

Fun Facts: Valentine's Day - February 14

TEACHING GUIDE



About Fun Facts

Fun Facts are student-friendly handouts that tie statistics from the Census Bureau to holidays, anniversaries, and other observances. These fact sheets—which are designed to be used at varying grade levels and across different subjects—can be used at the end of class (if students finish their work early), during a lighter day (perhaps when a substitute teacher is present), or on/before a holiday (when there may be an opportunity for flexibility outside the curriculum).

Using Valentine's Day Fun Facts in the Classroom

Teachers should give students time to read and digest the information in the *Valentine's Day Fun Facts* handout. Below is a list of ideas for using the fact sheet with students at any and all grade levels:

Any Grade Level

Discussion: Potential discussion questions include:

- What surprises you about the information on this page?
- What questions do you have about the information on this page?

5-minute travel escape: With students, teachers could explore one of the cities or towns with the “loveliest” names using census data and other resources. This could include learning about the makeup of the population, sources of employment in the area, features that are most likely to attract tourists, etc. (There are resources online about Love Valley, North Carolina, for example, that include old photos of this western community.)

Elementary School Level

Visual representation: Teachers could have students create a visual representation of a data point from the fact sheet. For example, students could design a chocolate bar wrapper for New York and/or California that's just for Valentine's Day (being sure to include the related data point about chocolate production somewhere on the wrapper).

Taste test analysis: Teachers could have students taste chocolate samples from various chocolate manufacturers (e.g., Hershey, Nestle, Mars), vote on their favorite, and create a pie chart or bar graph that shows the popularity of each one. For students who don't eat chocolate, they could instead vote on which candy they like the best based on the name and packaging.

Middle School Level

Creative writing exercise: Students could write an acrostic poem that incorporates information from the fact sheet. Then, in a supporting sentence, they could explain how the nation gets information like this and why it matters.

Community focus: Teachers could put students in pairs and have them create a list of businesses or companies in their community that were likely counted for the list under "Finding Gifts for Your Valentine." Students could then present to the class one of their ideas and a possible reason why a country might count businesses.

High School Level

Debate: Teachers could ask students to answer the following questions and then participate in a class debate using their responses: Are the statistics for the ages that men and women first get married surprising to you? In the next several years, do you think these ages will change? Do you think that the percentage of people who have been married more than once will increase, decrease, or stay in the same in the future?

Persuasive pitch: Students could create an advertising campaign for a state to increase its chocolate sales for Valentine's Day, reflecting on the data in the fact sheet and thinking about the specific groups of people and areas they would target. Teachers could ask students: What additional data would you need to sell your product?