



ES Mūžizglītības programmas

Comenius daudzpusējais projekts „The treasure chest and ICT or ICT in reading and writing”

Līguma nr. 2013-1-BG1-COM06-00006 2

Written by Zane Novika, form 11, Rezekne Polish State Gymnasium.

Latvian Folk Dances

Latvian folk dance has its origins in the traditions of the Baltic tribes that arrived in the Baltic region in approximately 2000 BC. Dances portray the day-to-day life of rural communities (sowing, harvesting, fishing) as well as specific events (courtship, marriage, birth) and reflect the surroundings important to Baltic culture (animals, birds, nature in general, the changes of the seasons).

We have Children's dances (called *rotāļas*) are usually danced in the round. The steps are simple repetitions, and the music is often a polka. Also Adult dances are often danced in a square made up of 4 couples. The figures are complex, and are reminiscent of a square dance or a quadrille. The music may be a jig or a polka tune. Most dances are performed with a partner in four or more couple formations. Steps are based on variations of the polka and gallop. Switching partners provides an opportunity for dancers to become acquainted with others in social settings.

Latvian folk dance provides fun and entertainment for performers and guests at social gatherings, weddings and traditional festivals such as Jani (the summer solstice). The Song and Dance festivals (dating back to 1873) provide a forum in which dance groups from far and wide can show off their imagination and skills. The intricate dance patterns and the colorful costumes are great to watch and fun to perform.