

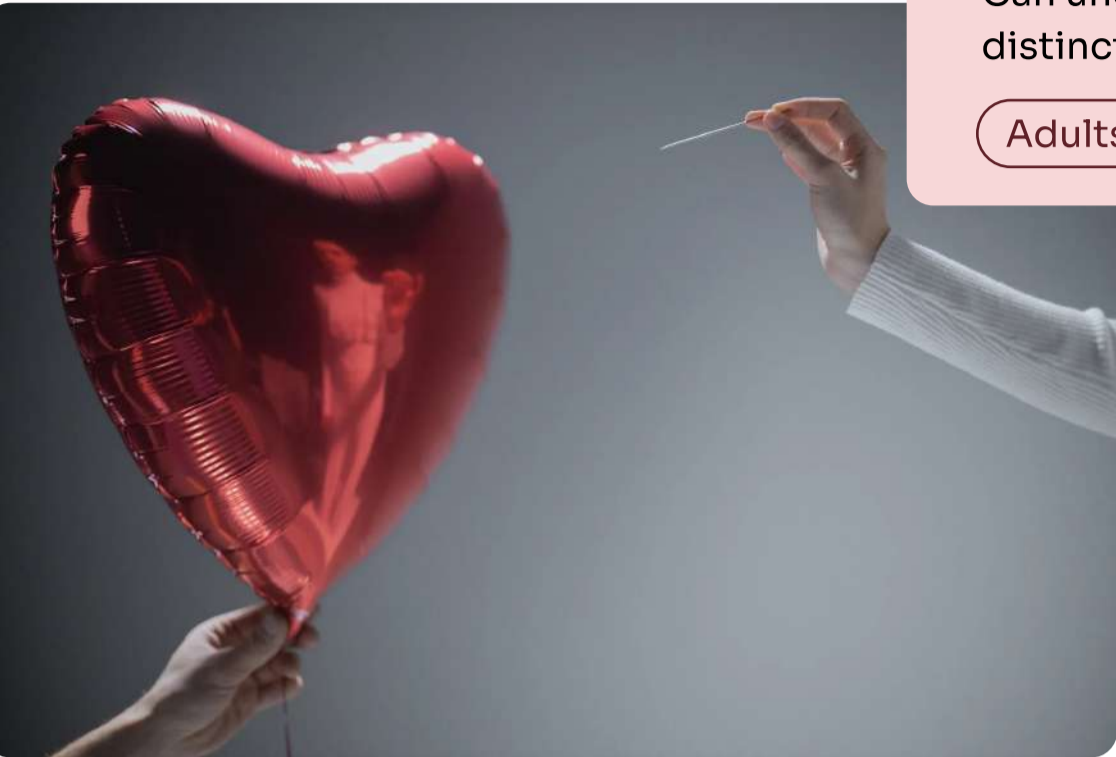
# I Hate Valentine's Day

## Skills:

Can understand a wide range of long and complex texts, appreciating subtle distinctions of style and implicit as well as explicit meaning.

Adults

Individual



**1** Why would someone hate Valentine's Day? Have you ever had a bad experience on Valentine's Day?

**2** Read this extract from an online article about Valentine's Day and answer the questions.

## Dear Diary: I hate Valentine's Day, and you should too

February 14 is inescapable every year, but it seems even harder to avoid when you're single. Every shop has its own Valentine's Day-themed section in the run-up to the dreaded day. There are cards, flowers, teddy bears, heart-shaped chocolates, sexy underwear embroidered with little kisses — you name it, at every turn there is another reminder of love. There is no better day to feel as painfully alone as this annual holiday.

Maybe I am so cynical because I don't have a valentine. Maybe if I felt loved in a romantic way then I would appreciate the fourteenth of February and eagerly await its arrival every year. Being alone on Valentine's Day goes hand in hand with the feeling of being unlovable. It's a stark reminder that you are painfully single.

Being single is automatically considered to be a bad thing in our society — well, at least that's how it has appeared to me. Those around me in relationships often remark that they don't envy me when it comes to my numerous failed dating stages, being ghosted at least twice a week, the treacherous realm of online dating and all of the other fun stuff that goes along with the single life. Without meaning any harm, people are quick to ask about my love life. "Are you seeing anyone, Ria?" No. "Any nice boys?" No. I smile and shake my head while inside I scream and scream and scream.

