

READING

St. Valentine's Story

Let me introduce myself. My name is Valentine. I lived in Rome during the third century. That was long long ago. At that time, Rome was ruled by an emperor named Claudius. I didn't like Emperor Claudius, and I wasn't the only one! A lot of people shared my feelings. Claudius wanted to have a big army. He expected men to volunteer to join. Many men did not want to fight in wars. They did not want to leave their families and wives. As you might have guessed, not many men signed up. This made Claudius furious. So what happened? He had a crazy idea. He thought that if men were not married, they wouldn't mind joining the army. So Claudius decided not to allow any more marriages. Young people thought his new law was cruel. I thought it was preposterous! I certainly wasn't going to support that law. Did I mention that I was a priest? One of my favourite activities was to marry couples. Even after Emperor Claudius passed his law, I kept on performing marriage ceremonies - secretly, of course. It was really quite exciting. Imagine a small candlelit room with only the bride and groom and myself. We would whisper the words of the ceremony, listening all the while for the steps of soldiers. One night, we did hear footsteps. It was scary! Thank goodness the couple I was marrying escaped in time. I was caught. I was thrown into a jail and told that my punishment was death. I tried to stay cheerful. And do you know what? Wonderful things happened. Many young people came to the jail to visit me. They threw flowers and notes up to my window. They wanted to know that they, too, believed in love. One of these young people was the daughter of the prison guard. Her father allowed her to visit me in the cell. Sometimes we would sit and talk for hours. She helped me keep my spirits up. She agreed that I did the right thing by ignoring the Emperor and going ahead with the secret marriages. On the day I was to die, I left my friend a little note thanking her for her friendship and loyalty. I signed it, "Love from your Valentine." I believe that note started the custom of exchanging love messages on Valentine's Day. It was written on the day I died, February 14, 269 A.D. Now, every year on this day people remember. But most importantly, they think about love and friendship. And now when they think of Emperor Claudius, they remember how he tried to stand in the way of love, and they laugh - because they know that love can't be beaten.

***Write TRUE (T) or FALSE (F)**

1. Many people liked Emperor Claudius but St. Valentine didn't. _____
2. Soldiers weren't allowed to get married. _____
3. Emperor had forbidden people to get married. _____
4. Valentine was a teacher. _____
5. Valentine died in prison on 14th February. _____

***Answer the following questions**

1. When and where did St Valentine live?
2. Who was the emperor at that time?
3. Did St. Valentine like him?
4. What did St. Valentine do? What was his job?
5. Why didn't Claudius like men to get married?
6. Why was St. Valentine caught and put into prison?
7. What was the punishment the Emperor ordered for him?
8. Who visited him when he was in jail?
9. When did St. Valentine write a note?
10. Who did he write the note to?
11. Why did he write the note?
12. When did St. Valentine die?
13. Why is St. Valentine a symbol of love?

*** Match the words from the text with their definition**

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| 1. share: | a. register |
| 2. sign up: | b. permit; let |
| 3. allow: | c. have the same idea |
| 4. scary: | d. happy and joyful |
| 5. stand: | e. take a particular attitude |
| 6. cheerful: | f. frightening |
| 7. jail: | g. illogical |
| 8. preposterous: | h. prison |