



Ideas for Valentine's Day



A huge 'Thank you' to all the teachers who have shared their wonderful ideas over the years!

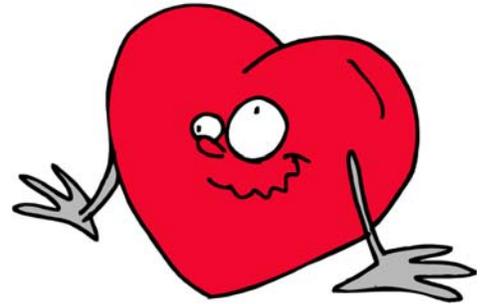
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To start things out.....

February is heart month. Learn about the heart, and exercise and eat to have a healthy heart. For a party on the day, have a Friendship party and celebrate the wonderful friends in your classroom. Then eat - healthy snacks for our hearts, of course! Have low fat dips and veggies of all sorts, yogurt, etc., for your Valentine party. Do exercises and aerobics, too, and learn to skip as part of the February celebrations."



The Wrinkled Heart

This has been often repeated, but it is one of my favourite activities. Perhaps there is someone who hasn't heard it before!

"With the class seated on the floor, start talking about the difference in the things we say that make people feel good or that hurt them. While talking, cut a big heart out of red construction paper. After it is cut out, hold it up and tell the children that each one of us starts out with a heart that is as pretty as this one. Have the children begin sharing things a person might say that might be hurtful to someone. With each response, fold the heart (in random ways - so it gets another fold in it for each 'hurtful' sentence). Eventually the heart is crumpled in your hands. Tell the class that each time they say something hurtful to someone, they are putting a little wrinkle in that person's heart. Talk about how someone's heart might begin to look like this crumpled heart if people continue to say mean things to them.

"Then have the children begin to tell things that they might say to someone to make that person feel good. With each response, unfold one of the creases in the heart. Eventually you will have pressed out all of the 'hurts'....except, of course, for the fact that the wrinkles can still be seen, even though the heart is now all unfolded. Talk about how we each have those wrinkles in our hearts from things that people have said to us, and that the wrinkles last forever. Stress that we want to be careful with what we say so as to not add wrinkles to anyone's heart.

"We put that heart up in a high corner of the bulletin board and leave it in plain view all year. Frequently someone will mention it... that their heart is wrinkled like that one, etc. It serves as a great reminder all year long."

Valentine Art

- Hearts, Hearts, Hearts!

How to cut a Valentine

Some children see the half-shape and how to draw and cut out the shape of a heart, and others have a big problem with this! To help those who have troubles, show them how to cut a heart. Begin by folding paper bigger than the child's hand. Have them place the fold into the non-dominant hand with the fold in the crease between the thumb and the fingers. Extend the thumb. Draw around the hand from fold to fold and you have a heart shape!



Encourage them to think about the concept of folding paper and cutting it when it is folded and then finding that the two sides are the same when it is opened. You could do some different shapes and ask the children what they think the shape will be when it is opened. Talk about the fold being the middle of the design.

Show half of the heart shape. Where must the fold be? The half heart looks a bit like an ear..... Practice drawing the half heart shape on the fold of the paper. Then use scrap, newspaper or re-cycled paper to practice drawing the half hearts and cutting them. What happens if the straight line of the half heart isn't on the fold?

When the children have the concept and can cut hearts, try making long skinny ones and short fat ones. Draw the line before cutting.

"I spend a few days practicing cutting hearts - some of my Kindergarten children can't seem to visualize that they are folding the centre of the heart - and either end up with two pieces or are astonished when the heart appears! I want them to be able to cut hearts in a variety of sizes and shapes."

Huge red hearts!

Fingerpaint large papers with red or pink paint. When they are dry, fold them in half, and draw the half heart shape and cut out huge attractive hearts - and then smaller ones from the scraps. These look wonderful around your classroom! They can be decorated or layered to add interest.

Make tracers:

Kindergarten kids can have problems cutting perfect hearts, but they do love to trace them. Cut hearts from tag (you can use old file folders, too). Use the positive (the shape) and the negative (the hole) pieces for tracing.

Stamp pad fingers:

Place the hole made from a cut stencil on a sheet of paper. Press finger onto the stamp pad and then the coloured finger onto the paper which shows through the hole. Let the print overlap onto the stencil around the hole. Fill the entire shape with fingerprints. Remove the stencil and look at the design left behind.

Crayon stencil pattern:

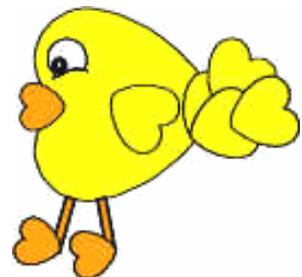
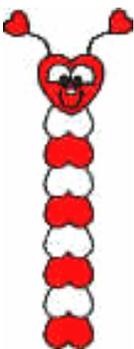
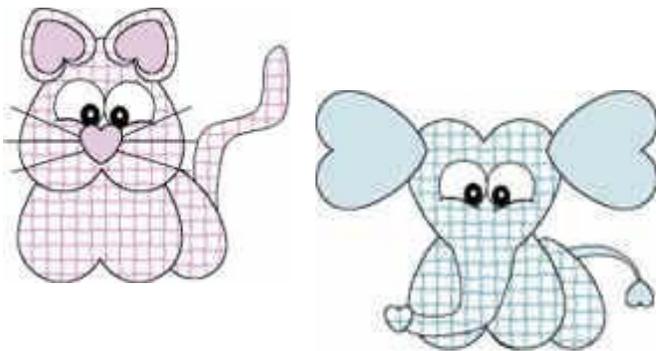
Place a stencil cut from the old file folder on a sheet of paper (or use the hole). Trace around it with crayon. Now move the stencil slightly, overlapping the stencil on the design just traced. Trace the new location of the stencil. Use red crayon. Keep moving the stencil and tracing it until the designs look like they have moved across the paper or in a pattern.

