

Valentine's Day, President's Day, St David's Day



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Spring is coming, the weather is getting better, flowers are starting to appear and everyone has new energy. There are lots of really interesting special occasions over the next few months and we have information on a couple of them. Read on to find out more ...

Valentine's Day: 14th February

Who was Valentine?

The Church recognizes at least three Saint Valentines, all martyrs. Although the legend goes that one of them wrote the first Valentine's card while in prison, no-one really knows what the connection is between any of them and romance. The tradition of sending cards or gifts to loved ones started long after their deaths - in the sixteenth century in Great Britain and in the early 1700s in the USA.

Today, *Valentine's Day* is celebrated in many parts of the world. In some countries, such as the USA, children and adults give cards to friends and family to show their affection. In other places, such as the UK, cards are given to one special person, sometimes from a 'secret admirer'.

To find out more about the **history of *Valentine's Day***, click here:

<http://www.history.com/topics/valentines-day>

Who's Cupid?

What would *Valentine's Day* be without Cupid, that cheeky little imp whose arrow doesn't always hit the right person? In Roman mythology, he was a much more serious character, being the god of desire, affection and erotic love. Legend has it that he fell in love with a mortal, Psyche, who proved her love to him by carrying out the tasks Venus set her. When Psyche fell into a deadly slumber, Cupid found her but the gods took pity on her because of her love for Cupid and made her into a goddess.

Romantic couples

How well do your students follow the loves and lives of famous people? Look at the famous couples below and the dates of their marriage.

Here are two alternatives for a nice quiz you could do in class using our information:

Alternative 1:

Draw a table with three columns on the board. Write the name of the woman in the first, the name of the man in the second, and the date in the third column making sure the answers are mixed (we provide you with the correct matching below, of course). Don't include the words in brackets as that would be too much of a hint. In class, the students match up the two halves of the famous couples, i.e. man and woman, and the date of their marriage.

Alternative 2:

Make a set of 21 cards for each group of 4 students. Each set has the names and dates on separate pieces of card. Don't include the words in brackets. Give out the cards and ask the students to match the two halves of the famous couple and the date of their marriage. Check in class.

- Elizabeth Taylor & Richard Burton: 15th March 1964
- Heidi Klum & Seal: 10th May 2005
- Kate (Middleton) & (Prince) William: 29th April 2011
- Wallis Simpson (Duchess of Windsor) & (King) Edward VIII: 3rd June 1937
- Ayda Field & Robbie Williams: 7th August 2010
- Yoko Ono & John Lennon: 20th March 1969
- (Queen) Victoria & (Prince) Albert: 10th February 1840

To find more ideas for Valentine's Specials and lots of **activity ideas for this Valentine's Day** just click here:

<http://www.theholidayspot.com/valentine/>

President's Day: 16th February

In 1968, Congress moved the national holiday commemorating George Washington's birthday from the 22nd February to the third Monday in February. Although Nixon re-christened it *President's Day*, in honour of all American presidents, the official title is still 'Washington's Birthday', according to the website of the US Diplomatic Mission to Germany.

There are no national holidays when employees across the country have a day off in the USA as each state sets its own days. Only federal employees have a free day on national holidays. Most states observe *President's Day*, which falls on 16th February this year.

School teachers often use the opportunity of *President's Day* to study the lives of the presidents, from George Washington to Barack Obama.

How much do you know about US presidents? Just click here and try this quiz to find out: https://worldhistoryproject.org/quizzes/us_presidents

St David's Day: 1st March

St David is the patron saint of Wales and the anniversary of his death, 1st March, is a day of celebration in Wales. Although it's not an official holiday, some schools give children half a day free.

Do you know which of the following two represent symbols of Wales?

1 leeks - 2 rose - 3 daffodil

Yes, you are right, Welsh people wear leeks and daffodils on March 1st. The leek is the symbol for David. Once, in a battle, the Welsh soldiers wore leeks to make it possible for them to distinguish their comrades from enemy English troops. Daffodils, which are in bloom in March, are a more recent addition. In Welsh their name means 'Peter's leek'. There are many parades in Wales on 1st March and the biggest is in Cardiff. People also dance and sing traditional songs.

To find out more about St David and *St David's Day* just click here:
<http://www.sucs.org/~rhys/stdavid.html>

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<http://www.klett-sprachen.de/special-day-file>