

**Students should follow their interests and take advantage of their talents.  
(Letter in Malibu Times, July 15, 2021)  
<https://tinyurl.com/963akdf9>**

**Arnold York points out how unusual it is for a terrific hitter like Shonei Ohtani to also be an outstanding pitcher (Publisher's Corner, July 8). It is interesting that baseball neither demands nor expects this kind of diverse ability. In fact, baseball encourages early specialization.**

**Youngsters generally know what position they will be best at, and coaches usually accept this. This is true of all sports: Some of us still remember how remarkable it was when over 40 years ago Magic Johnson filled in at center when Kareem-Abdul Jabbar could not play.**

**Athletes are clearly better off if they discover early on what they are good at and specialize. Coaches know this: No coach would require all baseball players to be competent at more than one position. We don't ask good shortstops to be good catchers as well.**

**School doesn't understand this. It insures failure and frustration when it requires that all students meet demanding standards in all subjects, which insures that students are not given the time and freedom to follow their interests and take advantage of their talents. Students and society are the losers.**

**Stephen Krashen**