AN INVESTIGATION TO LOOK AT THE BEHAVIOURAL PATTERNS OF CHILDREN WHO ARE PHYSICALLY ABUSED AT HOLY GHOST SCHOOL IN DANGRIGA.

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TOPIC:

AN INVESTIGATION TO LOOK AT THE BEHAVIOURAL PATTERNS OF CHILDREN WHO ARE PHYSICALLY ABUSED AT HOLY GHOST SCHOOL IN DANGRIGA.

SUBMITTED TO:

Principal of Belize Teachers' College In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement For a Trained Teachers' Certificate

SUBMITTED BY:

CHRISTINE WITTY

**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The presentation of this study would not have been possible without the valuable assistance of a number of individuals. I therefore wish to use this medium to thank these persons: the Principal and staff of Holy Ghost Primary, Mr. Santos Mena, Mrs. Dorothy Castillo and all who took time out of their busy schedule to give their assistance.

Finally, to all those whose patience and encouragement gave me the energy to complete this research, I extend my utmost appreciation and gratitude.

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This study is dedicated to all those abused children throughout
the country of Belize, especially to those abused children
attending Holy Ghost School: Carol, Maribel, Indira, Horace,
Vernita, Cecilia and Gareth, who are abused at Holy Ghost
Primary School.

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CHAPTER 1: DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION:

Children play a vital role in the development of our country. They are the ones who will be our future leaders of tomorrow, and if they are constantly being abused then chances are that our future Belize will be one of hatred, violence and crime.

Jim Gordon (1984) clearly define abuse as:

"Generally to mean situations where: the abuser
threatens to repeat the behavior the abused person feels
trapped; and the abused person gets blamed. He goes on
to say "Abuse can be physical as in or beating someone. It
can be verbal or emotional where one is constantly
threatened and put down."

Dangriga, one of the Southern districts of Belize is a multi-cultural society. The ethnic composition includes Mestizos, Creole, Chines, East Indians, Mennonites, Mayas and the Garinagu - the Garinagu being the predominant race of the people. Each ethnic group practices its own Religion, Culture and Language. Each culture has its own child rearing practices. Most usually discipline their children by whipping, cursing, belittling or other forms of punishment. This has been passed on from generation to generation and

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parents think this is the only form of disciplining a child. Even teachers have been found to be guilty of this practice, even though laws have been passed that corporal punishment should not be administered on any child, except by a senior teacher or principal.

According to Gilbert and Harry, 1982, Child Abuse is occasionally perceived as a "New" problem that has increased to major proportions, and as a result of this the Government of Belize has established a new programme, The National Organization for the Prevention of Child Abuse. This was in January of 1992. It is a non-profit organization, which aims to establish a countrywide network to maximize efforts to prevent Child Abuse and Neglect. Teachers as well as parents were involved in various workshops to become aware of the different type of child abuse. Primary or elementary education commences between the ages of 13 or 14 and in some cases have a very negative impact on the child. What a child gets from his home environment and encounter at school from other homes may also affect his learning more than what the school itself puts in. Peer pressure, too many in some instances, affect the behavior of a child because the child might be threatened or bullied by his peers, which is also a form of abuse. An example of negative impact of a child in school is to have a low selfesteem. If the child is poorly dressed, smelly, hair not usually combed then the other children will keep their distance away from the child.

If children are given the proper guidance, care and love at home and in school, chances are that their performances and behavioral patterns will be much better.

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THE BACKGROUND

Through investigation the researcher has gathered information that for the past years students attending Holy Ghost School have always suffered from some type of abuse which have really affected their performance physically, mentally, emotionally and socially.

Children of this kind are poorly dressed, smelly at times, hair usually not combed, bare feet and most of the time they complain of hunger while in school. If teachers would encourage freedom of speech inside the classrooms and have a close relationship with every children, and confident enough to tell them anything even their problems, and if a child has a problem, the teacher should be ready to assist. If it is something which will need other people help, then the teacher should be willing to do so.

Teachers should help to promote the protection of children. Physical Abuse is the battering of a child to the extent of endangering his health and well being (non-accident) injury. It includes: shaken violently, slamming the head against the wall, uncontrolled beating, causing injuries, fractures, cigarette burns on various parts of the body, immersion of the hand in hot water or boiling soup, bruises, welts, eyes and mouth injuries. While physical neglect encompasses acts such as abandonment and gross or repeated failure to provide for a child's physical needs, it includes malnutrition that is not the result of an organic disease.

