

Valentine's Day is a holiday celebrated on February 14. In America, Europe and now many countries, it is the traditional day on which lovers express their love for each other by sending Valentine's Day cards, presenting flowers or offering confectionery.

This special day is most closely associated with the mutual exchange of love notes in the form of 'valentines'. These are Valentine symbols that include the heart-shaped outline, doves and the figure of the winged Cupid. The popularity of Valentine's Day cards in 19th-century America was a harbinger of the future commercialization of holidays in the United States.

Esther Howland, the woman who produced the first commercial American valentines in the 1840s, sold a then mind-boggling \$5,000 in cards during her first year of business. The valentine industry in the United States has been booming ever since. The United States Greeting Card Association estimates that approximately one billion Valentine's Day cards are sent each year worldwide, making this day the second largest card-sending holiday following behind Christmas and New Year cards. Card giving goes back to when the English settlers first arrived in the United States. As it was against the law to display affection in public at that time, giving cards to loved ones was a way of showing one's affection without doing something illegal and inviting public ridicule.

The United States Greeting Card Association estimated that women purchase approximately 85 percent of all valentines. In addition to cards, there are millions of boxes of chocolates and bouquets of roses purchased, mostly by men. Today, Valentine's Day beaus give their girls flowers, candy, cards, jewelry or some other gift. A candlelight dinner usually follows, either homemade or at a romantic restaurant. Children and families celebrate too. Children

make hearts and valentine crafts in school to bring to their mothers and fathers, and the family might have a special dinner and celebrate the love that keeps them together.

Many people feel that Valentine's Day is too commercialized. They ask if we need just that one day to show our loved ones we love them. They feel that we should not need an excuse to show our love. In fact, love should be shown every day. Moreover, it does not serve a good purpose for millions of people to spend more than what they can afford on just one day.

On that day, shops begin to see the dollar sign as they cash in on the occasion. Everywhere are thousands of different cards with all those endearing words. Big massive teddies sit in shop windows clutching a big red heart with loving words. Florists are working through the night tying ribbons around dozens of red roses and running out to deliver. Restaurants are fully booked with the men treating their lady to a romantic dinner.

This is typically what a Valentine's Day is today (473 words)

SUITABLE TITLE:-

Valentine Day: Then versus now

PRECIS:-

Valentine's Day is marked with showing affection to loved ones. Loved ones exchange feelings through various love symbolic gestures. Valentine's Day fell prey to commercialization during 19th century because of its high revenue generation potential. About one billion valentine's day cards are sold each year in United States. Card selling saw boom in earlier days because of legal security it provided. But nowadays, loved ones exchange emotions through sweets, flowers, ornaments and cards as well. Romantic candle light dinners have become part and parcel of valentine day. Kids also buy cards for their parents. However, many believe that Valentine's Day is over-commercialized because showing affection is not a one day affair. Valentine's Day has just turned into a business day where restaurants, card sellers, florists and shops adopt all possible means to sell the symbols of affection. Hence, valentine's day nowadays it is not what it used to be in earlier days.

(TOTAL WORDS = 473)
(PRECIS WORDS = 151)