Why is this? What makes one day a year so hateful? Chatting with a friend, we both agreed that it is naturally embarrassing to be perceived as not being in a relationship; even if we don't believe this ourselves, it is how we are taught to view being single. With the dreaded fourteenth finally upon us, we need to make sure that we are so distracted that we don't even have the time to remember that it's Valentine's Day.

Not only is Valentine's Day a somewhat unenjoyable day for singles, but it also places unrealistic pressure on couples to pull out all the stops in order to make each other feel loved. If you don't receive a present or if your significant other doesn't book a romantic restaurant the natural response is to feel annoyed or upset. It's been instilled in us that if Valentine's Day isn't celebrated in extravagant ways then we are not loved enough. While it is lovely to receive gifts — despite my cynicism — it shouldn't take a card or flowers to remind us that we are loved, and it shouldn't be through giving gifts that we express our love. If you are single and don't receive a gift that morning your mood is automatically brought down, as if buying something is a direct measure of love. It becomes a game of comparison; flicking through social media and seeing what others have received can make you feel short-changed. Just because your boyfriend didn't get you an engraved necklace doesn't mean he doesn't love you.

The true meaning of Valentine's Day has been lost beneath the teddies and heart-shaped memorabilia.

I, for one, am anti-Valentine's Day, and you should be too.

**What are the reasons behind the author's hate for Valentine's Day?**

**In what ways does Valentine's Day place unrealistic pressure on couples?**

### 3

**In the text above, find words and phrases that match the following definitions:**

- a. deeply ingrained or taught through repetition or influence **(para. 5)**
- b. a clear and harsh reminder of something unpleasant or difficult **(para. 2)**
- c. to make every possible effort or use all available resources in order to achieve something **(para. 5)**
- d. a dangerous and unpredictable environment or situation **(para. 3)**
- e. to feel disappointed or cheated due to not receiving what was expected or deserved **(para. 5)**
- f. quickly browsing or looking through something, usually a book or magazine **(para. 5)**
- g. a term used to refer to one's romantic partner, typically in a serious relationship **(para. 5)**
- h. objects or items that hold sentimental value or serve as reminders of past events or experiences **(para. 6)**
- i. being suddenly ignored or cut off by someone without explanation or warning **(para. 3)**

### 4

**Now use these words and phrases to fill in the gaps in the following sentences. Note how they can be used in contexts other than the topic of the lesson.**

- 1. The abandoned building served as \_\_\_\_\_(1) of the town's former glory.
- 2. She felt hurt and confused after \_\_\_\_\_(2) by her supposed friend.
- 3. Navigating the corporate world can feel like venturing into a \_\_\_\_\_(3).
- 4. The team decided \_\_\_\_\_(4) in order to secure the championship title.
- 5. I can always count on my \_\_\_\_\_(5) to support me through tough times.
- 6. My parents \_\_\_\_\_(6) the importance of education and hard work in me from a young age.
- 7. Emily spent hours \_\_\_\_\_(7) old photo albums, reminiscing about happy memories.
- 8. After working overtime for weeks without proper compensation, I felt \_\_\_\_\_(8).
- 9. The museum displayed a collection of historical \_\_\_\_\_(9) from different time periods.

# Correct answers

**1**

Created in “Create Discussion Questions” tool.

**2**

Created in the “Create Open Questions” tool.

1. The author dislikes Valentine's Day because it highlights feelings of loneliness and the societal stigma of being single. The day also pressures couples to make grand gestures and equates love with material gifts, leading to unrealistic expectations and commercialisation of affection. This distortion of love's true meaning fuels the author's negative view of the holiday.

2. Valentine's Day places unrealistic pressure on couples by creating expectations of extravagant celebrations and gifts as measures of love.

**3**

Created in “Word-Definition Matching” tool.

- a. instilled
- b. a stark reminder
- c. to pull out all the stops
- d. treacherous realm
- e. feel short-changed
- f. flicking through
- g. significant other
- h. memorabilia
- i. being ghosted

**4**

Created in “Create Sentences” tool + “Fill in the Gap” tool.

- 1. a stark reminder
- 2. being ghosted
- 3. treacherous realm
- 4. to pull out all the stops
- 5. significant other
- 6. instilled
- 7. flicking through
- 8. short-changed
- 9. memorabilia

