

## For People Who Care for Young Children

### A SPECIAL VALENTINE'S STORY

Happy Valentine's Day! Share this special story by Mary Beth Spann Minucci with your group. "The Valuable Valentine" is a story taken from *Alpha Stories* (First Teacher Press).

Once upon a time, there were two children named Victor and Vivian who were best friends. Victor and Vivian enjoyed giving each other cards and gifts, so, when Valentine's Day came, they were excited to make paper valentines for each other, and they each planned their valentines in secret.

Victor wanted his valentine for Vivian to be special. He carefully cut out a beautiful card and, with his violet crayon, drew onto it a vase of violets. He decorated the edges with violet lace, and tried to think of something to print to her inside. All he could think of was this poem:

*Roses are red  
 Violets are blue  
 I ran out of tape  
 So I had to use glue!*

The ugly poem didn't sound like it belonged inside of a valentine, but at least the card looked pretty.

Vivian also wanted her valentine for Victor to be special. She carefully cut out a card, but it looked very wiggly. Then, she tried to decorate it with her violet crayon, but it just looked like scribble-scrabble. When she was done, she thought of a poem to print inside:

*Roses are red  
 Violets are blue  
 There is no friend more special  
 Than Y-O-U !!*

The ugly card didn't look like it belonged on the outside of the poem, but at least the card sounded pretty!

On Valentine's Day, the two friends held their surprise valentines behind their backs. "Happy Valentine's Day!" they said together and out came their cards.

*"Your poem sounds prettier than my poem,"* said Victor.

*"And, your card is prettier than my card,"* said Vivian.

*"Let's put the best part of our cards together!"* they said at once.

And so, to make the nicest valentine ever, they used the outside of Victor's card and the inside of Vivian's card. Of course, now that there's only one card, they have to share it between them; but neither Victor nor Vivian has ever minded sharing even one little bit.

# HEART-FELT LEARNING

Start early in February to prepare your group for Valentine's Day on the 14th. Love and friendship can be expressed in many ways through projects. Do activities together or set up learning centers. Your children will "love" you for the added holiday fun and they'll be learning skills at the same time.



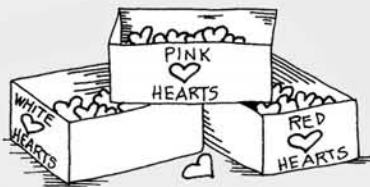
## MOVING THE VALENTINE

Teach children about directions as they play this game. Put a decorated valentine box on the table. Challenge children to move a valentine card in relationship to the box according to directions that you give. Examples are: "Move the card... under, behind, in front of, to the left side, to the right side of... the box."



## MATH— SORTING VALENTINES

Place several shoe boxes on a table. Fill them with construction paper hearts that you have cut in different sizes and colors. Invite children to sort the hearts according to size, color or both.



## BE MY VALENTINE— CREATIVE MOVEMENT

Divide players into two equal groups. Form two circles with one circle inside the other. Recite this verse and do the actions.

1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8

(circles rotate in opposite directions)

*Who will be my Valentine mate?*

*Please stop and stand in place.* (circles stop)

*Turn around, look me in the face.*

(inside players turn and face outside players)

*Let's clap our hands and slap our knees.*

(clap hands, slap knees)

*Be my Valentine, would you please?*

(give partner a hug)

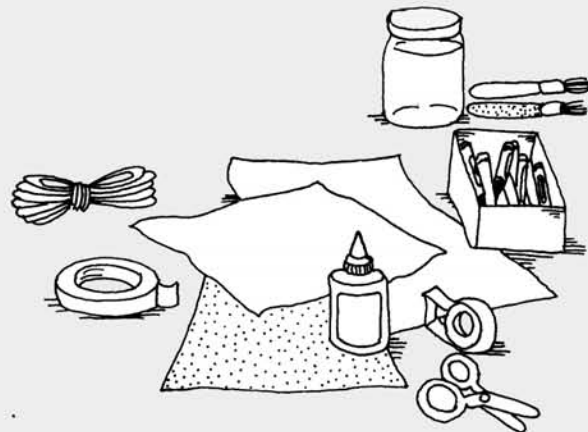


## LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

On Valentine's Day, we send cards, gifts, and flowers to family and friends. Sharing, helping, saying kind words, doing kind deeds, and being considerate of one another can also express love. Gather together and talk about friends.

Here are a few questions to ask.

- ◆ What is a friend?
- ◆ How do you become a friend to someone?
- ◆ How do you show that you love someone?



## LOVE BUG— ART

Paint or cover an empty toilet tube with pink paper to make the body of the bug. Cut two hearts from construction paper. Attach these with tape or glue on either side of the body to be the wings. Encourage children to draw a face on the top of the tube. Pipe Cleaners make great antennae.

Write a cute message on the wings such as "Valentine, you make my heart flutter."



