

Audio Index: 15:22

Would you want to have a special **talent** in something? Maybe as a musician or an athlete? I'm **of two minds about** this. Sometimes I watch TV or read about someone who has a special talent. This was true during the Olympics. Some of those athletes I saw were very talented. Whether it was **playing soccer, running track, ice skating, or doing gymnastic routines**, you could see how **gifted** they were and how **well-trained** and **focused** they were. I get the same feeling when I see musicians who can sing well or play an instrument easily. Watching or listening to them can **take your breath away**. I sometimes wish I had a special gift like theirs.

On the other hand, I also read about stories of children who are **singled out** as having talent early in life. Some of these kids begin training or practicing **at the exclusion of** other things kids do, like **hanging out** with friends or learning things in other subjects. Some of these kids don't go to school but are taught at home with tutors instead. They may be sent away to teachers or trainers in other cities, sometimes even without their parents. And, sometimes they spend so much time **developing** their talent, they don't have much time to develop other parts of their lives. These kids often **live under a lot of pressure** to perform. I **envy** these kids' talent, but I don't envy their lives.

I guess maybe it's not so bad being **mediocre** after all. At least that's what **I'll keep telling myself** when I practice this week.