Features

Valentines: Good Times With Friends

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By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor

What does Valentine's Day mean to kids these days? Well, for the second grade students in Tracy Elfrink's class, it mean giggles, good times, and games … and something that just might be a thing of the past for kids in 2012.

Remember Sweatheart Conversation Hearts? Those sugary sweet, heart-shaped candies with short (and usually sweet) messages, It just wouldn't be Valentine's Day without these candy hearts bearing cute messages, would it?

But what about kids growing up today?

The candies were on hand Tuesday for the Valentine's party in Mrs. Elfrink's classroom. But they're important role in 2012 was more as a marker in Bingo than as a vehicle for sharing special messages with your Valentine.

"The messages just aren't as popular," Elfrink said. Blame modern technology. For kids growing up with computers, cell phones, texting and e-mail, the Conversation Hearts are just another great Valentines candy.

But that didn't dampen the fun times! Games, refreshments (including pink and white cupcakes), and good fun were the order of the afternoon.
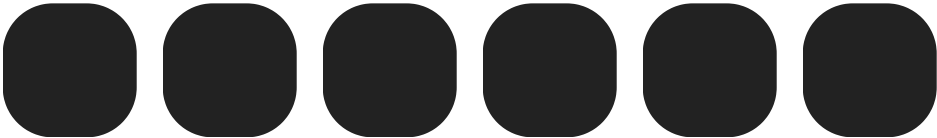
Sweethearts Conversation Hearts are more than 100 years old. The NECCO company (NECCO stands for New England Confectionary Company) began printing sayings on candy in 1860, and the company reports that the present version of the candy dates back to 1902. In 1990 the company started updating its messages for the modern crowd – including sayings like "text me".

But for the kids in Mrs. Elfrink's class this week, they were just another generation of kids who enjoyed the fun of Conversation Hearts and sharing Valentines Day with friends and finding a stash of cards from classmates in you Valentines Card Box.

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