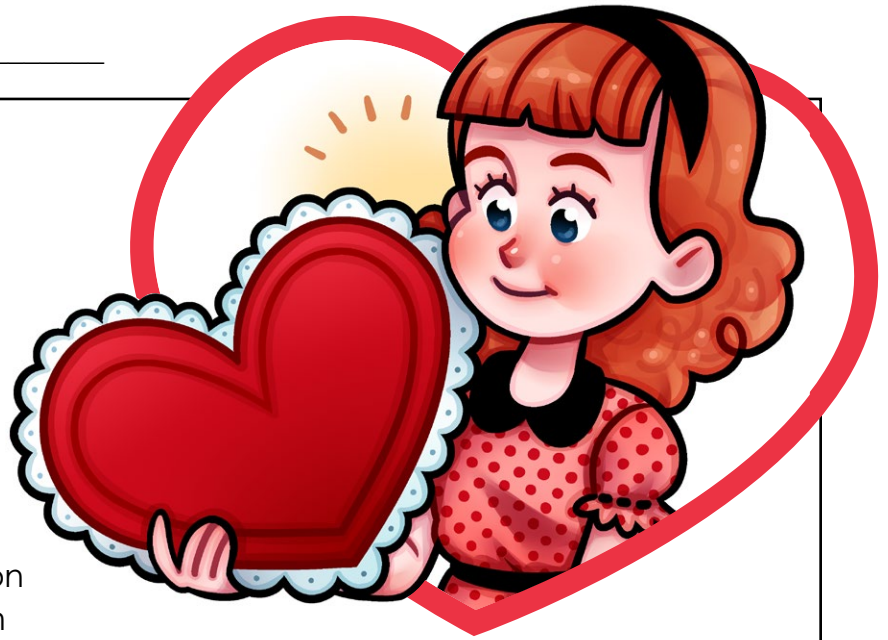


Name: _____

Valentine's Tradition

By Kelly Hashway



Amerie stared at the giant cardboard heart at the front of the classroom. Mr. Mickelson had a new project in mind, and from the looks of it, it had to do with Valentine's Day.

"Can someone tell me what this heart is?" Mr. Mickelson asked.

Amerie raised her hand. "Is it a valentine?"

"Very good." Mr. Mickelson tugged on one edge of the heart, and it opened up. Inside it said, 'Happy Valentine's Day!' "Does anyone know how the tradition of giving Valentine's began?"

No one answered. Amerie had never thought about it before, but she'd been giving valentines for as long as she could remember.

"In 1847, a woman named Esther Howland began a business venture making valentines. The tradition caught on and has been continued ever since."

"A woman started the tradition?" Jason asked from the back of the room.

"That's right," Mr. Mickelson said. "Were you thinking it was someone named Valentine?"

Most of the class nodded.

"Well," Mr. Mickelson continued, "the holiday actually began in other countries before coming to America. Valentine's Day was a day to celebrate St. Valentine, a symbol for love. At that time, most people in the United States had never heard of Valentine's Day. Esther Howland received a valentine card from one of her father's business partners in England. She loved the idea, and at nineteen years old, she began a business here in the United States. She called her company, 'The New England Valentine Company.' People in America loved the idea of sending valentines to loved ones, so the idea caught on."

"That's really cool, Mr. Mickelson, but why are you telling us this?" Amerie asked.

Mr. Mickelson's eyes lit up. "Because for your next class project, you'll be coming up with a new Valentine's Day tradition. You'll have to think of something that will show the spirit of the holiday in a creative way."

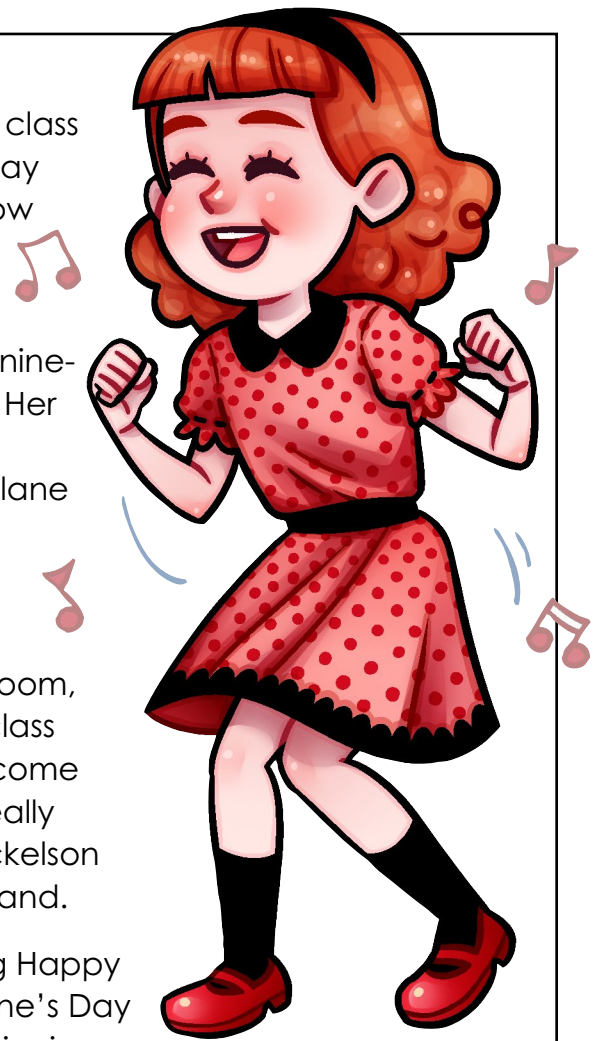
Amerie's mind was already working. If Esther Howland could create the valentine card business at nineteen, Amerie could think of something for this project. Her classmates were volunteering ideas, everything from cupcakes with messages written in icing to paper airplane hearts. But Amerie wanted something different. Something that could really catch on.