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Sexual Abuse: This involves intimate kissing or touching, fondling a child's sexual parts or making a child fondle the adult's genitals, voyeurism, exhibitionism.

In most sexual abuse cases, the perpetrator is most commonly someone the victim knows, for example: a biological or step parent. After one realizes the long lasting effect of these abuses on a child, one therefore sees the need to promote the protection of children.

THE PROBLEMS

Most children attending Holy Ghost School have parents who are living in the United States. The researcher realizes that these children are left behind living with immediate relatives, being a grandparent, an aunt, an older sister or a cousin, who doesn't take much interest in their education or their well-being. And because these guardians do not show the children love and care, these children automatically become withdrawn from self and society. They start to get the impression that nobody really cares about them. So they start to look after themselves doing what they think will make them feel good about themselves. Some of these children have to look after themselves before going to school. Some of them have to comb their own hair, iron their own clothes and in some cases make their own food.

Since education forms a major part of children's lives and have a potential, long term influence for good or bad as explained by moon, our primary school teachers try to accommodate these basic needs by creating a very special relationship with the children. Schools as it might be is the only place where the child feels accepted and appreciated. This study therefore seeks to find out whether these type of children at Holy Ghost School have behavioral patterns as a result of being abused or neglected.

From this study effective educational programs that will make Belizean families on a whole aware of the problem of child abuse and understand ways for preventing this problem. It is striving to improve the situations of children at Holy Ghost School.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

Since the beginning of the school year in September 1992 the researcher have a very different physical outlook from out children. They appear to be not properly fed and clothed, some of these children are very aggressive, slow and readily delinquent. These children are usually academically backward.

The researcher was very concerned about these children and wanted to find out why these children are slow and have behavioural patterns. As a result of this the researcher has decided to do an investigation to find out the reasons why these children appear the way they do and why they do not do well in school.

Is it because their parents abandon them?

Is it because of poverty or is it because of socio-economic background of the family.

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SIGNIFICANCE

This program will be of great significance to:

- All teachers
- b. Parents
- c. Social Workers

The teachers of Primary School will be able to deal and help to understand why some children have behavioral patterns and perform poorly in school, and how they can help them to do better in school so that they can feel better about themselves.

This study will also help parents and the Social Development Officers to understand why children of this category usually do poorly in school.

It will also assist some organizations that deals with children, like in youth groups, boys scouts, girl guides etc., to identify early signs of abuse.

Workshops can be held to educate teachers on these matters so that they can offer psychological aid, or to give counseling to help minimize abuse.

This study will be most significant to the Government of Belize because the children of any country are its future. These children obtain attitudes and values from their environment.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Children who are abused usually come from the lower class in society and are normally backward, although their parents are eager to have them go to school they are least able to help them with their studies at school. Since these parents do not emphasize the importance of education for their own lives, "The National Commission on the causes and prevention of Violence", chaired by Milton Eisenhower, concluded in 1969 that a combination of environmental factors is responsible for present unrest in ghetto areas where the survival of the fittest is the norm often see themselves as a possible victim of circumstances and are therefore intolerable towards other children. A child coming from an environment like this does not know the importance of patience, love, cooperation and togetherness or oneness.

Gilbert (1982) after studying abuse children came up with the following effects on the abuse child. These include intellectual deficits, learning disabilities and poor self-concept. The inability to play and experience joy, a poor sense of self with the child constantly changing behavior to meet adult demands, and lack of trust in people. The researcher has also noticed some of these effects in some of the children that were studied. Gilbert also characterizes abusing parents. He claims that there is a tendency to consider child abuse and neglect as an occurrence confined to the poorer, less educated part of the population. However, children from educated, prosperous families also suffer from abuse and neglect. Abusive parents or caretakers are represented in every social class, ethnic, and cultural groups, and in all ranges of educational achievement. The eight

abused children studied, through interviews the researcher, found out that all eight of them came from poor families.

Article 30 of the United Nation on the Rights of the Child, states that it is the right of the child to enjoy his or her culture, to practice his or her religion and to use his or her own language. That is why the researcher feels that every child should be given the choice and freedom to speak out on things they like and doesn't like. Article 5 also state that parents and their families must be respected in their child rearing functions. That is why many of the parents today feels that they have the right to discipline their children the way they want to even if it is seen as abuse to the local professionals. To them it's a part of the family belief.

