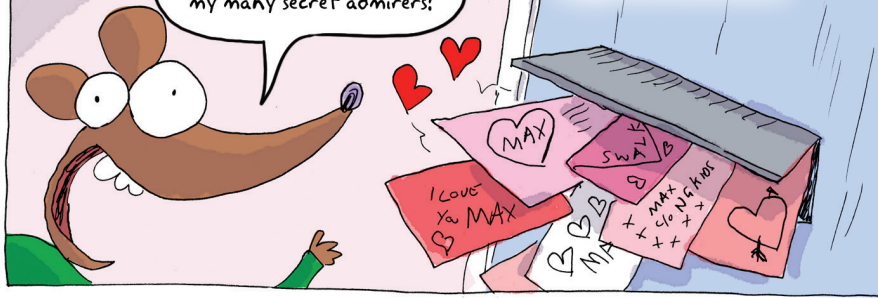


VALENTINE'S DAY

NG KIDS' time-travelling mouse, Max, explores the origins of this famous day of romance...

Hooray! It's Valentine's Day! Which means lots of lovely cards from my many secret admirers!



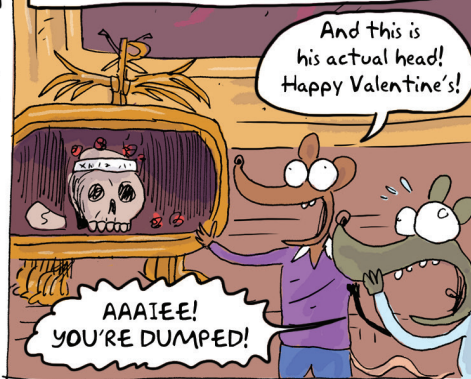
The story of St. Valentine goes back to 278 AD, when a priest called Valentine arranged secret marriages for Roman soldiers, which were banned by the emperor.



When the emperor found out, Valentine was locked up and sentenced to death. Depending on which legend you believe, Valentine cured the jailer's daughter of blindness, OR he fell in love with her, signing a letter, "Your Valentine".



Valentine's skull can be still seen today in the Basilica of Santa Maria, in Rome!



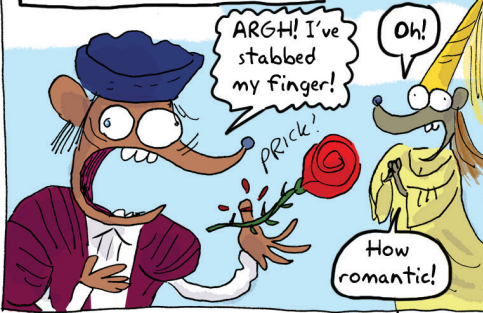
The Romans actually celebrated the coming of spring in mid-February with a game where you picked a card with a girl's name on it and she'd be your girlfriend!



We had to wait until 1537 when King Henry VIII of England declared February 14th as the official date for Valentine's day.



There are many customs associated with Valentine's Day, including the giving of red roses. Red is the colour of blood and people believed the heart is where feelings of love came from.



In Medieval Times, before people sent cards, admirers would sing messages of love!



We also give lots of chocolate to each other. This became very popular in the 1800s thanks to confectioner Richard Cadbury, who sold chocolates in beautiful heart-shaped boxes. When the boxes were empty, people used them to keep romantic mementos in.



Nowadays, it's estimated that over 1 billion cards are sent worldwide on Valentine's Day. Crazy!



And did you know that nearly 3% of Valentine's cards are sent to pets?