She thought about it all night and on the way to school the next morning. When she entered the classroom, Mr. Mickelson was writing ideas on the board for the class to vote on. Amerie wasn't sure about the idea she'd come up with. It couldn't be mailed, or wrapped, or even really given, and it didn't cost any money. But when Mr. Mickelson announced the last call for ideas, Amerie raised her hand.

"What about a Valentine's Day song? People sing Happy Birthday and go caroling at Christmas. What if Valentine's Day had a song, too?" Just as she was feeling silly for mentioning the idea, her classmates began shouting, "Yeah!"

Mr. Mickelson nodded. "I think it's unanimous. We have a song to write."

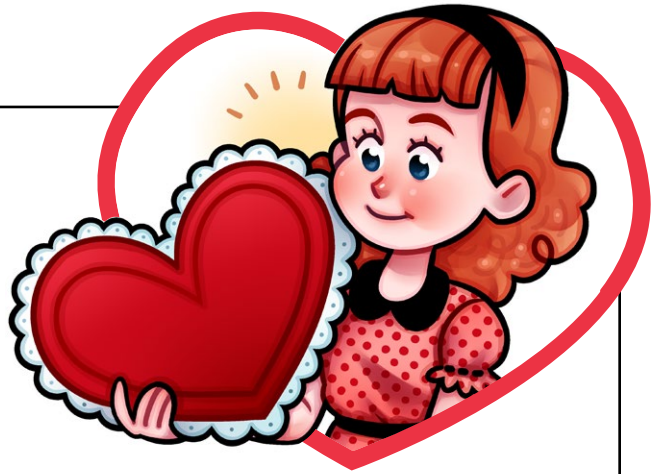
Amerie smiled. Maybe she hadn't started her own business, but she'd come up with a really fun project that just might become a tradition in her school.



Name: _____

Valentine's Tradition

By Kelly Hashway



1. Esther Howland...
 - a. was the first person to send Valentines to loved ones
 - b. received many Valentines from England
 - c. started a company that made Valentine cards
 - d. wrote a song about Valentine's Day
2. Before he assigned a Valentine's Day class project, Mr. Mickelson...
 - a. taught his students about the history of St. Valentine
 - b. taught his student why Valentine's Day is an important holiday
 - c. taught his students how to make a Valentine card
 - d. taught his students how the tradition of sending Valentine cards began
3. When Amerie first mentioned her idea to write a song, how did she feel? (*circle one*)

proud

embarrassed

excited

disappointed

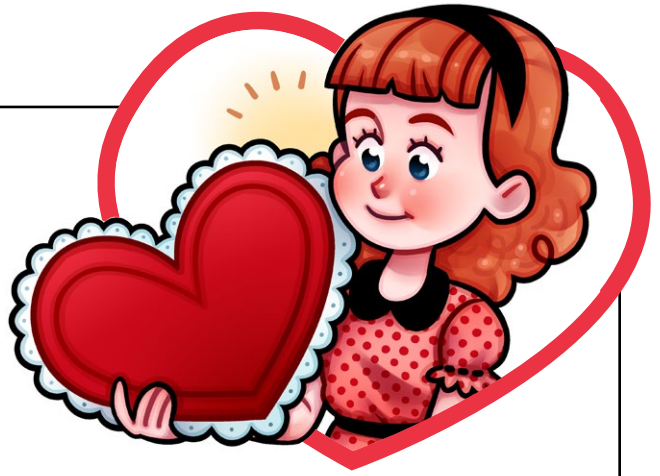
4. Did Amerie's classmates like her idea? How do you know?