According to A.H. Maslow (1908 - 1970), every human being has certain needs structure. He places human basic needs into different groups. He claims to say if these needs are not met to some degree, the individual cannot move to the next group of needs. The need for food which is very important, the need for something to drink when thirsty, and the need for shelter and clothing in order for one to feel comfortable and relax. The need for safety, to have protection, from physical harm or injury. The need for love. These are the needs to be wanted by another person. Also the need to be proud of one's self, to respect one's self and others.

These are the needs that children who are abused really need. If only teachers would take Maslow's hierarchy of needs into consideration when dealing with abused

children or holds meeting with parents and teach them about these needs, this would help to break the on-going cycle of child abuse in Belize.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

Statistics indicates that there are children that are abused at Holy Ghost School.

These children are mostly children who have single parent or they come from an overcrowded home because they live with extended family relatives. The researcher also
observed that some children of this kind lack self-confidence and is very sloppy in their
schoolwork.

In order to fulfill the researcher's plans and objectives the selected abused children were interviewed briefly for further information.

SAMPLE

The population for this study will include children attending Holy Ghost Primary from Standards 2 - 5. The sample will include children with poor performance and behavioral patterns.

There are five schools in Dangriga Town and from among them the researchers has selected Holy Ghost due to the fact that Holy Ghost school shows a wide range of socio-economic inequality. Therefore the researcher have decided; for equal representation, to select a group of children with behavioral patterns from eight class in the primary division, this will give a total of eight (8) children. Each teacher/principal will then be given questionnaires to complete by supplying appropriate responses.

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Instrument

One type of questionnaire will be used in this in this study. It will be the Principal/Teachers questionnaire.

The questionnaires will be designed to obtain information about the children's physical surroundings as well as their socio-economic status. The questionnaires will also seek information from principal and teachers, how they respond to cases when child abuse is been suspected; how they deal with that specific problem and what accommodations are available at school level to assist the abused child.

Instrument For Data Collection

The researcher used questionnaire sheets and occasional interviews of children who have been selected by their class teachers as abused children to collect data.

Questionnaires were given to each class teacher who has an abuse child in their class.

The questionnaire also consisted of twelve questions, based on the child's attitudes towards learning the child's appearance at school, the behavior and performances in the classroom, and how the child socialize with his/her peers and the tardiness of the child.

How the Data Was Analyzed

Out of the eight children studied, it is shown on the chart that five children attended school regularly, two sometimes and one hardly. The chart also shows behavior as one very good, four fairly, and three poorly. For the appearance of the children the chart shows one very good, two good, three fair, and two poor. Parental interest of the

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children shows one good and seven poor. Academic performance is as follows: one good, six fair, one poor. Attitude towards exam shows five fair, three poor, without any good or very good. Tardiness of the children was shown as two good, two fair, four poor. For Physical Education, one very good, three good, three fair and one poor.

From the study one can see that there equal amount of children who are interested in school as the amount that are not interested in school. It also shows that the majority of these children attend school regularly, but one can see that although the children attend school regularly and half are interested in school, their behavior is not very good. The chart also shows that the interest of the parents is very poor. One can clearly see from this study that the children's attitude towards exam is not very good. However, it shows that these children enjoy physical education. It shows that one of the children was studied and performed very well in sports.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

Data will be presented on a simple chart. The chart will help in revealing information about the behavioral patterns of the abused children in the study to show how they perform at school and as well as their behavioral patterns in school.

Question 1:

How do you see the child's interest in his/her schoolwork?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RESPONSES	0	2	2	4
POINTS	4	3	2	1
TOTAL	0	6	4	4
PERCENTAGE	0%	25%	25%	50%

Table 1 shows that 25% of the students show interest in their school work while 25% performed at a fair enough level. The majority 50% did not show interest in their schoolwork. This is a significantly large percentage that showed no interest, which is of much concern because if children did not show interest in their schoolwork, they might not do well. This can have significant impact on their performance at school.

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Question 2:

How often does the child attend classes?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RESPONSES	0	5	2	1
POINTS	4	3	2	1
TOTAL	0	15	4	1
PERCENTAGE	0%	62.5%	25%	12.5%

Table 2 shows a high percentage of students attend classes on a regular basis while 25% of the attendance was fair. 12.5% of the students has a very poor attendance at school. Even though there is high attendance, there is a lack of interest in their schoolwork.