Valentine critters

"We only use white, pink, and red paper and make hearts of all sizes and the kids make 'creatures' or critters. A big heart becomes the body, smaller heart the head, smaller still hearts for the ears, eyes, etc. They even make the tails out of lots of little hearts or one long heart or one 'fluffy' heart, for the bunny. I usually don't have a sample made, but do make all sorts of sized hearts as well as 'cloud-shaped' hearts, etc. to show for examples. Kids have fun with this one."

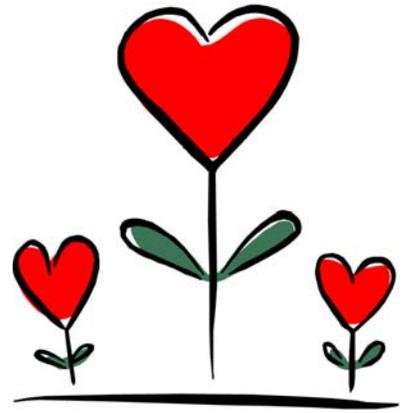
<http://www.kidsdomain.com/craft/animals.html>

Here is a cat, a mouse, a butterfly and an elephant.



More hearts

"I put up the words, 'Plant Some Love', and then we make plant pictures. I give the kids a brown or tan piece of paper for them to make a vase or flower pot (4 1/2 in. by 6 in.). They put this on a 9 x 12 piece of paper (whatever colour) and we use green yarn for some stems, from 3 to 6 stems. Then they cut out pink or red hearts from 2 x 2 inch paper. I have patterns for this, but I show them how to make their own hearts, too. They put these as the flowers. Then I give them a candy conversation heart to glue on as the centre for each flower. We eat some, too! You have to let the candies set for the glue to dry, but they stay on. Sometimes I cut around the plant pictures instead of leaving them a 9 x 12 piece since some are small, and to get them all to fit on the bulletin board."



"Using red, pink or white construction paper and a tracing template, cut out a lot of hearts that are the same size. Fold a heart in half vertically. Place one folded heart on the table. Spread glue on the top surface. Fold a second heart in half, and place it on top of one side of the first heart, matching the centre lines. Fold a third heart in half, and glue it on top of the second heart, again matching the centre lines. Repeat this until you have a pile of 4 folded hearts. Open the pile, and place yarn in the centre, and then glue the bottom of the first heart to the top of the fourth heart.

Glue many other heart triplets to the string. You may have to make a knot under each heart to keep it from sliding down the string (if the string is too thin or if you don't use enough glue). You now have a great decoration for Valentine's Day!"

"Make a strawberry out of one red heart, add a paper green top and black marker specks. Label, 'For a berry nice valentine!'"

"Paint with plain water on hearts cut from art tissue in ANY colours on white paper, , and then peel them off again. The tissue will leave a blurred design when the pieces are lifted. You can also use pieces of crepe paper, as crepe paper is filled with colour, too."



"Cut out pink, red and white tissue hearts. Place on clear plastic wrap and paint tissue hearts with liquid starch or thinned Elmer's glue. Encourage kids to let the hearts overlap to make new colours. Let them cut other shapes and designs too. They dry clear and crisp. Paint tissue hearts and designs onto glass jars, wood scraps, Styrofoam grocery trays, glass in empty picture frames, milk jugs, paper or matte board, waxed paper, etc."

"Heart People: Provide each student with a large heart shape to cut out, as well as one medium heart, and four small hearts. The large heart is the body, the medium heart the head, and the small hearts are the hands and feet. Glue the head onto the back of the large heart with the point side down. Add facial features with markers or crayons, and/or wiggly eyes."

Sparkling Sugar Valentine's Day Heart

Draw a large heart on white construction paper and paint the heart with red paint. Before the paint is totally dry, sprinkle some sugar and glitter over the paint.

Valentine's Day Heart Mobile

Cut a variety of different sized hearts out of red, pink, and white construction paper. Using a single-hole paper punch, punch a hole in each heart and string thin red or pink ribbon through the hole. Hang the hearts from a clothes hanger. The hearts can have pictures drawn on them or poems written on them. The hearts could also be covered with glitter. Just use a thin layer of glue on the heart and sprinkle different colours of glitter on them. Tie on a big red bow and hang it from a prominent place. The clothes hanger could be decorated before being used as the base for the mobile by either spray painting it red or wrapping it with crepe paper.

Cupid's Arrow

"I wanted to share a quick and easy Valentine craft that we made. We have Grade 4 book buddies for our little ones and I wanted to make cards for them to go with a candy treat. We had the kids trace and cut out a paper heart (about 5 inches wide). Then I cut two small slits in each heart. The kids wrote **Happy Valentines Day, Love _____**. Then they put a long popsicle stick through the two slits. We glued a feather to one end and a small (1 1/2 inch) heart to the other end so the bottom of the little heart was the tip of Cupid's arrow. It was so cute, the arrow went right through the heart. The Grade 4's loved the candy and my kids felt like they did something for these special friends. It was a lot of fun."



Make a "Love Mouse"

Cut out a valentine and then cut it in half along the fold line. The folded edge of a heart is the bottom of your animal. The pointed end of the heart is your mouse's nose. Take little hearts for the ears. Use wiggly eyes and add yarn for a tail.

Valentine Quilts

This can be kept up through February.

