

## Etta Ferdmann



That's me at the entrance to the music school, where I am teaching Russian. The picture was taken in Tallinn in the fall of 2005.

My father helped me get a job of a teacher of Russian language and literature at the Construction College. I worked there for 14 years teaching Russian to Estonian and Russian students. Then I

changed my work place for the music school at the conservatoire. I taught Russian language and literature there. I worked for 28 years full time and retired. I had several hours of Russian with Estonian lawyers. It was not a very well-paid job, but I enjoyed it. This year, I was asked to come back to the music school. They really wanted me to be back. So, I am working there and I am very happy as I find no pleasure in sitting at home.

. I am rather elderly. I worked with Estonians all the time and nobody ever hurt me. My relationship with Estonian students is great. Every year on teachers' day my graduates come to congratulate me. Actually, they come to see me even on ordinary days asking for my help if it is needed. They do not come in groups, just one or two people. I know they are sincere. I am currently teaching the Russian language in the ninth grade of the music school.

Recently there was a poll and students were asked to share their opinion of the teachers, including their personal qualities. I think this would have been impossible in Soviet times. And now we are mature enough to be given characteristics by our students. I was lucky enough to read some of those opinions expressed by students. Of course, I was not entitled to do that as the poll was intended for the Ministry of Education, not for the teachers. But I was so curious that I decided to browse through the material. I was so shocked how good those students were at knowing people. They did not care about my nationality. All they are interested in is what kind of person I am. I was not aware of many things brought up by the students. When I finished reading and thought about it, I understood they were right.

I always got along with my students. The last graduates of the Construction College from the year 1972 come to see me every year on teachers' day. They found out from somebody that I was going to fix my apartment. I made arrangements with specialists, but my former students asked me to cancel everything saying that they would fix my apartment. They did a great job and I was very happy that they made such a present for me.