# Valentine's Day CARD COOKIES

[60 Minutes] *These cookies make a tasty greeting.*

*What fun you and your children will have making them together!*

*You'll Need:* 1/3 cup (5 1/3 Tbsp.) butter or margarine ♦ 1/4 cup sugar ♦ 2 eggs ♦ 2/3 cup honey  
♦ 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract ♦ 2 3/4 cups flour ♦ 1 tsp. baking soda ♦ water ♦ food coloring ♦ measuring cups  
♦ measuring spoons ♦ rolling pin ♦ small brushes or Q-tips ♦ knife or pizza cutter ♦ mixer ♦ cookie sheet

*What to Do:*

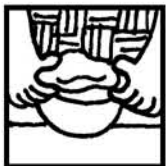


1.

Help children beat butter and sugar together in a large bowl until fluffy.

2.

Let them add one egg, honey, and vanilla and beat well.



3.

Help them combine flour and baking soda and add to butter/honey mixture. Again beat well.

4.

Cover the bowl. Chill 1 hour.



5.

Show children how to roll the dough until it is about 1/4-inch thickness on a floured surface.

6.

Encourage them to use a plastic knife or pizza cutter to cut dough into rectangles approximately 5 X 7 inches. Place cookies on greased cookie sheets.

7.★

Invite children to write and draw messages on unbaked cookies using Egg Paint and thin brushes.



8.

Bake at 350° F for 8-10 minutes.

CACFP credit bread/alternate for snack (check your state's guidelines)

## ★ EGG PAINT

Let them beat one organic egg yolk and 1/4 tsp. water together. Divide yolk mixture into 3-4 small dishes. Add 3 drops of different food colors into each bowl. Mix with brushes.



Taken from  
*First Teacher Magazine*  
(Idea by Kathy Faggella)

## BOOK CORNER:

IN THE

- 📖 *The Day It Rained Hearts* by Felicia Bond (Laura Geringer)
- 📖 *The Night Before Valentine's Day* by Natasha Wing (Grosset & Dunlap)
- 📖 *Happy Valentine's Day, Delores* by Barbara Samuels (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)
- 📖 *What Is Valentine's Day?* By Harriet Ziefert (Sterling)
- 📖 *Corduroy's Valentine's Day* (Board Book) by Lisa McCue (Viking Juvenile)

## AFTER-SCHOOLER IDEA: I Have a "Cool" Valentine Just for You

Nothing says "Happy Valentine's Day" with quite as much spirit as a homemade card. In a world of cell phones and e-mail, there's something reassuringly special about a greeting card you can actually hold in your hand—and display in your favorite place. Give children construction paper and lots of decorating materials. Here are a few ideas to make your cards different and "cool":

*"You light up my life!"*

Use an outline of a light bulb.

*"You're priceless!"*

Use a For Sale column from the newspaper.

*"For Mom, my need-le never ends."*

Enclose a packet of sewing needles inside the card.

*"Dad's an old smoothie—never rough on me."*

Use sandpaper and satin.

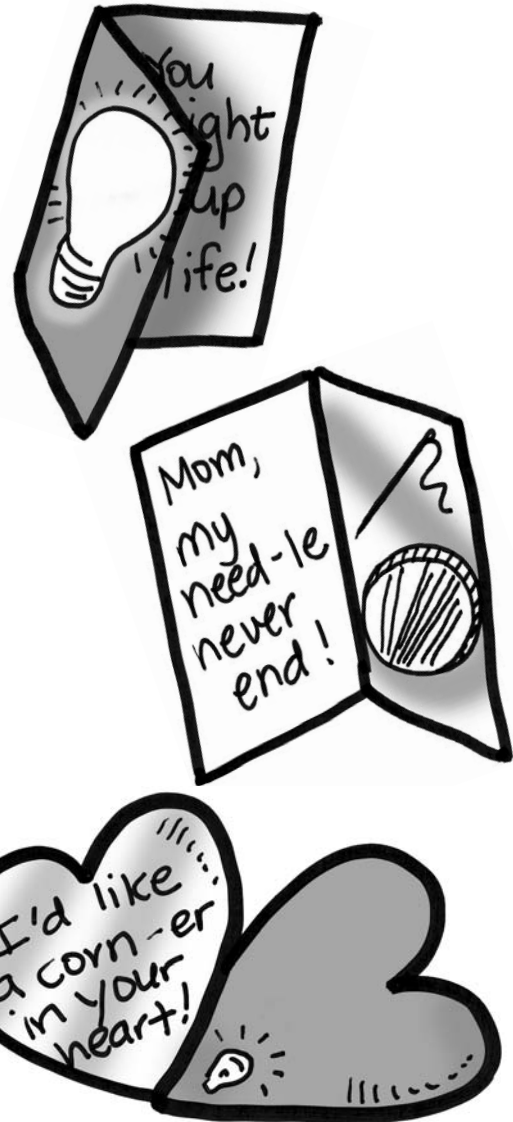
*"I'd like a corn-ner in your heart."*

Glue a dried corn kernel in the corner of a heart card

*"Where have you 'bean' all my life?"*

Glue on a dried bean.

Together, talk about the word usage and meaning of each of these sayings. Have fun making up new ones.



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