

# The seven best ways of describing love

**D** [theday.co.uk/the-seven-best-ways-of-describing-love](https://theday.co.uk/the-seven-best-ways-of-describing-love)



*Floral adorer:* This detail from *The Honeysuckle Bower* by Rubens shows him with his wife.

**But can it be defined? As people around the world prepare for Valentine's Day tomorrow, we look at what some of the wisest thinkers in history have said about love.**

## What's happening?

Tomorrow is Valentine's Day. It is a celebration of romantic love. But there is also the love you feel for your family, your friends, your pets — even your school.

## Find out more

Since love has existed as long as humans, there are plenty of **definitions** of it. Here are seven of them:

1. "Two souls with but a single thought, two hearts that beat as one." — Friedrich Halm, German poet.
2. "Love is that condition in which the happiness of another person is essential to your own." — Robert A. Heinlein, American writer.
3. "Love does not consist of gazing at each other, but in looking outward together in the same direction." — **Antoine de Saint-Exupéry**, French writer and **aviator**.

4. "Love is like a fever which comes and goes quite **independently** of the will." — **Stendhal**, French writer.
5. "Love is a canvas furnished by nature and embroidered by imagination." — **Voltaire**, French writer and philosopher.
6. "Love is a battle, love is a war; love is a growing up." — **James Baldwin**, American writer and **civil rights** campaigner.
7. "Love is an attempt to change a piece of a dream world into reality." — Theodor Reik, German American **psychoanalyst**.

## Can love be defined?

### Some say

Yes! All you need is a copy of the **dictionary**. It will tell you exactly what love is.

### Others think

No! If you feel love, then you know what it is. But you will never be able to describe exactly how it feels to someone else. That is why it is so beautiful.

## Some people say

*"A dog is the only thing on earth that loves you more than you love yourself."*

**Josh Billings (1818 – 1885), American writer**

*What do you think?*

## Six steps to discovery

### 1. Connect

**How do you feel about this story?** -

Are you looking forward to Valentine's Day?

### 2. Wonder

**What questions do you have?** - For example: How did Valentine's Day get its name?

### 3. Investigate

**What are the facts?** - Pick out one thing we know for certain and one thing we cannot say for sure from this story.

### 4. Construct

**What is your point of view?** - You are asked to vote for the best definition of love. Think about what you would say.

### 5. Express

**What do others believe?** - What is the best song about love? Take it in turns to say.

### 6. Reflect

**What might happen next?** - Imagine you get a job with a card company. Make a card for Valentine's, Galentine's or Palentine's Day.

## Glossary

**Definitions** - All of the possible meanings of a word.

**Antoine de Saint-Exupéry** - A French aviator and writer who wrote *The Little Prince*.

**Aviator** - Pilot.

**Independently** - Doing something without being controlled or helped by someone else.

**Stendhal** - The pen name of Marie-Henri Beyle, a 19th Century French writer.

**Voltaire** - A French enlightenment writer, historian and philosopher known for his criticism of Christianity and slavery.

**James Baldwin** - An American writer and civil rights activist who was born in 1924.

**civil rights** - Rights that protect people's personal freedoms.

**Psychoanalyst** - A practitioner of psychoanalysis, a set of psychological theories first laid out by Sigmund Freud in the late 19th Century.

**Dictionary** - A book with a big list of words and their meanings.