

## ABOUT THIS BOOK

The origins of this book extend to more than a decade ago when Mary Ormiston was asked to develop a course on English language teaching materials for a new certificate program in teaching English as a Second Language at the University of Saskatchewan. Unfortunately, no one textbook could be found that provided enough information on materials selection and development to form the backbone of the course. So, after many months of research and writing, substantial course notes were completed. Several years later, as time came to revise the course, Mary searched again for a materials textbook that included both theory and practice. Although more and better books addressing materials development had been published, still nothing was comprehensive enough for an undergraduate course on materials selection and development. Undaunted, and with increased experience in teaching and materials development, including publishing a resource book of materials for the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada program (*The ESL Tool Box*), Mary further developed and updated the course material.

As part of a teacher training program, a course on ELT materials allows future teachers to refine their beliefs about language learning and teaching and provides them with tools and knowledge to make their teaching more interesting and effective. Learning about different types of materials—written, visual, auditory, computer-based—also helps teachers in training to learn to accommodate their students' individual learning styles and preferences. A solid background in materials selection, development, and use, along with TESL theory and methodology, facilitates the transition from theory to effective classroom practice for students in certificate and master's programs.

Students and instructors always rated the course highly. Many who had completed the course remembered how practical the content was and how immediately useful it was to them in their subsequent teaching positions. They also discovered that choosing, adapting, and developing effective materials was creative, enjoyable, and rewarding. Ruth Epstein, then Academic Coordinator of the Certificate Program in Teaching English as a Second Language (CERTESL) at the University of Saskatchewan and instructional designer for the second version of the course, felt that the material in the course would be of benefit to other teacher preparation programs and to English language teachers in general. Her research confirmed that a book on language teaching materials would indeed be welcomed. And so we began to update and edit the material into book form.

The contents of *Tools and Tips for Using ELT Materials: A Guide for Teachers* will help you, the teacher, come closer to the ideal of addressing your students' needs within a given teaching context regardless of whether or not you have an assigned textbook, by providing you with the theory and practice of materials selection,

development, and adaptation for language teaching. With the vast number of published materials and resources that have increasingly become available, it is more and more challenging for language teachers and program administrators to decide which are the most effective, appropriate, and flexible for their students and for their programs. When the published materials do not work adequately for you, you will undoubtedly find yourself supplementing them with other published resources, adapting existing materials, and even developing new ones to meet your specific needs. Added to this mix is the variety of technology available (from print to digital technology) for presenting published and teacher-made materials. This book provides you with background to make sound, informed decisions about how to choose or adapt published materials or develop your own, and how to make the best use of materials that will enhance teaching and learning.

One chapter is available on the University of Michigan Press's website at [www.press.umich.edu/esl/tm/toolstips/](http://www.press.umich.edu/esl/tm/toolstips/), Drills, Dialogues, and Role Plays.