1. Give each student a 12" x 12" (30 cm. x 30 cm.) square of white construction paper.
2. Cut a 6" x 6" (15 cm. x 15 cm.) square of red paper for each child.
3. Cut a 6" x 6" square of blue paper for each child.
4. Glue the red square onto white square in the upper right corner of white paper.
5. Glue the blue square onto lower left corner of white paper.
6. Now you have two white squares and two coloured squares on your quilt.
7. Cut a snowflake and glue to blue square.
8. Cut a heart and glue to red square.
9. In one white square demonstrate how to make a plaid design using 3 or 4 colours of student's choice.
10. In the other white square, write your initials, or draw a picture of your choice.
11. Make stitch marks with crayon around each square.
12. Put together on a wall for a lovely winter quilt.

A Valentine Tree

Paint a black or dark brown tree trunk and then place a large blob of paint at the top of the trunk. Take a straw and blow the paint out in all directions to make the branches. Cut a large pink valentine for the base of the tree, and lots of tiny red and pink hearts to put on the branches as leaves or blossoms.



Blurred Painting

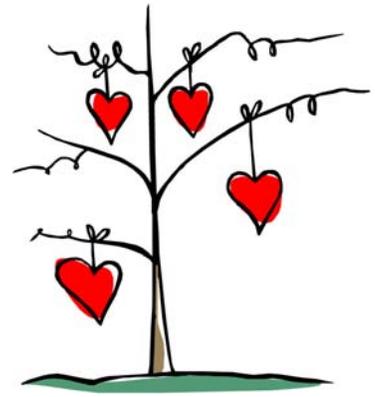
"One of my favourites is to let kids paint with watercolours any Valentine designs they like, but use REALLY LARGE white paper, and let them dampen the paper first with a wet sponge or a wet paintbrush. That way, the designs blur as they paint. When dry, they can take a permanent marker and outline some of the designs to highlight them. This makes a beautiful painting, which can be a special Valentine for someone like a Mom or Grandma or a neighbor who is housebound, etc."

"Cut out large hearts from pink or white paper or draw the hearts for the kids and have them cut them out. Cutting with pinking shears or scissors with other fancy cuts add a neat effect. Put out red, white, purple and pink paint and let the kids design their own hearts. Some just paint blobs all over, others paint a variety of hearts, others make a pattern or design, etc., etc. Then, once they are finished painting they can sprinkle glitter on the heart for a glittery look. The children can make these into valentines for someone special, too. I always demonstrate a few ideas but find the kids come up with great ones on their own. Another extension of this is to give them 8x11 sheets of white paper and let them paint on them and glitter, too. Then out of a coloured piece of construction paper cut a heart as large as you can and make the outlined remainder of the coloured paper the frame for the white sheet. Then use the large cut out heart for another activity."

A Tree of Hearts

"Fold a piece of black paper in half. Draw, then cut out, a half-tree shape with many bare branches. Open it and paste it onto a piece of pink paper. Paste red or white heart cutouts on the branches. The hearts should be cut out freehand and of various sizes.

"Or...Draw a brown bare tree with brown wax crayon on pink paper. Cut out tiny red hearts and glue on the branches, or stamp red and white hearts on the tree."



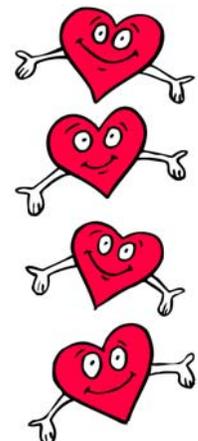
"Here's another easy and fun Valentines Day activity. Cut out large hearts from pink or white paper or draw the hearts for the kids and have them cut them out. Cutting with pinking shears adds a neat effect. Put out red, white, purple and pink paint and let the kids design their own hearts. Some just paint blobs all over, others paint a variety of hearts, others make a pattern or design, etc., etc. Then, once they are finished painting they can sprinkle glitter on the heart for glittery look. The kids can make these into valentines for someone special too. I always demo a few ideas but find the kids come up with great ones on their own. Another extension of this is to give the kids 8 x 11 sheets of white paper and let them paint on them and glitter too. Then out of a coloured piece of construction paper cut a heart as large as you can and make the outlined remainder of the coloured paper the frame for the white sheet. Then use the large cut out heart for another activity."

Make a mouse. Cut a large heart shape from construction paper. Glue a small length of yarn for a tail at the top of the heart but let it hang off the heart. Fold in half like a teardrop. Stuff with a little cotton. Glue edges of heart shut all around. Tail should be hanging out. Cut a small heart for his ears. Fold heart in half. Glue on rounded part of big heart so they form an ear on each side. Add whiskers, eyes, and a little pink nose.

Make heart rubbings. Cut out different sizes of hearts from sandpaper. Tape hearts to table and lay a sheet of white typing paper over them. Use side of crayon to lightly rub over hearts, making a pattern on paper.

Create valentine banners! Glue two (or three) pieces of 9 x 12 red paper end to end. Make red wool tassels and glue to the bottom end, and a loop to hang it at the top. Now decorate with lace and hearts.

Cut many, many small hearts from red construction paper. Cut pink crepe paper strips 1" wide. Glue the small hearts to the crepe paper strips. Hang the crepe paper strips with the hearts over your doorway, a window or from a light.



Valentines for You

Valentine's Day "Red" Carnations

Cut the ends off of three white carnations. Add warm water to a vase and place in a few drops of red food colouring. Place the carnations in the vase. Watch patiently as the red colouring seeps into the carnation.

Magic Valentine's Day Hearts

Cut out a heart from white construction papers. Write a special message to your Valentine using a white crayon on the white construction paper (be sure they press down hard on the paper when writing). Then paint the hearts red.

The special message will appear as if by magic.

Red Valentine Heart

Cut out two big, identical-sized red hearts; decorate as desired. Staple edges together, leaving an opening at the top to be stuffed with newspaper. After stuffing the heart, staple the top together completely; including a red ribbon in the middle so the heart can be hung up (in the window, against the wall, etc.).

