**St. Valentine's Day**

Ask students: What do you think Valentine’s Day means? Where do you think this holiday originated from, and why? Why do you think this holiday is celebrated? Do you know of other countries that celebrate Valentine’s Day?

Begin lesson by showing the Valentine’s Day video.

Lecture:

The genesis of St. Valentine’s Day is not known. What we do know however is the several different martyrs named Saint Valentine mentioned in legends, including the Roman priest named Valentine and was imprisoned because of his Christian beliefs. At that time, Roman emperors commanded that people believe in Roman gods. The story says that Valentine was put to death on February 14 and signed his farewell note "From Your Valentine."

The holiday that is now celebrated as St. Valentine's Day may be traced back to the Roman feast of Lupercalia. There were also pagan love festivals where it was customary to randomly choose a mate on February 14. And it was also believed that birds mated each spring on that same day.

Start PowerPoint and read through and add detail.

Slide 1: Title

Slide 2: Origins

There are varying opinions as to the origin of Valentine's Day. Some experts state that it originated from St. Valentine, a Roman who was martyred for refusing to give up Christianity. He died on February 14, 269 A.D., the same day that had been devoted to love lotteries. Legend also says that St. Valentine left a farewell note for the jailer's daughter, who had become his friend, and signed it "From Your Valentine". Other aspects of the story say that Saint Valentine served as a priest at the temple during the reign of Emperor Claudius. Claudius then had Valentine jailed for defying him. In 496 A.D. Pope Gelasius set aside February 14 to honor St. Valentine.

Slide 3:

**For this was sent on Seynt Valentyne's day  
Whan every foul cometh ther to choose his mate.– Chaucer, "Parliament of Foules"**

Cupid with his bow and arrows is a known symbol of Valentine’s Day and today people all over the world exchange loving or amusing cards or messages and call them **"valentines"** on February 14. In the United States in the 1840s, **Esther Howland** sent the first commercial valentines.

Slide 4: Valentine’s Day Massacre

The St. Valentine's Day Massacre, the **most spectacular gangland slaying in mob history, was actually somewhat of a failure**. Capone arranged for Chicago mobster “Bugs” Moran and his North Side Gang to be rid of on February 14, 1929. Jack McGun or “Machine Gun” was who proposed a plan. McGun proposed that a bootlegger loyal to Capone would draw Moran and his gang to a warehouse under the pretense that they would be getting whiskey smuggled for a price much under any they could dream of. The delivery was set for a certain time, place, and day. That day was Valentine's Day. Capone arranged to distance himself from the assassinations by spending time at home while the monstrous act was committed. The gang members thought there was cops, and proceeded to line up against the wall with the thought of being handcuffed. Instead, they were put down with machine guns by the hit men. A total of seven men died in the hit. Capone was made a celebrity, yet no one was pegged for these brutal murders.

Slide 5:

History:

Valentine's Day began during the Roman Empire where February 14th was a holiday to honor Juno, the Queen of the Roman Gods and Goddesses. The Romans also knew her as the Goddess of women and marriage.

The following day, February 15th, began the Feast of Lupercalia.

What makes Valentine’s Day interesting for the time of the Roman Empire is that at the time the lives of males and females were completely separate. The custom was to draw a name on the 14th of February, the eve of Lupercalia where the men would draw a woman’s name. The name chosen would be the person who he would partner for the rest of the festival, and sometimes the pairing lasted up to a year, sometimes even fall in love and lead to marriage.

Emperor Claudius II Rome was involved in many bloody and unpopular campaigns. So much so that he was also known as Claudius the Cruel. Soldiers did not want to join his armies or military, and he believed that it was because they did not want to leave their wives r families. Claudius in turn decided to cancel all marriages and engagements in Rome.

Saint Valentine was a priest at Rome in the days of Claudius II. Saint Marius and Saint Valentine helped by secretly marrying couples. When Saint Valentine was found out, he was apprehended and dragged before the Prefect of Rome, who condemned him to be beaten to death with clubs and to have his head cut off. He suffered this death on the 14th day of February, about the year 270.

As we know that the Lupercalia Feast takes place the day after, the pastors appear to have chosen Saint Valentine's Day for the celebration of this new feast. So it seems that the custom of young men choosing maidens for valentines, or saints as patrons for the coming year arose in this way.

Sources:

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/valentines-day/us-history/4735.html>

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/valentines-day/us-history/4735.html#ixzz1EA8Ffocd>

“Saint Valentine's Day - February 14th." *Picture Frames UK, Picture Framing by Professional Picture Framers*. Web. 21 Feb. 2011. <http://www.pictureframes.co.uk/pages/saint\_valentine.htm>.

<http://www.pictureframes.co.uk/pages/saint_valentine.htm>

Benchmarks:

[SS.912.A.1.5: Evaluate the validity, reliability, bias, and authenticity of current events and Internet resources.](javascript:__doPostBack('ctl00$ContentPlaceHolder1$FlBrowseTab$StandUc1$BenchmarkGrid$ctl00$ctl12$HyperLink2','')) 