



**Digital Play** has suggested many ways of engaging your learners by focusing on computer games to teach language skills. But what about *you*, the teacher? Can you also develop, becoming more effective in your teaching environment and also widening your own horizons? The answer is, yes you can.

#### 21st century teaching

As technology has advanced, so has its application and use in the classroom. This has affected both what we teach and how we teach it. We frequently have audio recorders and players, televisions or computer screens, video or DVD players and even interactive whiteboards – not to mention the technology that our learners also bring with them, such as MP3 players, mobile phones, etc. Maybe we haven't used them all in our own classrooms, but the chances are that we will probably have used at least one of them.

As the technology becomes more commonplace, we are beginning to see not only new tools but also new ways of teaching emerge. And as the focus in the classroom involves more than just teacher/learner/coursebook, such issues as reviewing syllabus design, rethinking classroom management and sharing information are also adapting to the new context. Our tried and tested teaching is not being questioned – it is simply being applied to the 21st century.

#### 21st century teachers

With the advent of greater connectivity through the internet, it is now possible for teachers not only to have access to a rich source of online material but also to have the opportunity to be part of a larger global online teaching community. By joining Communities of Practice it is possible to share help and develop knowledge and experience of digital play.

To better understand the pedagogy involved, a wide range of literature is currently being published. Many of these books chart a rise in new applications of technology in teaching and explain how best to use these new resources to maximise learning and make the learning experience more effective. And who knows? Your own commitment to being a 21st century teacher might lead you to consider designing your own digital play materials.



In Part C, we look at ways for you to integrate your digital teaching within the school system and further your expertise beyond the classroom. Our suggestions, therefore, range from researching and recording online materials, both for yourself and for the larger community of teachers, through to producing your own games.