

# Five Days in Poland!

By Federica Scotti (2F)

The arrival in Italy seemed to mirror a week of mishaps. The delayed flight is now the curse of our Comenius Trips.

When we landed at Linate airport on Saturday morning, we were more sad than happy. The adventure just finished, the beautiful city just left, the moments spent together. Gdansk, a city full of magic, which contains a story, our story.

It was a week full of activities from the first day. Upon our arrival at the airport in Gdansk, our host families were already there, waiting for us. After the formal presentations, followed by the first shy words, we all went home to spend the first night in Poland. The next morning we woke up at six, and we were 40 minutes away from school. As soon as we arrived at Lingwista school, I met the others, each one with his/her own host. There were also the Romanians, the Swedes, the Greeks and the Germans. The conversation started immediately with our poor English. We learnt that the Polish school system is based on a first level of education from the age of seven to thirteen, followed by the Gymnasium (three years), which is precisely the school where we met our group for the first time. The morning at school continued with integration activities in order to get to know each other better. After the lunch break, we began a tour of the city of Gdansk with its

history. Gothic Gdansk's ancient history. Its most significant symbols are the Gothic Basilica of Santa Maria, overlooking the city, Tragic Długi, one of the most beautiful market squares in Europe, surrounded by some rich Renaissance houses, with the statue of Neptune at the centre of a medieval square and the crane near the River Motława. The landscape is unique, and I liked Gdansk very much!

The guided tour was followed by an Orienteering game in Gdansk. During the next two days, we devoted our time to some artworks at school. Using our talent we made drawings, models and posters related to the theme of the Comenius project: "Bridges". The teachers divided us into groups of different nationalities. The best work was also rewarded, not just for its beauty but for the relevance to the topic given and the communicative skills of the members of each group. In

the afternoon, after school, we met together to talk and spend an afternoon at the shopping centre or at the beach. It was almost a necessity to find a travel companion and speak Italian, saying whatever you wanted, in a river of words that nobody could understand.

In order to learn more about the history of the countries involved in the project, each group prepared a speech to talk about a celebrity and a famous bridge in his/her own country. Our work was appreciated and we had some curiosity to know more about our classmates.

"Roads to Freedom" was the theme of Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. The visit to the Solidarity museum was interesting. It was built to commemorate the struggle against Communism in Poland and in honour of Lech Walesa, the founder of "Solidarnosc" the first independent trade union organization of the Soviet bloc. The last day was the most critical. Attending ordinary lessons at school and thinking about our departure.

Sopot, the last town we visited, was beautiful, especially with its pier and the clear blue sea that almost blended with the sky. During the last hours, we all had tears in our eyes! It was time to say goodbye to all the foreign teachers, the new friends from Poland and all the other countries, the families who had hosted us.

Trying to keep smiling and repeating "Now, don't be a stranger!", the moment of our imminent departure was approaching.

And now that this adventure is over, it is still as if we were there, as if I were still on the plane to Poland.

The view from the plane is beautiful. The thrill of not knowing exactly where you are is even more beautiful. Departure: Linate. Check-in: Gdańsk. Good company, lots of smiles, the week begins from the journey. The first crucial minutes of takeoff and then free.

Amar Gamovic, Erika Le Rose, Agata Piacentini, Chiara Insirillo, Gulia Ardeleani and myself. Five new mates to get to know better and five days to spend together.