5. People have been sending Valentines in America for about...
 - a. 75 years
 - b. 100 years
 - c. 175 years
 - d. 275 years
6. This story probably takes place in....
 - a. early-January
 - b. mid-February
 - c. late-February
 - d. early-March

Name: _____

Valentine's Tradition

By Kelly Hashway



Match each vocabulary word from the reading passage with the correct definition.

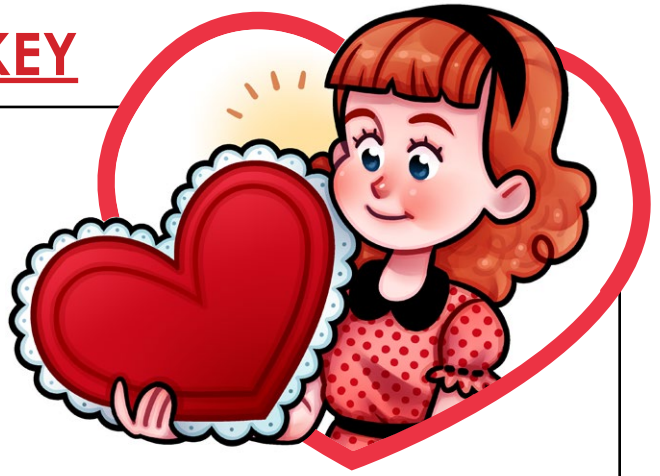
- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. cardboard | a. small cakes |
| _____ 2. tugged | b. island country in Europe |
| _____ 3. business venture | c. everyone agreeing |
| _____ 4. business partners | d. thick type of paper used to make boxes |
| _____ 5. unanimous | e. business started in hopes of earning money |
| _____ 6. cupcakes | f. two people who run a business together |
| _____ 7. tradition | g. pulled |
| _____ 8. England | h. a custom that continues on a regular basis |

Now try this: Write a sentence using each of the vocabulary words above.

ANSWER KEY

Valentine's Tradition

By Kelly Hashway



1. Esther Howland...
 - a. was the first person to send Valentines to loved ones
 - b. received many Valentines from England
 - c. started a company that made Valentine cards**
 - d. wrote a song about Valentine's Day
2. Before he assigned a Valentine's Day class project, Mr. Mickelson...
 - a. taught his students about the history of St. Valentine
 - b. taught his student why Valentine's Day is an important holiday
 - c. taught his students how to make a Valentine card
 - d. taught his students how the tradition of sending Valentine cards began**
3. When Amerie first mentioned her idea to write a song, how did she feel? (*circle one*)

proud

embarrassed

excited

disappointed

4. Did Amerie's classmates like her idea? How do you know?

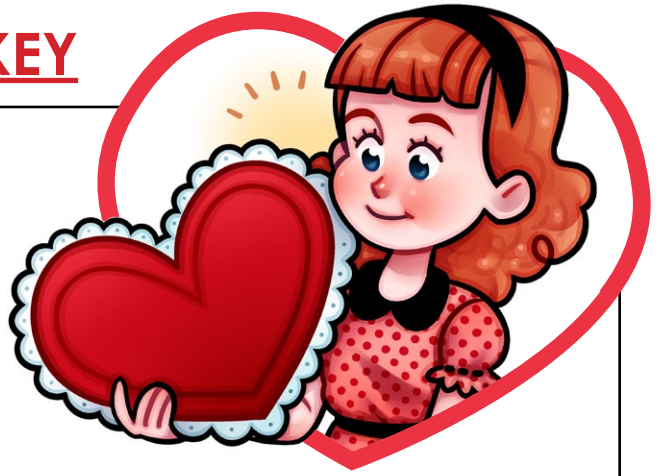
Yes they did like her idea because the class unanimously voted for it.

5. People have been sending Valentines in America for about...
 - a. 75 years
 - b. 100 years
 - c. 175 years**
 - d. 275 years
6. This story probably takes place in....
 - a. early-January
 - b. mid-February**
 - c. late-February
 - d. early-March

ANSWER KEY

Valentine's Tradition

By Kelly Hashway



Match each vocabulary word from the reading passage with the correct definition.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <u>d</u> 1. cardboard | a. small cakes |
| <u>g</u> 2. tugged | b. island country in Europe |
| <u>e</u> 3. business venture | c. everyone agreeing |
| <u>f</u> 4. business partners | d. thick type of paper used to make boxes |
| <u>c</u> 5. unanimous | e. business started in hopes of earning money |
| <u>a</u> 6. cupcakes | f. two people who run a business together |
| <u>h</u> 7. tradition | g. pulled |
| <u>b</u> 8. England | h. a custom that continues on a regular basis |

Now try this: Write a sentence using each of the vocabulary words above.