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**FRIENDSHIP**

**International Day of Friendship – The importance of friends**

1. Friends come in all shapes and sizes. They may be someone we met as a child, a classmate at school, someone we met at work or through other friends. They may be friends who live at a distance in another country or virtual friends we've made online.

**International Day of Friendship – The importance of friends**

2. Whoever they are, however we met them, there is a special connection based on a shared history and interests, enjoying doing things together or simply talking and understanding each other.

**International Day of Friendship – The importance of friends**

3. Friends are there to help us at difficult times and to celebrate the good times. Doctors say that friends are very important for both our physical and mental health at all stages in life.

**Declaring an international Friendship Day**

4. Friends are not only important on an individual level. Friendship can also be important on a global level. Friendships that cross borders can help bring peace and avoid war.

**Declaring an international Friendship Day**

5. Learning to think of other people, people who are different from us, as our friends helps us work together to build a culture of peace. That's why the UN declared 30 July as its official International Day of Friendship.

### **Friendship Day -The origins of the day**

6. An international celebration was first suggested by the World Friendship Crusade. This organisation was founded by Dr Ramón Artemio Bracho and his friends in Puerto Pinasco, Paraguay, in 1958.

### **Friendship Day -The origins of the day**

7. Mr Bracho and his friends wanted to support the power of friendship and its importance in creating a culture of peace. So, in the same year, they decided to celebrate Friendship Week in Puerto Pinasco and other places in Paraguay.

### **Friendship Day -The origins of the day**

8. The following year Dr Ramón Artemio Bracho and his friends repeated the week and finished on 30 July, which they declared as Friendship Day.

### **Friendship Days around the world**

9. The International Day of Friendship on 30 July is not the only day celebrating friendship around the world. A number of countries, such as Paraguay, also celebrate on 30 July, but other countries have different dates.

### **Friendship Days around the world**

10. Argentina, Brazil and Spain celebrate Friend's Day on 20 July, while in India and the US, they celebrate it on the first Sunday in August. In Finland and Estonia, Friendship Day is celebrated on the same day as Valentine's Day, 14 February.

### **What do people do on the International Day of Friendship?**

11. Wherever it's celebrated, the celebrations are very similar. Friends meet up to spend time together. They may eat out or have a meal at home.

### **What do people do on the International Day of Friendship?**

12. During the International Day of Friendship friends give each other small gifts: books, flowers, simple jewellery such as a friendship band (a simple bracelet).

### **What do people do on the International Day of Friendship?**

13. Some people send each other cards and greetings online. Whatever form the celebration takes, the spirit is the same – to remember the importance of friends and the power of friendship in our lives.

## **VALENTINE’S DAY**

### **Valentine’s Day**

14. Valentine’s Day is on 14 February, and it can seem as if the world is full of couples who are celebrating their love. Some couples might celebrate with dinner at a nice restaurant, flowers, chocolates or other presents.

### **Valentine’s Day**

15. Some single people might put a post on social media about why they hate ‘V-Day’ or maybe they just avoid it completely. But it’s impossible not to know that Valentine’s is happening. And that’s not surprising when over half of all Brits and Americans celebrate Valentine’s in some way.

### **The price of love - Valentine’s Day**

16. For romantic people, Valentine’s Day means spending money. British people spend much less than Americans. The average Brit spends £28.00, while the average American spends \$221.00 (approximately £170.00). Across all generations, on both sides of the Atlantic, men spend more money than women.

### **The beginning of modern Valentine’s Day**

17. Today Valentine’s is celebrated in Canada, Mexico, France, Denmark, Italy and Australia as well as the USA and England. But it’s the USA where the celebration really became mass market, because of a woman called Esther Howland.

### **The beginning of modern Valentine's Day**

18. Esther Howland known as the 'mother of Valentine's' after she created a successful business making and selling greetings cards in the 1840s. She got the idea from valentine cards from Europe.

### **Valentine's Day - Further back in history**

19. Valentine's Day has been celebrated in some way for 600 years. As far back as the 17th century, people gave cards or presents, but the very first valentine messages were written down in the 1400s.

### **Valentine's Day - Further back in history**

20. In 1415, the Duke of Orleans in France sent his wife a Valentine's Day letter while he was in prison in the Tower. It is the first example of a written valentine message.

### **Valentine's Day - Further back in history**

21. However, the exact history of Valentine's Day is not known because there were three saints with the name Valentine. One story says that Valentine was a priest.

### **Valentine's Day - Further back in history**

22. Valentine performed marriages at a time when the Emperor thought that single men were better soldiers than married men. The Emperor was so angry that he punished him with death.

### **Valentine's Day - Further back in history**

23. Another story says that Valentine helped Christians escape from Roman prisons. A third story says that Valentine sent a letter to a girl while he was in prison and signed it 'From your Valentine'.

### **Valentine's Day - Further back in history**

24. Whichever story is true, the Catholic Church chose 14 February for St Valentine's Day to replace the pagan festival of Lupercalia on 15 February with the new Christian celebration.

## **What is Black Friday?**

25. Black Friday is the day after the American holiday of Thanksgiving, which is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November. Because it is a holiday in the United States, it has long been a popular day for consumers to start shopping for Christmas.

## **What is Black Friday?**

26. Over the last 20 years big retailers have started to offer discounts and bargains on this day, and it has become more and more popular. Last year, people in the USA spent an estimated \$54.7 billion between Black Friday and Cyber Monday (the Monday after Thanksgiving, when people often buy more online).

## **Is Black Friday out of control?**

27. Many of us love to get a bargain, but some feel that events like Black Friday encourage people to buy things that they don't really need and can't afford. Many people seem to lose control.

## **Is Black Friday out of control?**

28. It is easy to find video online of customers physically fighting each other over bargains. It is also argued that Black Friday is bad for small shopkeepers, who cannot afford to offer the kinds of price cuts that the big companies can.

## **What's the alternative to Black Friday? Buy Nothing Day**

29. Instead of taking the opportunity to buy as much as possible on Black Friday, you could do the opposite and buy absolutely nothing. Since 1997, Buy Nothing Day has been held on the same day as Black Friday.

## **What's the alternative to Black Friday? Buy Nothing Day**

30. The rules are simple. Just don't buy anything at all for 24 hours. Many people are surprised how difficult this actually is. The aim is to make people think more about their spending and to make better decisions about what they buy and where they buy it from.

### **Ethical spending**

31. As well as spending less and not buying unnecessary items, Buy Nothing Day aims to raise awareness of how to be a more ethical consumer.

### **Ethical spending**

32. For example, you can avoid buying 'fast fashion', that is, very cheap clothes that are worn a few times before being thrown away. This kind of decision can help to protect the environment as well as saving you money.

### **What else can you do on Buy Nothing Day?**

33. Some people carry out protests at shopping centres. Others avoid the shops completely and go for a walk in nature instead.

### **What else can you do on Buy Nothing Day?**

34. Another alternative, the Buy Nothing Coat Exchange, is an idea which is spreading. People donate winter coats throughout November and anyone who needs one can come and take one on Buy Nothing Day.