I Love You!

To make a valentine for parents, I had the students make little books. On each page they wrote "I love you like _____." (We discussed possibilities first, and talked about things that are especially wonderful.)

We usually had to choose at least 5... the faster kids could choose more. Then they would illustrate each sentence. We would make a cover for it different ways. Sometimes I used full sheets, sometimes I used sheets cut in half. With the whole sheets, you could have them put paint on their hands, then UPSIDE DOWN on the paper (I used tag on the cover) they put their handprints on the paper with the thumbs touching and the index fingers touching so the opening between is a heart shape. On the last page of the booklet, I used a school picture or a picture of them I printed out from my digital camera, and we wrote 'I love you like...' on the top, and under the picture we wrote '...like only I can!'"

My Friend:

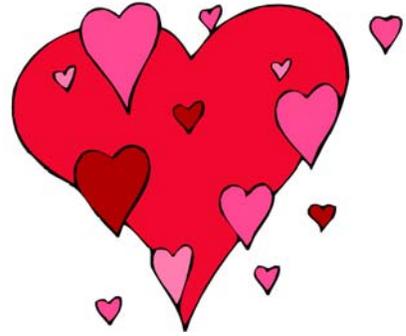
Make up a chart, with the children taking turns filling in the blanks and giving everyone a turn.

_____ is my friend because he/she is _____, said _____.
(Katie is my friend because she is kind, said Michael.)

Then take a digital photo of the two children, arms around each other and print it out as large as possible. Mount the pictures on construction paper with the 'friend' statement and a heart. Great to go home with each child on Valentine's Day!

Go to:

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/valentine/>
for lots of cards to make.



Homemade Valentine's Day Gift Wrap

Dip a heart shaped cookie cutter into a shallow dish containing red paint. Make heart designs on a sheet of white or light pink paper. Use to wrap up your Valentines Day gifts.

Classroom Decorations

Make a Valentine chain - as you would make chains at Christmas - but use red and pink in an ABAB (or other) pattern.

"Each year at this time I send home a heart shape on a 8 1/2 x 11 piece of tagboard. A note follows it asking parents to decorate the heart as a family. Children send these back to school, we hang them and they stay until the end of February. They make a neat bulletin board."

"One year the kids made pigs from hearts and put them up with Hershey kisses that I made from aluminum foil and labelled 'Hogs and Kisses'. For other bulletin board ideas, you could also do a sea of fish made from hearts or a zoo filled with animals made from hearts."

"I make a winter quilt during January and February. In January each student makes a snowflake and it is mounted on pink or red construction paper. In February we make hearts and glue them on the snowflakes - they can do one large heart or several small. Then we glue the papers on posterboard alternating the pink and red papers so it looks like a checkerboard. We hang it in the hall and it looks very attractive."

Fingerpaint large sheets with red and pink paint. When they are dry cut huge hearts out, then smaller ones with the scraps until all the paper has been cut into hearts. Mount these in the hall - the largest first and then staple up the next largest randomly on top until all the hearts are up. Or..... use these to decorate your classroom or hall, and as background for writing, art, or other examples of student work. They are very effective!

"Make a bulletin board - titled 'Ms. _____'s little sweeties! Make the outline of a valentine shaped chocolate box and put large cupcake papers in the box. Put pictures of the children in the cupcake cups. Line the box with doilies or cut snowflakes for the background."

"Do you want to feel like you are inside a bag of Valentine conversation hearts? Cut out 100 hearts of different colours. I cut 10 of each color, but you can do what you want and use it for a graph later. Write sight words or math problems you are learning on the hearts. Attach a strip of construction paper onto each heart for hanging. Hang from ceiling all around the room. Kids love the color and cheerfulness, and you can use these for a heart graph of colours, or have children write as many words as they can find for a word center activity. And you can leave it up all February if you like!"

Valentines Through the curriculum

Language Arts

"They were asked to choose a large conversation heart and put it into a sentence. For example, 'Be mine'. The students write sentences like, 'Could that pencil *be mine?*' They would glue the heart where it belongs within the sentence. The kids got so creative and even used several hearts in one sentence."

"I do a Valentine page on Valentine's Day with elbow macaroni to represent quotation marks. Examples of sentences: Amy asked, "Will you be mine?" and they use the macaroni to put in quotation marks. It would be cute to use with contractions, too."

"On Valentine's Day we do this listening activity. They have (or make) a sheet with 10 hearts.

Draw a face on the number 9 heart.

Colour number 1 red.

Write your name on the number 8 heart.

Put an arrow through the number 2 heart.

Put an O on top of the number 4 heart.

Decorate the number 5 heart like a valentine.

Write the word 'love' on the number 7 heart.

Draw a line down the middle of the number 6 heart.

Put two X's on the number 3 heart.

The number 10 heart is a box of chocolate candy. Give it a tag that says who it is for.

Clifford for Valentines Day

"Clifford comes alive in our classroom in the month of February. We love our big red dog. To decorate my classroom I have enlarged huge Cliffords. We bone up on new words, and have lots of fun. We graph/discuss their favourite kind of dog, and also their pets. We talk about their birthdays, and graph their birthdays when we read Clifford's Birthday. We make big books, writing our own Clifford story, Clifford's Valentine... We sing Clifford songs.."

"We write to people we admire secretly - the children write positive notes to others. I make a form and they have to write to 4 students anonymously. 1. To your best friend 2. To make a new friend 3. Someone that might be forgotten because: they are too quiet, too nice, or always break rules 4. Surprise someone...write to someone who would never expect to get one from you or that you would like to have as your friend.

They turn them in to me and I check to be sure there are no put downs. Then I cut them apart and hang them on the bulletin board on Valentine's Day and they can't wait to see what other people have to say to them. I make sure every one gets at least 3. It is so much fun to try to figure out who said that about them!"



