

# Talent for Teaching is 'special treat'

by MARSHA BANGERT  
Nebraskan Staff Writer

The door opens on the first grade classroom at Prescott School. Pupils immediately perk up as their "special treat" from the University of Nebraska walks in.

In this case its a tall, slim girl, a senior in elementary education who is enrolled in the Talent for Teaching program.

"It's really memorable to see the enthusiasm of the children when you walk in the door of the classroom and their eyes light up," Lynn Taylor, chairman of the program, recalled. "The pupils act as if you were a special treat."

Talent for Teaching gives sophomore, junior and senior teaching students the opportunity to get in the

classroom and "find out what teaching is all about," Charles N. Godwin, the group's faculty adviser and an assistant professor in elementary education, said.

He added that this program helps the student get into the classroom before the student teaches. Student teaching is usually during the senior year.

"Students like the experience of being in the school system," Godwin noted. "And it's almost too late if they're student teaching and then discover that teaching just isn't for them."

The program, originated during the 1963-64 school term, has "mushroomed" in participation, the adviser said. According to the Talent for Teaching handbook, the pro-

gram started with 75 students aiding in two Lincoln elementary schools.

This semester 190 students are participating in 29 schools including two junior highs and one Beatrice school, Godwin reported. He also noted that Wesleyan University has a program with about 100 students involved.

The success of the program is also indicated by cooperating teachers who were "even willing to change their schedules so that they could work with Talent for Teaching personnel," Taylor said.

She explained that the volunteers are often used when the study or activity requires more individual attention.

"The student volunteer can sometimes give the pupil encouragement he couldn't get from the teacher," Taylor said. "Every child wants to be noticed."

Working with an individual child who is having difficulty in some area is also rewarding for the Talent for Teaching student, she added.

"You're working with a child that's had difficulty and then

suddenly he gets it," Taylor said. "There's that look of 'oh, yes' on his face."

Barry McDevitt, a former Talent for Teaching volunteer and now a fifth grade teacher at Havelock School, has viewed the program from both angles — as a student and now as a cooperating teacher.

"The program really strengthened my conviction about wanting to teach," he said.

In the spring of 1967 McDevitt worked as a Talent for Teaching student at Saratoga School which included children from Cedars Home. He said that this "underprivileged and special segment of the community broadened my insights into the way children work."

"These kids did away with my stereotype of children and brought me back down to earth," he added.

McDevitt explained that even though college students have spent years in the classroom, they quickly lose touch with new ideas in education and what children are really like.

As a cooperating teacher

with his own Talent for Teaching student, McDevitt said that more evaluation of the student would be helpful.

"It's supposed to be a learning experience for students," he noted. "I think the cooperating teacher should make a stronger effort to give the student some feedback."

But while he believes in the instructor-critic concept, McDevitt also strongly maintains that the program should remain voluntary without official grades.

According to Taylor, the drawbacks of the program relate to the people involved—students who fail to meet their responsibilities and teachers who fail to let the college students do anything worthwhile.

"It's not enough for the student to sit and cut paper for a bulletin board the whole time," she said. "That's just doesn't work."

## English course booklet published

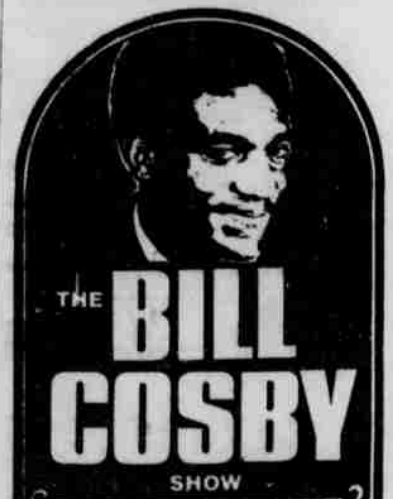
The Department of English has published a 29 page booklet of course descriptions of all courses at the 100 level and above. The booklet includes statements by the instructors of course requirements, classroom format, tentative booklists and general information.

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