Welcome to spotlight. I’m Collin Lowther and I’m Katy Blake. Spotlight uses a special english method of broadcasting. It is easier for people to understand no matter where in the world they live.

Ankitawa worked on the street of Delhi, India. He sold clothes for children. This help him learn business skills but this was not Tawa’s main job. He was also an engineering student. Tawa wanted to continue his study in Europe so he started to take the test of english as a foreign language – the Toefl. Tawa studied very hard and he won scholarship money to study engineering at a university in Spain. The scholarship paid many of Tawa’s school cost. Tawa won the scholarship for hard work in many areas of his life. But he mainly got it because of his high score on the Toefl exam. Not all people do it well as Tawa on the Toefl but many people around the world take this test every year. Today’s Spotlight is on the Toefl test.

Experts at Stanford University in the United States created the Toefl in 1964. They saw that many people wanted to study in universities in the US and other English speaking countries. But these schools needed to know that people coming from other countries could communicate well in English. The school wanted to accept international students and they wanted these students to be successful in English speaking universities so they needed to test international students’ English language skills before admitting them.

There are different tests to determine a person’s English language skills. Each university decides which test it will give. However, most choose the Toefl. Another test universities may choose is the international English language testing system – IELTS. To get a job or enter a school, most English speaking universities require international students to pass these tests. That’s why they can learn well in classes that are taught in English.

Most of people who take the Toefl are students. But some people take the Toefl or the Ielts for other reasons. Some workplaces require a language test. It can be helpful for moving to an English speaking countries and many professional programs require a test too. For example, a doctor who is moving from India to the US may have to take the Toefl. This may be needed for approval to do her job in a new country. No matter what the persons’ reason is for taking the Toefl, he or she takes the same test. The Toefl is standardized. There are over 4000 places that give the Toefl. People in over a hundred different countries take it. But every person take the same test. Experts then mark the test and give person a score. The experts do not know whose test they are marking. This kind of test is more fair.

People taking the Toefl must go to an official testing site to take the exam. They must pay to take the exam. They usually sit in a room at a small table or at a computer. The room maybe very full of other people also taking the test. For many years, students took the Toefl on paper. Sometimes, people still take the Toefl this way. But since 2005, most people take the test on computers. The Toefl looks at 4 different skills in English: Reading, Listening, Speaking and Writing.

Students read or listen then they answer questions about what they have read or heard. They must also record themselves speaking English. And they must write some longer essays in English. It usually takes about four hours to take the TOEFL. But people prepare for much longer than that.

Madison is a students from Romania, she spent 6 months studying for the TOEFL. After the test she was afraid that she did not do well. She tells the stories about studying on the website us.com

I needed to take an English test in order to study for a degree in the United Kingdom. I bought a TOEFL preparation book. I found this book very useful. I honestly could not have prepare without it. Whatever mistake I made I do not think they were caused by a lack of preparation. Unfortunately, I am not satisfied with my performance. But me and everybody in the same position we must try again. Failure cannot get us down.

Madison did not have to try again. One week later she found she had a good score of the TOEFL but doing well on the TOEFL can be difficult for some people. They may not be as prepared as Madison or they may have been distracted in the testing room. Sometimes, testing rooms are full of people. Many people are recording themselves speaking. It can be difficult for students to do well in this environment. Studying for and taking the TOEFL can be stressful. But many people must take it and lots of people have already the TOEFL to follow their plan for work or study. We end today’s program with some good advice from people who have taken the TOEFL successfully.

Kim Min Yun is a students and scholarship winner from Korea. In the Korea time, he talked about his experience. He told the people taking the TOEFL that it is important to practice, hearing, reading and speaking English. Try to hear and see English often. Speak as much as possible. The best way to improve speaking is to practice. Speaking to one friend and English teachers would definitely help. Always keep in mind that practice makes perfect.

Anna Barboo from Romania found a way of study while enjoying television shows and films. She told US News

Subtitles on films help me increase my understanding of English idioms. I learn how native speakers use the language rather than just reading whatever English manual we had or listening to a teacher.

Alice Chan from Taiwan is a very successful test taker. She won scholarship money for her TOEFL score. She gives simple but good advice to test takers. Take it easy but be prepared.

What about you? Do you plan to take the TOEFL? If you have already taken it, what was your experience? What is the best advice you have heard? You can leave a comment on our website or email us at radio@radioenglish.net

You can also comment on Facebook at facebook.com/spotlightradio

The writer of this program was Rina Dam. The producer was Bruce Colon. The voices you heard were from the United Kingdom and The United States. All quotes were adapted for this programs and voiced by spotlight. You can listen to this program again and read it on the Internet at [www.radioenglish.net](http://www.radioenglish.net/). This program is called Taking the TOEFL. We hope you can join us again for the next spotlight program. Good bye.