Valentine Centers

"I thought I would share a few ideas I used for Valentine's Day last year. I created six or seven centers that the kids rotated through throughout the morning. The students really enjoyed it.

Center 1: Making some sort of creature out of heart shapes. The hearts could be any size, but the creature had to be made completely out of hearts. Good examples are butterflies, people, etc.

Center 2: Making a heart magnet. They made a frame from popsicle sticks (on which they drew little hearts). Inside the frame they pasted a white piece of paper (pre-cut) and then glued red pompoms onto the paper in a heart shape. I then put a little piece of magnetic tape on the back.

Center 3: A painting center They painted a picture onto a heart shaped piece of paper.

Center 4: Searching the newspaper for words to create a Valentine's message and pasting the words onto a heart shape.

Center 5: A literacy center, where they read Valentine's stories and poems. I put the poems up on the wall and had a basket full of stories for them to choose from.

Center 6: Writing Valentine's messages and completing a Valentine's wordsearch.

Center 7: Valentine's cookie icing station - I had a volunteer help with this one.

"I had the students record themselves reading the book 'Guess How Much I Love You'. I typed the book up leaving space for the students to illustrate. (*Note: this isn't legal, of course!*) They then each illustrated the book pages and cover and listed themselves as the illustrator. I taped a library pocket in the front for the tape and gave it to the mothers as a gift. They absolutely loved it! I heard so many compliments about it. It is just a nice thing for parents to listen to year after year and helps bring back fond memories of when the child was that age. We had practiced the reading for a week or two before I actually did the recording. I read the book to them, they read it independently and used the book for buddy reading."

"We wrote valentine Haiku poems for their parent(s) or significant grown up about anything they loved....

Traditional Haiku has 5 syllables in the first line, 7 syllables in the second and 5 in the third.

Be my Valentine
I love to cuddle near you
You make me happy."

"On of the favourite lessons my class liked to do was write Valentine messages that fit a form or frame. The form that was always fun and worked well was this:

You are the _____ in my _____.

or

You are the _____ on my _____.

And then they would draw a picture to go with it.

You are the **cream** in my **coffee**.

You are the **chicken** in my **potpie**.

You are the **flower** in my **garden**.

You are the **peanut butter** on my **bread**.

You are the **snow capped peak** on my **mountain**.

It was a little different thought pattern than most Valentine ideas. I suggest brainstorming first."

Making words

For 'Valentine': ant, ate, let, lie, van, vet, tail, teen, nail, line, late, alive, net, tan, tea, ten, tie, tin, vine, nine, neat, live, even

For 'heart': earth, hate, hat, hear, heat, tear, are, art, ear, eat, her, rat, tar, tea, the

Make up a chart, with the children taking turns filling in the blanks and giving everyone a turn.

"_____ is my friend because he/she is _____," said _____.

("Katie is my friend because she is kind," said Michael.)

"We did a book made of thumbprint characters. We called it, THUMBODY LOVES YOU. Pages were different for different children so they were specific to that child and parents e.g. Thumbody who loves to swim. Thumbody who is good at gymnastics. Thumbody who loves it when you rub his back. etc. We did 6 sentences, illustrated each page, and we did not reveal who it was (surprise, surprise) until the last page where we put the child's picture. This works well for a card to the parents for Valentine's Day."



Math Ideas

"I teach symmetry in February. We learn to cut hearts, and then cut other symmetrical shapes, too."

"On Valentine's Day I give each child a box of the candy hearts. They have sheet with hearts drawn on it, each one labeled with a colour of the candies (pink, yellow, green, orange, etc.). They sort their candy by colour, then write how many they have of each colour on the appropriate heart. Then they have a sheet on which they graph the colours. They then have to write at least three sentences about the graph.

"They pull out twenty of their hearts; colours don't matter here. They have to group them into groups of two, three, four, and five. They write how many of each group they can make and whether there are any leftovers (remainders). Then they have to add colours: (# of) yellow + (# of) white = _____, (# of) pink + (# of) yellow = _____ and so forth.

"The kids really love doing Valentine Day math! Of course, they get to eat the candies when they have finished. This can be done with any type of candy. I have taken M&M's, divided a big bag into small baggies."



More Kisses

"You need 100 Hershey Kisses, red and silver ones, and self adhesive round stickers that would fit on the bottom of the Hershey kisses. Write the numbers 1 to 100 on the stickers, and put a line under each number. Put the even numbered stickers on the red Hershey kisses, and put the odd numbers on the silver ones. Make a poster sized 100 chart. I do it with 1 to 10 on the first line, 11 to 20 on the second line, etc. Hide the kisses around the room while the kids are away. Send the children on a kiss hunt. As they find a kiss, they look at the number on the bottom and take it to the poster that is laying on the floor and they place that kiss on the correct number. As the children find more and more they will see that the even numbered kisses are all red, and all odd silver. They will also see a pattern with the colours. There are many objectives that go along with this activity, such as number recognition, sequencing, even - odd, counting by 2's, and 10's etc."

"I usually buy the small boxes of conversational hearts and have the kids estimate how many are in the box, what colour there is the most of, estimate how many of each colour, etc., and then sort and graph the results. I divided the kids into groups of 4, and had them estimate how many candies in each bag, and what colour there was the most of and least of. Each group sorted the candies by colour, and completed the rest of the worksheet. Then they outlined a large circle (about 36" diameter) with candies, keeping the colours together. I drew lines dividing the sections and they coloured the sections."

<http://www.kidzone.ws/math/valentine/index.htm>

Go here for Valentine theme math worksheets at the different grade levels..... Fun!

"I give each child a box of conversation hearts to graph. We will also be estimating how many can fit on a paper heart and compared to how many actually do fit. We have a sheet with one hundred hearts to colour or write numbers in. You can make a graph showing the different colours of hearts, too."