Question 3:
How does the child usually dress?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RESPONSES	1	1	4	2
POINTS	4	3	2	1
TOTAL	4	3	8	2
PERCENTAGE	12.5%	12.5%	50%	25%

Table 3 shows 50% of the student dress well enough at school while 25% dress poorly.

Although this is not much of significance in the children's performance it helps to stimulate learning.

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Question 4:How is the child's behavior inside the classroom?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RESPONSES	1	0	4	3
POINTS	4	3	2	1
TOTAL	4	0	8	3
PERCENTAGE	12.5%	0 %	50%	37.5%

Table 4 shows a small percentage of 13% very good behaviors. 50% shows fair behavior while 38% have poor behavior. Majority demonstrates fair enough behaviors. If the behavior is fair, why is their lack of interest? This can be cause by the abuse the child might be going through.

Question 5:

What is the child's self-image about her\himself?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RESPONSES	0	1	3	4
POINTS	4	3	2	1
TOTAL	0	3	6	4
PERCENTAGE	0%	12%	37.5%	50%

Table V: shows that 12% of the students had positive self image about themselves while 38% had a fair enough self image. The majority 50% did not show positive self-image about him/herself. A large percentage shows no self-image at all which cause a lack of confidence in an individual.

Question 6:

How is the child's parent's visit to school?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RESPONSES	0	1	0	7
POINTS	4	3	2	1
TOTAL	0	3	0	7
PERCENTAGE	0%	12.5%	0%	87.5%

Table VI shows that 88% of parents do not visit their children's classroom. Only a small amount 13% of parents tries to visit their children's school. This shows that majority of these parents might not have the time or are not interested in their children's performance at school.

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Question 7:
What is the child's performance like in school?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RESPONSES	0	1	6	1
POINTS	4	3	2	1
TOTAL	0	3	12	1
PERCENTAGE	0%	12.5%	75%	12.5%

Table VII shows that no % or (0) of abused children was able to perform well in school. 13% perform poorly, while 75% performed fairly enough. Usually a child with no interest in school will have bad behavior and will lack self-confidence, which will result in poor performance in school.

Question 8:

How is the physical appearance of the child?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RESPONSES	1	1	4	2
POINTS	4	3	2	1
TOTAL	4	3	8	2
PERCENTAGE	12.5%	12.5%	50%	25%

Table VIII shows that 13% of the children are healthy in their appearance, 50% shows fair physical appearance while 25% have poor physical appearance. One's appearance helps to enhance his/her self-image.

Question 9:What is the child's attitude towards exam?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RESPONSES	0	0	5	3
POINTS	4	3	2	1
TOTAL	0	0	10	3
PERCENTAGE	0%	0%	62.5%	37.5%

Table IX shows that majority of the students showed no interest in exams. 63% have a fair attitude towards exams while 38% show poor attitude towards taking exams if children do not show interest in their schoolwork as mentioned in Table I. With poor performance their attitude towards exam will be negative.

Question 10:
Ability to get along with peers.

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RESPONSES	1	2	3	2
POINTS	4	3	2	1
TOTAL	4	6	6	2
PERCENTAGE	12.5%	25%	37.5%	25%

Table X shows the ability of students to get along with their peers, 13% shows very good, 25% good while 38% shows a fair enough ability to communicate with peers and 25% do not know how to get along with peers. Communication plays a vital role in the life of children.

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Question 11:

Tergueness of the child.

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RESPONSES	0	2	2	4
POINTS	4	3	2	1
TOTAL	0	6	4	4
PERCENTAGE	0%	25%	25%	50%

Table XI shows that a high percentage of students, 50% are often late for class. 25% are fairly late. Children might be late for school for different lessons.

- a. wake up late
- b. run errands before attending class
- c. lack of guidance.

Question 12:

How does the child perform in Physical Education?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RESPONSES	1	3	3	1
POINTS	4	3	2	1
TOTAL	4	4	6	1
PERCENTAGE	12.5%	37.5%	37.5%	12.5%

Table XII shows that between good and fair 38% of students performed well in Physical Education (PE) while very good and good share a decrease of 13% performance in Physical Education. Physical Education entails the use of lots of energy, a good healthy body and a clear mind. Children who lack these things will not be able to function properly.

