

2011

Brevet de fin d'études moyennes (BFEM)

Épreuve d'anglais LV1

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### The story of St Valentine

Do you know why we celebrate St Valentine's Day ? Nowadays it is the opportunity to tell people how much you care about them, to give and receive presents. But according to one legend, St Valentine's Day is meant for people to remember a brave martyr whose name was Valentine.

Roman emperor Claudius II was fighting many wars. He wanted a strong army, but many men did not want to be soldiers. Claudius thought the men wanted to stay with their wives and children instead of leaving to fight wars.

Claudius thought of an awful solution to his problem. He decided to cancel all marriages !

No one in all of Rome could get married. Claudius thought that if men couldn't get married, they would ignore women and want to be soldiers.

Valentine, who was a priest, believed that people needed to get married. He thought that if people were not married, they would be tempted to sin by living together without being married. So he secretly and illegally married couples anyway ! He performed the weddings in secret places, so Roman soldiers would not find out.

But they did find out. Valentine was arrested and brought before the emperor. The emperor thought Valentine was a well spoken and wise man, and he encouraged him to stop being a Christian and become a loyal Roman. Valentine would not deny his beliefs, and he refused.

He was sent to prison until he could be executed. While in prison, he sent out letters to his friends and asked them to pray for him by writing {Remember your Valentine.}

Valentine was killed on the 14<sup>th</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup> of February in year 269 or 270. We celebrate St Valentine's Day on February 14<sup>th</sup> in honour of St Valentine.

*Slightly adapted from [www.abcteach.com](http://www.abcteach.com)*

## I. Text comprehension (8 points)



**A. Read the text and choose the most appropriate answer (3 pts)**

**1) The emperor decided to cancel all marriages means ..**

- a) He wanted all marriages to be celebrated;
- b) He decided to attend the wedding parties;
- c) He decided to oppose all weddings;
- d) He didn't care about marriages

**2) The emperor wanted men to ...**

- a) live at home and work for the empire ;
- b) raise their children and be loyal Roman citizens ;
- c) go to other countries and raise families ;
- d) go and fight wars in other lands

**3) They would be tempted to sin means ...**

- a) They would offend God's prescriptions ;
- b) They would be seduced by Claudius ;
- c) They could disobey the emperor ;
- d) They would divorce their wives

**B. Find in the indicated paragraphs words corresponding with the definitions below. 1.5 pts**

4) a victim who suffered a lot because of his/her beliefs  
=..... (paragraph 1);

5) terribly bad = ..... (paragraph 3)

6) knowledgeable and experienced  
= ..... (paragraph 5)

**C. Are the following sentences True or False ? Justify with passages from the text 2 pts**

7) Valentine was a married man who did not want to be a soldier .....

**Justify :** .....



8) Valentine wrote letters to his friends for the emperor to remember him in prison .....

**Justify :** .....

**D. Who do the following words refer to in the text ? 1.5 pts**

9) **their** (line 5) : .....

10) **they** (line 11) : .....

11) **him** (line 15) : .....



## II. Linguistic competence (6 points)

### E. Circle the most suitable words to make a meaningful paragraph 2 pts

Nowadays, St Valentine's Day (12) **has celebrated - is celebrated - was celebrated** everywhere in the world on February 14<sup>th</sup>. It is surprising that (13) **someone - anyone - no one - everyone** really knows the story of St Valentine. Emperor Claudius II cancelled all marriages (14) **thanks to - because - that's why - while** people did not want to leave their wives. But Valentine secretly married people to help them avoid (15) **ungratefulness - unfaithfulness - misfortune - honesty**. Unfortunately, he was discovered and executed.

### F Complete this skeleton dialogue between Julie and her teacher, Mr Sarr. 1.5 pts

Julie\_ What is St Valentine's Day ?

Mr Sarr\_ It's a festival.

Julie\_ Is .....? (16)

Mr Sarr\_ No, it isn't a religions feast as many people think, but it's a special feast of lovers.

Julie\_ .....? (17)

Mr Sarr\_ Yes, I celebrate it every year with my wife.

Julie\_ ..... ? (18)

Mr Sarr\_ I offer her a rose and a beautiful card. But for me, St Valentine Day is everyday.

### G) Put the words in brackets in the right form to make a meaningful paragraph. 2 pts

Valentine was really (19)..... (**courage**) to refuse to accept the emperor's decree. This was the cause of his (20).....,..... (**executed**). His (21)..... (**dead**) made him a martyr ; he will be remembered as a saint whose faith and (22).....(**wise**) will serve humanity forever.

### H) Write the following dates in full letters. 0.5 pt



23) (February) 14<sup>th</sup> 269 = .....

**III) Writing : Choose one topic only and write about 80-100. 6 pts**

**Topic 1** : Do you think that it is important to celebrate St Valentine's Day in Sénégal ? Give your opinion.

**Topic 2** : It's St Valentine's Day. Write a letter to a friend to tell him/her how much you care about him/her.

**Topic 3** : Describe an important figure in your country. Focus on his/her qualities and the reasons why you think he/she is considered as a model.

