



A Brief History of Valentine's Day

name

date

Directions: Choose the most sensible answer to complete each statement.

1. Valentine's Day began:

- ☐ on a Tuesday in Antarctica.
- ☐ in the ancient Roman empire about 2,000 years ago.
- ☐ to help people sell Girl Scout cookies.

2. In ancient Rome, February 14th was a day to honor:

- ☐ President Lincoln.
- ☐ children who did their homework.
- ☐ Juno, the goddess of women and marriage.

3.) February 15th was the start of a festival called the Lupercalia. On the first night, boys:

- ☐ drew the names of girls out of a big jar.
- ☐ trained penguins to sing.
- ☐ washed and waxed the family car.

4.) Each boy and girl would then be partners for the entire festival. Sometimes they:

- ☐ fell in love and later got married.
- ☐ built a boat and sailed around the world.
- ☐ stayed in touch by e-mail after the festival ended.

5.) But the Emperor Claudius II had a problem. He had trouble getting men to join the army. He thought they:

- ☐ would rather watch television.
- ☐ didn't like the uniforms.
- ☐ didn't want to leave their wives and girlfriends to defend Rome's borders far away.

6.) So Claudius II decided to:

- ☐ ban all marriages and engagements.
- ☐ hire Native Americans to join the army.
- ☐ offer free trips to Disney World to anyone who joined the army.

7.) That brings us to Valentine, who was a Christian priest in Rome in the days of Claudius II. Valentine:

- ☐ secretly married any couples who came to him for help.
- ☐ preached against the Disney World trips.
- ☐ joined the army.

8.) For this and perhaps for a few other things Claudius didn't like, Valentine was:

- ☐ beaten and killed on February 14, 270 CE.
- ☐ sent to live in Antarctica with the singing penguins.
- ☐ not allowed to go to Disney World.

9.) The leaders of the early Christian church in Rome didn't much like the Lupercalia because it was for a Roman god and got pretty wild at times with all that pairing-off of boys and girls. In 496 CE, the Christian church leaders:

- ☐ went to Disney World to talk about the problem.
- ☐ banned the festival.
- ☐ said that only singing penguins could attend.

10.) However,

- ☐ people ignored the ban and held the festival anyway.
- ☐ the penguins wouldn't cooperate.
- ☐ Martians arrived and said the festival had to go on.

11.) Then the Christian leaders tried to change the festival by telling people to put the names of saints in the jar instead of girls' names. The young men who drew the saints' names were supposed to spend the next year:

- ☐ thinking about the life and lessons of that saint.
- ☐ singing hymns with the penguins.
- ☐ working at Disney World.

12.) The day of Valentine's execution (February 14) was chosen as the start of the newly-redefined holiday, probably because:

- ☐ there was nothing else happening on that day.
- ☐ it's in the middle of February.
- ☐ it was close to the traditional date of the old Lupercalia festival that the Church wanted to stop.

13.) It didn't work, of course. The name stuck – Valentine's Day – but the holiday quickly went back to its original focus on love and affection because:

- ☐ people thought that was a lot more fun than thinking about singing penguins.
- ☐ people thought that was a lot more fun than thinking about saints.
- ☐ people thought that was a lot more fun than thinking about joining the army.

14.) Although Valentine's Day was never a major holiday anywhere, it continued to be celebrated for a long time in many areas that had once been:

- ☐ part of the Roman Empire.
- ☐ infested with singing penguins.
- ☐ part of Disney World.

15.) Where did that cute little cupid figure come in? Cupid, in Roman mythology, was a son of Venus and was the

- ☐ god of homework.
- ☐ god of railroad transportation.
- ☐ god of love.

16.) Although the earliest images of Cupid show him as a good-looking and muscular young man, by the mid-300's CE he had become a:

- ☐ chubby little winged baby with a bow and arrows.
- ☐ grey-haired old man.
- ☐ popular talk show host.

17.) Valentine's Day was revived and achieved great popularity in Great Britain:

- ☐ last week.
- ☐ sometime in the 17th century (the 1600s).
- ☐ after the singing penguins arrived in London.

18.) By the middle of the 18th century (1700s), it was common for friends and lovers to exchange small gifts or hand-written affectionate notes:

- ☐ on February 14.
- ☐ if they went to Disney World.
- ☐ every Monday afternoon at 2:00 pm.

19.) By the end of the 1700s, printed cards that people sold began to:

- ☐ advertise Disney World.
- ☐ contain pictures of penguins.
- ☐ replace hand-written "Valentine" letters.

20.) In the 1840s, Esther A. Howland began to sell the first mass-produced "valentines" in the United States. Hearts, flowers, and cupids appeared on her cards from the very first. Today, Valentine's Day is widely celebrated in Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, France, and Australia as well as:

- ☐ the United States.
- ☐ ancient Rome.
- ☐ any place you might meet singing penguins.

