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118 Valentine's Day in The USA

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"DO YOU LOVE ME?"

"I LOVE YOU MORE THAN THE COOKIE MONSTER LOVES COOKIES."

Happy Valentine's Day, everybody! I am Georgiana, founder of [SpeakEnglishPodcast.com](https://speakenglishpodcast.com). My mission is to help you speak English fluently.

In today's episode, I will talk about Valentine's Day in the United States. And with a mini-story you will improve your English speaking.

Remember! You can get the transcript at speakenglishpodcast.com.

Ok. Let's get started!

Although it is a very commercial holiday, Valentine's Day has a fascinating history that goes back to ancient Rome! In the United States and other parts of the world, people celebrate February 14 by giving away candy hearts and red roses.

Historians believe that Valentine's Day originated in ancient Rome as a pagan fertility festival.

But despite its origins, in 1300, it officially became a holiday associated with love and romance.

The Roman Pope officially declared February 14, "Valentine's Day." It was then associated with love because many believed that birds began their mating season on February 14.

There was more than one St. Valentine.

There have been multiple St. Valentines throughout history, like a bishop and a pope. But the most common one was the one who challenged Emperor Claudius II.

Back then, Claudius had forbidden marriage because he thought it would distract young soldiers.

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However, Valentine disapproved, so he illegally married couples until he was captured. After he was convicted, young couples would visit his cell and give him flowers and cards. It's said that he died on **February 14**.

Let's see how Americans celebrate Valentine's Day nowadays.

Since 1840 sending cards became a tradition and Americans send out **145 million Valentine's Day cards** every year.

Americans spend a lot of money on Valentine's Day

About 50% of Americans celebrate Valentine's Day and spend about **\$19 billion a year**, and over **\$2 billion on candy alone**. That's a lot of money, right?

But do you know where most of the money goes?

Americans spend almost 5 billion dollars on jewelry on Valentine's Day!

They also spend more than \$3.7 billion on going out at night, followed by flowers, clothes, and candy.

Ok. Now let's get a bit romantic.

Nearly 6 million couples get engaged on Valentine's Day.

As it turns out, Valentine's Day was voted the best day of the year to get engaged.

Because what better day to propose than a day devoted to love and romance?

For me, Valentine's Day is an opportunity to tell others how important they are in my life.

And what does Valentine's Day mean to you?

Ok! Let's continue with a mini-story.

Mini Story

(Improve your Speaking)

What's a mini-story?

A mini-story is very simple. I give you information using phrases, and then I ask you questions.

After each question, there will be some seconds of silence: it's your turn to answer the question!

Just try to give an easy and short answer.

After you answer, I'll give you the correct answer.

And like that, I'll tell a story with questions and answers.

Are you ready?

Jack and Emily were completely in love with each other.

Were Jack and Emily fighting?

No, no fighting. They were in love.

How much were they in love? Not at all, a little, a lot?

A lot. They were absolutely in love.

Were they in love with each other or with themselves?

With each other. They were in love with each other.

Jack and Emily went to have dinner at a romantic restaurant.

Did Jack and Emily have dinner on a boat?

No, no. Not on a boat. It's a romantic restaurant.

Why did they go to that restaurant? To have breakfast, lunch, or maybe dinner?

Dinner. They went to have dinner. They didn't have breakfast or lunch. They went to have dinner.

Jack leaned across the table to offer Emily a spoonful of the delicious cake.

Did Emily lean across the table to offer him a spoonful of sugar?

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No, no. Emily didn't lean across the table. It was Jack who leaned across the table.

What did Jack lean in for?

To offer Emily a spoonful of the delicious cake.

What did Jack offer?

A spoonful of the delicious cake.

As he leaned over, Jack knocked over a candle that burned off some of her hair.

What did Jack knock over? A glass of wine?

No. He didn't knock over a glass of wine. He knocked over a candle.

Did the candle burn anything?

Yes. It burned off part of Emily's hair.

Whose hair did the candle burn?

Emily's. Emily's hair. It burned Emily's hair.

In the end, nothing serious happened to Emily and they ate for free.

Did something serious happen to Emily?

No, nothing serious happened to her.

Did they have to pay for dinner?

No, they didn't have to pay for dinner. They ate for free because of the accident.

The next day, Emily said, "There's too much fire in our relationship!"

Did Jack say, "We need a fire extinguisher for our relationship"?

No, no. Jack did not say that. Jack didn't say anything. Emily said their relationship had too much fire.

What was wrong with the relationship?

Fire. Emily said there was too much fire in their relationship.

Perfect! It's the end of this mini-story. And as you can see, through questions and answers, you can practice and improve your speech just like in a **real conversation**.

Let me ask you something. Is my podcast helping you with your English?

Though the podcast is a useful resource, because of time limitations, I can hardly develop these lessons, although they allow you to try out my method.

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That's all for today.

I will be back next week!
Bye! Bye!

Georgiana

founder of SpeakEnglishPodcast.com