

Fluency 1 – (1 – 6)

Valentine's day

Like many other holidays, Valentine's Day is thought to be of American origin; but—like many other holidays—it is not. Already in ancient Rome, people celebrated a similar holiday in the middle of February. It was Lupercalia, the festival of fertility.

The Valentine celebrations we know today probably originate in 14th-century England and France. We could indeed say that it was some kind of medieval »blind-date show« to which single men and women got together on 14 February. The women wrote their names on cards and put them into a box from which each man then picked a card. The woman whose name was on the card became the man's sweetheart or "Valentine", as 14 February is also the commemoration day of St. Valentine (therefore the day is called St. Valentine's Day).

The date, in fact, is the only connection between the festival and the martyr St. Valentine, a Roman priest from the 3rd century. Valentine lived during the reign of Claudius II, who did not allow his soldiers to get married. Claudius believed that married soldiers would not make a good army, so when he found out that Valentine married young couples secretly, he had the priest arrested and sentenced to death.

Let's leave martyrdom behind, however, and return to the more pleasant rites of our time. Valentine's Day has become the festival of love—lovers surprise each other with little presents, flowers or a romantic dinner by candlelight. Sending special greeting cards on that day is also very popular. Valentines, as these cards are called, are sent to loved ones or even to secret lovers in order to win their hearts. If the sender doesn't want to be recognized, the card is signed »Your Valentine«.

Answer the questions according to the text.

1. Valentine's Day was first celebrated in America.

true false

2. 14 February is a commemoration day for a Roman priest.

true false

3. Claudius II wanted his soldiers to be

() married
() single
() dead

4. Valentine cards are signed "Your Valentine" when they are from

() an anonymous sender
() St. Valentine
() Claudius II

Match the right parts according to the text.

1. Roman people :

marry soldiers.

2. Each man picked a card :

send cards to people they like.

3. On 14 February many people :

held a festival in February.

were often recognized.

with the name of a woman on it.

Answer with complete sentences:

1. Had you tried out another language before you started the English course?

2. How long did it take you to read the last book you had?

3. If you hadn't chosen the language you study now, what might you have study?

4. What is the most interesting person you have met?

5. How long have you been studying at Fisk?

Write a synonym or a definition to the phrasal verbs below:

1. Take off - _____

2. Brake up with - _____

3. Smarten up - _____

4. Try on - _____

5. Throw away - _____

6. Kick off - _____

7. Look up to - _____

8. Pig out on - _____

9. Pick up - _____

10. Come back - _____

Rewrite the sentences using the cues given:

1. His father didn't believe in his friend and in his son. (neither...nor)

2. She is beautiful, but everybody hates her. (although)

3. We should learn to accept our weaknesses and our strengths. (not only ... but also)

4. My grandmother had three daughters and a son from another marriage. (besides)
