

## Greeting Cards and More

By Jody Williams

How did Valentine's Day begin? Better yet, why did Valentine's Day begin? There are many legends that answer those questions. One story is about St. Valentine. Another tells that Valentine was a priest. He married people in secret because it was outlawed at the time. Valentine went to prison. While in prison, he wrote letters to the jailer's daughter who had been kind to him. He signed his letters "From your Valentine."

The first Valentine's Day was first celebrated as early as the fifteenth century. Many years later, handwritten notes were exchanged. Sometimes small gifts were given. Shortly after that, printed cards were made. This was a time in history when sharing feelings was discouraged. The printed cards allowed for emotions to be expressed.

Americans caught on to the valentine fun in the early 1800s. By 1847, the first valentine card was printed. Many copies of the card were made. Esther Howland began this tradition.

Valentine's Day is celebrated each year on February 14. The Greeting Card Association says that Valentine's Day is a busy day for the postal service. It is the second busiest day after Christmas. It is estimated that about one billion cards are sent each year. Valentine's Day has become a tradition and is still going strong.



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## Questions

1. Describe some of the legends of Valentine's Day.

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- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The first Valentine's Day was first celebrated as early as the \_\_\_\_\_ century.

A. fourteenth  
 B. seventeenth  
 C. fifteenth  
 D. sixteenth

- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The valentine cards allowed for \_\_\_\_\_.

A. giving flowers  
 B. eating chocolate  
 C. sharing feelings and emotions  
 D. getting married



