



Anti-Valentine's Day

A critical look at love,
pressure & consumption

A2+/B1

Warm-up!

- What do you think about Valentine's Day?
- Do you celebrate it? Why / why not?
- Is Valentine's Day about love or money?
- How do people who don't celebrate it usually feel on that day?



Gift rating

Rate the gift from the best ones to the worst ones. Explain your decision.

- a box of chocolates
- plant/flowers
- candles
- personalised card/letter
- romantic dinner
- jewellery
- teddy bears



- **Which gift is expensive?**
- **Which gift is romantic?**
- **Which gift is stressful?**



Vocabulary

Look at the words below. What do they mean? Are they verbs, adjectives or nouns?

- average
- pressure
- waste
- thrown away
- plastic
- disappear
- lonely
- break up
- stress

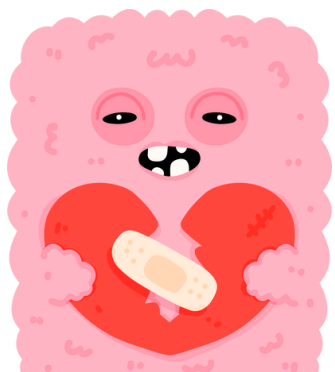
Make a story with all of them!



Before we read A

We will read a text about the less discussed sides of Valentine’s Day. What do you think the text will say about these things?

Area	Your prediction
Money	
Environment/waste	
Mental health/feelings	
Relationships & breakups	
Single people	



Before we read B

Match the numbers (A) with what you think they refer to (B).

A - Numbers

- 1. 100 dollars
- 2. 25 million
- 3. 7,500 tonnes
- 4. 450 years
- 5. 7%

B. Meanings

- a. Cards thrown away in the UK every year
- b. Time some waste needs to disappear
- c. Average money people spend
- d. Plastic waste from gifts
- e. People who break up around Valentine's Day



Reading - Valentine's Day: not always sweet



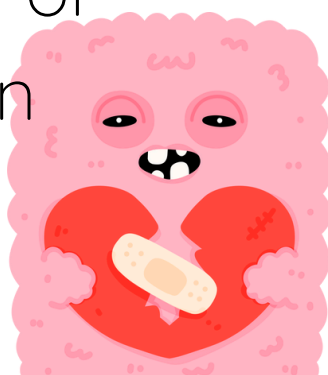
Valentine's Day is often a day about love and romance. People buy gifts, go to restaurants, and post photos online. But for many people, the day also brings stress and pressure.

On average, people spend about 100 dollars on Valentine's Day. Some people feel they must buy a gift, even if they do not have much money. This can cause stress, especially for couples.

Valentine's Day also creates a lot of waste. In the UK, around 25 million cards are bought and thrown away every year. There is also about 7,500 tonnes of plastic waste from gift boxes, chocolate packaging, and decorations. Some items, like balloons, can take 450 years to disappear in nature.

The day can be difficult emotionally. People in relationships may feel pressure to have a "perfect" day. Single people often feel lonely or sad. Social media can make these feelings stronger.

For some couples, Valentine's Day causes problems. Around 7% of people say they break up on or around Valentine's Day. Instead of bringing people closer, the day sometimes shows problems in relationships.



Comprehension gap-fill

Complete the sentences with words or numbers from the text.

1. People spend about _____ dollars on Valentine's Day.
2. Around _____ million cards are thrown away in the UK every year.
3. Valentine's Day creates about _____ tonnes of plastic waste.
4. Some waste needs _____ years to disappear.
5. About _____ percent of people break up around Valentine's Day.



Cute Writing – Anti-Valentine Poems

Write 4–6 lines

It can be:

- funny
- anti-commercial
- about self-love or friendship
- rhyming is optional 😊

***Roses are read,
Violets are blue.
Money is tight.
Let's go to the park.***



Speaking A - Rethinking celebrations

Brainstorm alternative ways to celebrate holidays that are:

- cheap
- less stressful
- good for mental health
- good for the environment

Examples categories:

- Activities
- Gifts
- No-gift ideas
- Celebrating alone / with friends





Speaking B - let's talk!

1. Can people celebrate love without gifts?
2. What is your perfect Valentine's Day?
3. Would you like to change how Valentine's Day is celebrated in your culture?





Answer key

Gap Fill (Comprehension)

1.100

2.25

3.7,500

4.450

5.7

Sources

1. <https://www.cnn.com/2025/02/14/americans-to-spend-14point6-billion-on-valentines-day-report-finds.html>

2. <https://www.businesswaste.co.uk/seasonal/valentines-day-waste/valentines-day-waste-facts/>

3. <https://today.yougov.com/society/articles/27894-valentines-day-break-up-relationships-poll>





Thank you!
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