Valentine Cards - handling the card exchange

The best activity:

I talk about this activity every Valentine's Day - but it IS the best! Make a small book or scrapbook for each student with empty pages and room for all the valentines received. You can make a cover for the book or the students can do this - perhaps 'MY CARDS - VALENTINE'S DAY 2009' and a place for the child's name. After the cards have been delivered, give the children time to look through them and read them. Then they each get a tape dispenser and put one piece of tape on the left side or top of each card and stick the card into the book. Only one piece of tape, so the card can be 'opened' to see who sent it on the back side.

If you ask every child to send a card to every other one, this makes a good keepsake of all the children in the class. It also is a nice quiet activity for your Valentine's party! Valentine cards are so often just lost or thrown out after the day - this makes the sending of cards a more interesting activity.

Spend some time talking about the sayings on the cards. The students may not understand the double meanings without this discussion.

"I made little books, bound with those plastic binders, with 10 pages of white paper between two pink sheets. The kids spent their valentines day party pasting their valentines into their books and writing who it was from below each. Then they have another 'book' to take home and read!"

"The Kindergarten teacher at my school told me of her own variation, which is to take the cards she is given by the children and to create a classroom "Thanks" book. She tapes the cards in a blank book and then under each one, writes, "Thanks, (name)!" She says that the children really love reading this book and finding their own names in it."

"I found that the kids spent time actually reading the cards and seemed to enjoy leafing through their books. I got positive remarks from parents, also."

"I make one of those scrapbooks with the valentines I receive from the kids. Then, I put it in the reading area. They love to look at all of them from through the years! You can tape the valentines on so that kids can flip over the card to see who sent it or you can write the names of the senders under the cards and then laminate. Always one of my most popular class made books!"

"I did the albums (scrapbooks) last year - and they were great! It has always bothered me to see them open their cards, and then just toss them aside for the next new one. This way, they taped, read, turned over, reread, talked to the sender - it was wonderful! "

"I made a big heart out of a posterboard and then glued on all the cards I received and displayed it in the room. The students love to read the cards!"

Ideas for giving out Valentines:

Have the children decorate Valentine boxes at home. Shoe boxes are perfect, with a slot in the top and the name printed on top, too.

Some children may be able to give out Valentines and read the names - but this may be difficult if all the children have tried to print the names on - some may be hard to read. It may be a better idea for you or another adult to put the valentines in the boxes as the children bring them to school.

Give every child in your class a list of all the names to take home so he/she won't forget anyone. (There is one to fill out at the end of this booklet.)

"I do individual valentine bags rather than a class box. About a week before the big day, the children each get a white lunchbag (from Wal-Mart) to decorate as they wish. They must put their name in large letters on the front of the bag. I then hang them on a long bulletin board. The children bring in valentines any day for about a week before Valentine's Day. On Valentine's Day, all I do is take down each bag and hand it to the correct child. They can open and read their cards and then place them back in the bag to take home. I also have a rule that if you are sending cards, you must send one to everyone to avoid hurt feelings."

Valentine Envelopes

"I bought a box of 9 x 12" white envelopes. I cut the flap off and cut down the front so the tops are uneven. I printed the names at the bottom of each with black felt pen. My kids cut one large red heart and glued it on, and then decorated with small pink, red, mauve, and white hearts and added glitter glue. I have scissors that cut fancy edges (from my scrapbooking), too. We taped the envelopes up in the order of our class numbers. Now the valentines are popped into the envelopes."



"We use the brown kraft envelopes. I cut the front part about 1/3 the way down from the top so that it is easier for students to put their valentines into the envelope. I let the students decorate them however they like and then I tape the envelopes to the side of their desks. I drop in treats throughout the week and let them drop in their valentines when they bring them."



"I have the children and parents each send in a shoe box with a slot in the top for the valentines. They cover it with paper and put the student's name on it. Then we decorate it with coloured hearts, lace paper doilies, etc."

"I send home a class list each year in early February, and tell the parents that the child **MUST** send a valentine to everyone on the list! They also must fill in the 'To:' and the 'From:' sections, so every student gets a card from every other one."

"When the cards are handed out, the students must read them aloud and then go and thank the person who gave the card! This makes for a very noisy, but pleasant card sharing time!"

"I give all the students in my class a class list and they must write one wonderful word or quality next to each name. Then I take the lists and combine all these 'compliments' onto a special valentine from their friends. This is always the favourite, and makes all the students feel special."

Compliment Valentine Boxes

"The children make individual Valentine's boxes out of cereal boxes. We cover them with Valentine's Day tissue paper (I ask a parent volunteer to come in and help out). Then, I give each child a sheet of construction paper with hearts on it with the other students' names on them. Each student has their name on a separate heart. Each child gets a couple of sheets full of hearts with everyone's name on them. On each heart, the students have to write one nice thing about every student. They then cut the hearts out and give them to the appropriate student to glue to their Valentine's box full of compliments. They were a big hit last year."

Individual Valentine Boxes

"I have every child bring in a shoebox and 4 margarine lids. We cover our boxes and decorate them (with a slot in the top) and then we put the margarine lids on the boxes for wheels. When this is done we put the boxes end to end to make 'The Valentine Train'. I make the engine and caboose and fill them with treats and goodies for the kids."

"Old file folders stapled or sewn up the sides make good Valentine holders."

"I cut out large heart shapes in blue, red, pink and purple (from construction paper). The kids each choose two colours. I staple them together (leaving the top open for a pocket) and they decorate both sides with felts, paper doilies and paper hearts. They're attached to the chalkboard ledge with tape."

