Christianity.



There are many stories about St Valentine's connection to love and romance. The most popular story is that of St Valentine's secret marriage 1. _____

The Emperor at the time, Claudius II, who was **pagan**, wanted to **extend** his army, but many young married men didn't want to 2. _____ because they didn't want to leave their wives and children. To solve his problem he introduced a law to prevent young Christian men from marrying.

For Valentine, marriage was an essential part of the Christian 3. _____, so he was strongly opposed to the new 4. _____ and started to hold secret marriage ceremonies for the soldiers. After some time, news of the secret marriages reached the Emperor, and St Valentine was **imprisoned** for his crimes and ordered to be 5. _____.



While he was in jail, the daughter of his **jailer** visited him, and after some time, the two fell in love. According to the 6. _____, the girl was blind and Valentine **cured** her blindness. He also cared for the other prisoners. Just before his execution, Valentine sent the girl a 7. _____ and signed it 'from your Valentine'; a phrase which is commonly used to this day in Valentine's cards.

Valentine was **beheaded** on the 14th February 269, and so, Valentine's day marks the anniversary of his 8. _____. Many churches around the world **claim** to have the **remains** of the saint. These include Whitefriar Street Church in Dublin, Ireland, which claims to have his 9. _____ and Santa Maria in Cosmedin in Rome, where a **skull**, which **supposedly** belongs to the saint, is on display.

bones join executed legend law faith ceremonies love letter death