

upstage **SPOTLIGHT** ENGLISH

CREATIVE TEAM

Playwright	Sanaz Toossi	Director	Knud Adams
Set Design	Marsha Ginsberg	Costume Design	Enver Chakartash
Lighting Design	Reza Behjat	Sound Design	Sinan Refik Zafar

WHAT IS THE SHOW ABOUT?

Two words set in motion playwright Sanaz Toossi's intricate and profound New York debut: "English Only." This is the mantra that rules one classroom in Iran, where four adult students are preparing for the TOEFL—the Test of English as a Foreign Language. Chasing fluency through a maze of word games, listening exercises, and show-and-tell sessions, they hope that one day, English will make them whole. But it might be splitting them each in half.

WHERE: A CLASSROOM IN KARAJ, IRAN

WHEN: 2008

WHO: MEET THE CHARACTERS

THE TEACHER

MARJAN

44 years old. Accent has traces of both American and British English. Once lived in Manchester, England. Loves speaking English.

THE STUDENTS

ELHAM

27 years old. Has a very thick Iranian accent. Wants to go to medical school in Australia. Doesn't care for English, prefers speaking Farsi.

ROYA

54 years old. Has a noticeable accent. Is studying English before she visits her son and granddaughter in Canada.

OMID

29 years old. Has no accent. Grew up with American cousins. Studying English for a U.S. Permanent Resident (also known as a "Green Card") interview.

GOLI

18 years old. Accent is light and sweet. Has wanted to speak English since she was a child.

TOEFL

Test of English as a Foreign Language. A standardized test used to measure the English skills of a non-native speaker. Often required for Green Cards, visas, and admission to colleges and universities in English-speaking countries.

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