1. Take one piece of red, white, or pink 9x12 construction paper and fold the long way (hotdog fold).

2. While folded, cut a curve on the top (this will be the top of the heart when opened).

3. Open up the paper.

4. Fold up the straight bottom edge about an 1 1/2 inch or so from the top of the curved top.

5. Bring the bottom left corner to the middle and line up the bottom fold to the middle crease.

6. Repeat with the bottom right corner. (Steps 5 and 6 create the pointed end of the heart).

7. Fold over the Step 4's open edge at the top, so that it creates a flap over the top of Step 5 and 6 (This will lock the two bottom folds in place.).

8. Sometimes a piece of tape is needed to secure it.

9. Put name along the folded flap, decorate, and staple to bulletin board for filling!"

"I have my kids bring a class set of valentines with no names on them. In class they sign their names on the back of each but don't put the recipient names on. They put one into each student's mail box. After they are handed out, we share them and read them together."

"I always get a valentine from each student. I tape them onto a chart, and we read them all. I keep it up for a week, and the students love to read all the cards in 'Read the Room' time.



It's Valentine's Day!

"Do a friendship theme! Valentine's Day can be a special day without purpose, but if you make it the culmination of a friendship unit your children will have a learning experience. Brainstorm all the nice things that friends do. Have your students state qualities of a good friend. List the qualities as your students state them.

Print out the friendship sheet found at

<http://www.geocities.com/teachingwithheart/vdayfriendshipsheet.html>

Hand out one sheet to each student and instruct the students to dictate or write a quality of a friend. Have the student illustrate his/her close friend in the box provided.

Wear red articles of clothing on Valentines Day. Who can wear the most red things? Give a prize to the reddest person....boy and girl.

Brainstorm red things.

"We have a paper heart and a safety pin for each of the boys in the school. If a girl can make a boy talk to her at recess time, he must give her the heart. The girl with the most hearts at the recess bell wins! Then at the next break the girls get the hearts and the boys try to make them talk."



"We are spending the whole morning at centres, then delivering the valentines and then in the afternoon is our party and video (Franklin's Valentine). It's one of the only days of the whole year that is just plain fun from morning till afternoon! Centres:

1) Teddy Bear Valentine Holders - we adapted the idea from the foam-kit ones from Oriental Trading. The kids brought in cereal boxes cut in 1/2 and we painted them brown and will now add the details (bow, heart eyes, heart ears, paws, etc.) as a center.

2) Valentine Candy Necklaces - I just love this idea!! You take a long piece of saran wrap (about 24 inches) and the kids lay out hard candy along it lengthwise. Then all they do is roll it up and then tie ribbon between each candy. The necklace is so pretty for them to wear.

3) Heart-shaped pizzas and 'Love Potion' milkshakes (they'll cut the pizza dough into a heart, put sauce on it, cut the cheese into a heart and then put it in the toaster oven. The love potion milkshake is just ice cream with strawberry mixture; topped with whipped cream and a cherry of course!)

4) M&M Math center - they'll do predicting and sorting and graphing of M&M's. Our party will be in the afternoon and we are having tea sandwiches, red jello, juice, cupcakes, etc. We also made princess heart wreaths for the girls that they will wear around their heads!

Valentines Day Bookmarks

Cut a 5"x2" strip from red construction paper. Cut white or pink heart shapes about 1/2" to just under 2" wide.

Paste the hearts onto the bookmark. Punch a hole in the centre of the bookmark, about 1/2" from the top and put red ribbon through the hole and tie.



"This is what my kids will be doing at their valentine centers:

- decorating heart cookies (This will be our treat later in the day.)
- dipping pretzel rods into chocolate and coating with sprinkles
- doing candy heart math
- playing number fact bingo (on a heart bingo board using candy hearts as markers)
- making a heart person (small heart on top of a large heart, accordion-style arms and legs with little hearts at the ends of them)"

Valentine's Day Graham Cracker Houses

For each house you'll use 5 graham crackers; leave 4 whole and break the 5th one in half. Use a paper plate as the base to hold each house. Using frosting, glue 2 whole pieces and 2 half pieces together in the shape of a rectangle. Using the 2 remaining whole crackers, glue them on top of the rectangle to form the roof. Use frosting to add doors and windows (use your imagination, have fun with this) Decorate your house with Hershey's Kisses, red hots, Valentine's day conversation candies, M&Ms, gum drops, raisins, pretzels, liquorice, etc. (just use the frosting to glue the goodies onto your house). Use leftover frosting to make a snow-covered roof.

At the Party

Games for Valentines Day

"We are getting ready for Valentines day and here are a few of the games we will do. One is taking a balloon and rubbing it on the student's head. The winner is the one who can then pick up the most tissue paper hearts on the balloon. Cute - good lead into static electricity too. We will also do a bulls-eye tossing game. Put red cinnamon hearts in a plastic baggie and tie with ribbon. The children pitch these little bags onto a heart shaped bulls-eye. The person closest to the white heart, which is in the very center, wins. The third game we are playing is a game where you tie a string in a ring with a toy ring on the string (say that 5 times fast). Anyway, the children pick one person to be in the middle and you pass the ring from person to person and when the music is over, the person in the middle guesses who has the ring."

Play x's and o's - kisses and hugs, of course.

Make your own valentine bingo cards - put the letters HEART at the top and put in the random numbers - 1-15 under H, 16-30 under E, 31-45 under A (and the free one, of course with a heart shape in it), 46-60 under R, and 61-75 under the T. Do a Google search for 'generate bingo cards' and you will find lots of sites that will make these up for you with numbers or words.

Play 'Valentine says'..... like Simon says.

