



A Holiday Made by Marketing?

Read the passage and answer the questions. (CEFR B1–B2)

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1 Many Japanese people joke that Valentine's Day was invented by chocolate companies, and the joke is partly true. The first advertisement linking the day to chocolate appeared in 1936, when Morozoff, a confectioner in Kobe, ran it in an English-language newspaper. After the war, department stores and confectioners promoted the idea that a woman could confess her love once a year.



2 However, marketing alone cannot explain why the custom survived. Researchers point out that giri choco spread in the 1980s, when more women were working in offices, and it became a way to manage relationships at work. Over time, many women came to see it as a burden, and in 2018 Godiva Japan even published a newspaper ad asking the country to stop giving obligation chocolate.

3 Japan is not unique in this respect. In Brazil, the lovers' day on June 12 is said to have begun with an advertising campaign around 1949, designed to raise sales in a slow month. Holidays may be started by businesses, but they last only when people find their own meaning in them, such as gifts for friends or a treat for oneself.

Comprehension

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- (A) Valentine's Day in Japan was started by the Catholic Church.
- (B) Chocolate companies should stop selling chocolate in February.
- (C) Businesses can start holidays, but holidays survive only when people find their own meaning in them.
- (D) Brazil copied Japan's Valentine's Day in 1949.

2. Where did the first ad linking Valentine's Day to chocolate in Japan appear?

- (A) In an English-language newspaper.
- (B) On television in Tokyo.
- (C) In a department store in Shinjuku.
- (D) In a magazine for office workers.

3. According to researchers, why did giri choco spread in the 1980s?

- (A) Chocolate became much cheaper in the 1980s.
- (B) Godiva Japan started a big advertising campaign.
- (C) Schools asked students to give chocolate to teachers.
- (D) More women were working in offices, and it became a way to manage relationships at work.

4. Why was Godiva Japan's 2018 ad probably surprising to many people?

- (A) It was written only in English.
- (B) A company that sells chocolate asked people to give less chocolate.
- (C) It said Valentine's Day should move to June.
- (D) It was the first chocolate ad in Japan.

5. In paragraph 2, the word "burden" in "many women came to see it as a burden" is closest in meaning to

- (A) something heavy or tiring that you have to do
- (B) a special present
- (C) a happy memory
- (D) a kind of chocolate

6. Why does the writer mention Brazil's lovers' day?

- (A) To explain why Brazilians do not eat chocolate.
- (B) To show that June is the best month for weddings.
- (C) To compare Brazilian and Japanese chocolate prices.
- (D) To show that Japan is not the only country where a holiday may have begun with advertising.



Vocabulary, Paraphrase & Summary

Match the words with the definitions. Then rewrite and summarize.

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|------------------|---|
| 1. confectioner | a. a notice, picture, or short film that tries to make people buy something |
| 2. advertisement | b. to help something become popular or known, often to sell more |
| 3. promote | c. to tell someone something that you have kept secret, such as your feelings |
| 4. confess | d. to continue to exist after a difficult time |
| 5. survive | e. the way two or more people feel about and act toward each other |
| 6. relationship | f. something difficult or tiring that you have to deal with |
| 7. burden | g. something you must do because of a rule, a promise, or social pressure |
| 8. obligation | h. a person or company that makes or sells sweets and chocolate |

Paraphrase — say it in your own words

1. “Many Japanese people joke that Valentine's Day was invented by chocolate companies, and the joke is partly true.”

Hint: Start with "People in Japan often say" and change "partly true" to "there is some truth in it".

2. “However, marketing alone cannot explain why the custom survived.”

Hint: Use "advertising" and "is not the only reason".

3. “Holidays may be started by businesses, but they last only when people find their own meaning in them, such as gifts for friends or a treat for oneself.”

Hint: Start with "Even if a company creates a holiday" and use "continue" and "for example".

Summary

Summarize the passage in about 50 words.



Debate & Opinion Essay

Prepare for a debate. Then write your opinion (100–150 words).

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Motion: A holiday made by marketing can become a real tradition.

FOR 賛成

- Japan's Valentine's Day began with ads, but now people give tomo choco to friends and buy treats for themselves, so it has its own meaning.
- Many old customs also began for practical or business reasons. What matters is whether people keep them for a long time.
- Brazil's lovers' day started as an ad campaign around 1949, but couples still celebrate it today.

Add your own reason:

AGAINST 反対

- If a holiday exists mainly to sell products, it is a sales event, not a tradition.
- Giri choco became a burden for many women, which shows that a marketing custom can feel forced rather than meaningful.
- Companies can change or stop a holiday when it no longer makes money, so it is not really owned by the people.

Add your own reason:

Opinion	<i>I believe / I think that ...</i>
Reason 1	<i>First, ... For example, ...</i>
Reason 2	<i>Second, ... In fact, ...</i>
Counter	<i>Some people say ... However, ...</i>
Conclusion	<i>In conclusion, ...</i>