The Mailman Game

Everyone gets to participate in this game involving a hidden valentine. Choose one child to be the mailman/postman and give him or her the mailman's hat. (Red strip of paper with pink heart that says Mailman.) The mailman must hide his eyes while you give another child a valentine to hide behind their back. Then the mailman uncovers his eyes and faces his classmates who say, "Mailman, mailman, where's the mail?" The mailman gets three guesses to find out who is hiding the mail. If he guesses correctly, he continues as mailman. If he guesses incorrectly, the person with the mail becomes the mailman.

"At our Valentine Party we will play this game.

Write 'Happy Valentine's Day' twice, each one on a different colour. Cut the letters apart, and hide them around the room, always with part in plain sight. Divide into two teams. Choose a captain for each team who becomes the speller. Players find their colour of letters and bring them to the captain who spells the words. First team to spell the entire phrase is the winner. (You can have more colours for more teams, if desired.)"

Food for the Party

Make red heart wigglers. Make Jello with less water and set in a shallow pan. Cut out hearts with a cookie cutter.

Make Valentine placemats.

Make red heart headbands for everyone at the party.

Let the children decorate heart shaped sugar cookies with icing and sprinkles, etc.



"For the afternoon on Valentine's Day I buy sugar cookies and have the children bring in sprinkles, frosting, etc., and they decorate their cookie just like they want. It makes for some very sugary treats but they just love it."

Valentine's Day Jiggler Hearts

Take 1/2 cup of thawed frozen strawberries (with the juice) and mix in a blender. Stir 4 envelopes unflavoured gelatine into 2 cups cold water and heat slowly over medium-low heat until the gelatine is totally dissolved. Stir together the strawberries and the gelatine mixture and add a 6-ounce can frozen apple juice concentrate. Spray a 9x12 inch pan with Pam cooking spray. Pour the mixture into the pan and chill until firm. To unmold, turn the pan upside down over a countertop. Using heart-shaped cookie-cutters, cut hearts out of the gelatine.



Valentine's Day Red Hot Punch

Make up a batch of red coloured Kool-Aid or fruit juice (cherry, strawberry, etc). Make up a tray of ice cubes and place a red hot candy in each ice cube and freeze. Serve the punch with the red hot surprise

"For my Valentine's refreshments, I have each child bring two pieces of fruit cut up and prepared to go into a fruit salad. After we enjoy our Valentines, we share our Friendship Fruit Salad. It's easy, healthy, and the kids love it!"

"I always do a Make Your Own Sundae party for Valentine's Day. I ask each child to bring in a topping and I provide the ice cream. They have more fun creating it than eating it! Since the bowls are small I don't have to worry about them overindulging. If a child forgets their topping it isn't critical since there are so many to choose from. I make sure to give the critical ones like chocolate syrup and Cool Whip to my most reliable children. I only have to buy 3 half-gallons of ice cream to do the whole room. I always get 1 chocolate, 1 vanilla, and 1 half chocolate-half vanilla.

It works like a charm!"

"We eat red foods for our Valentine party! We make red Jello Jigglers: 2-1/2 cups boiling water, 2 pkg. (8-serving size each) Jello in a red colour. Stir boiling water into dry gelatin mix in large bowl at least 3 min. until completely dissolved. Pour into 13x9-inch pan. Refrigerate at least 3 hours or until firm. Dip bottom of pan in warm water for 15 sec. Cut into decorative shapes using 2-inch cookie cutters, being careful to cut all the way through gelatin to bottom of pan. Lift the shapes out.

We drink Cherry pop. We eat red apples and watermelon (when I can find it at this time of year!) and frozen strawberries. We have sugar cookies with pink icing. I make rice krispie hearts by pressing the mixture and cutting it with heart cookie cutters. I have had ice-cream sundaes using white or strawberry ice cream and putting strawberry sauce on top. It is fun to think of new things to eat!"

Special Valentine Parties

"I have had the best parties this year! We have gone with healthy foods as opposed to sweets! For Valentines we're having red foods. Strawberries, red grapes, apple slices, cherry tomatoes, etc. We're also having cookies with red sprinkles, but that is the only sweet. The kids have loved our parties and we hardly ever have anything left to throw away! I'll never go back to cake and chips parties again."

"Last Valentine's Day I had a classroom party, as I have done every year. Most years I have had a problem putting in the time, and the parties were rowdy and the kids were very noisy - but last year's party was very different! As our 100 Day fell quite close, we first did 10 of 10 different exercises to equal 100 - jumping jacks, toe touching side swings, etc. We talked about our hearts and practiced taking pulse readings.

Then the valentines were handed out - easy, because they had all been mailed into individual envelopes. The kids had a few minutes to go through them, and then I gave out little 'scrapbooks' and clear tape, and they put a piece of tape on the side of each card and stuck them in the book. This took quite a long time to do! We spent some time reading the cards and talking about the meanings of them as some of the meanings and words were unfamiliar.

We had 'healthy heart' food - vegetable and fruit trays with dip, and the kids made faces on an apple with raisins and red pepper strips (held with half toothpicks). At the end of the party the kids sat with a partner and shared the cards, reading them aloud and at the end went around the class and thanked their friends for the cards.

The children really enjoyed the party, and it was reasonably quiet, they learned throughout and had a nice keepsake of the card album to take home. What a treat!"

"As not all of my kids celebrate holidays, I had a Friendship party rather than a Valentines one. The day before we brainstormed all the things they thought a friend would do and say, and at the party they made cards to friends - not specific children, but friends in general.

Then I gave each of my children a little autograph book, with enough pages for everyone in the class. I showed an autograph book that belonged to my grandmother and read some of the funny pages and rhymes. Then we looked at the ones they got. Each page had the person's name on it, and the children went around and got everyone to sign their name on the specific page. I gave them one minute with each person, and rang a bell. In that minute they signed each other's books and drew a little picture if time permitted or could write a friendly note in the friend's book.

We decorated cookies with faces and big icing smiles. They were very cute!"