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The word *abuse* as the Webster's Concise Dictionary explains it to mean - to make a wrong use of, to ill-treat, to violate or improper treatment. Most abused children come from broken, single parent homes or homes with no serious parental guidance. The survey shows that even though there is a high attendance rate for these abused children there is a lack of interest in their schoolwork. The survey also shows that these children dress well enough to attend classes.

Abused children usually portray a not too good behavior inside the classroom.

Majority demonstrates fair enough behaviors. These students show negative self-image, which cause a lack of confidence in them.

Children need love and guidance in their lives and if parents do not provide these two factors through visiting school and keeping a steady check on their performance in school, this enables a child to feel neglected. A lack of interest causes misbehavior and interruption inside a classroom. The survey also shows the students physical appearance as being fair enough while their attitude towards exam is negative, although socialization is not much of a significant factor. A small group of students had the ability to get along with peers.

(Lennox 1991) Children's biological and emotional needs for food, love physical holding, security outlets for aggression. The quality of the emotional relationship experienced by the child from birth in his/her family and later with others, including the teacher, which plays an important role in the meeting of his needs mentioned above.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Parental interest shows the highest poor responses on the questionnaire, which is seven out of a total of eight. Through an interview by the researcher with some of the teachers, the researcher found out that the seven parents never visits the classroom nor pick up report card, nor attend P.T.A. meetings.

When a parent doesn't show interest in his or her child's education the child is being abused and neglected. The child whose mother or father never visits school or his class feels that he is not loved or wanted, therefore it is the duty of every parent to visit classrooms and pick up the report of his or her child so that he can assist the child when it is necessary. The National Organization for the Prevention of Child Abuse is trying to promote effective educational programs that will make Belizean families aware of the problems of child abuse and understand ways of preventing this problem.

It is shown in the study that the children's attitude towards taking examination is not positive. For three of the children do not like exams very much. The attitudes of the children towards exam may be related to the lack of parental interests of the children's education. The researcher found that the same children who do not like exams do not study at homeor get help with their homework. This also results in their poor performance in school.

The children's behavior has been recorded fair and poor. The three children characterized as poor behavior are what one would call a "trouble child" always-picking

fights, telling lies, stealing and skipping classes. The other four characterized as fair would get into trouble every now and then.

Children learn only what they have lived: e.g.

- A. IF A CHILD LIVES TO CONDEMN CRITICISM, HE LEARNS TO CONDEMN.
- B. IF A CHILD LIVES WITH HOSTILITY, HE LEARNS TO FIGHT.
- C. IF A CHILD LIVES WITH RIDICULES, HE LEARNS TO BE SHY.
- D. IF A CHILD LIVES WITH SHAME, HE LEARNS TO FEEL GUILTY.
- E. IF A CHILD LIVES WITH TOLERANCE, HE LEARNS TO BE PATIENT.
- F. IF A CHILD LIVES WITH ENCOURAGEMENT, HE LEARNS CONFIDENCE.
- G. IF A CHILD LIVES WITH PRAISE, HE LEARNS TO APPRECIATE.
- H. IF A CHILD LIVES WITH SECURITY, HE LEARNS TO HAVE FAITH.
- I. IF A CHILD LIVES WITH FAIRNESS, HE LEARNS JUSTICE.
- J. IF A CHILD LIVES WITH APPROVAL, HE LEARNS TO LIKE HIMSELF.
- K. IF A CHILD LIVES WITH ACCEPTANCE AND FRIENDSHIP HE LEARNS TO FIND LOVE IN THE WORLD.

APPENDIX I

You are asked to kindly co-operate by making true and accurate responses to statements							
on the questionnaire attached.							
This questionnaire is partial fulfillment of a research paper, which is a requirement of the							
B.T.C. for the award of a trained teacher's diploma. All information will be kept strictly							
confidential and be used for research purposes only.							
QUES	STIONNAIRE						
(Princ	ipal/Teacher)						
Name	of student:						
Class:							
Age:							
1.	How do you see the child's interest in his/her schoolwork?						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			
2.	How often does the child attend classes?						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			
3.	How does the child usually dress?						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			
4.	How is the child's behavior inside the classroom?						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			
5.	What is the child's self image about her/himself?						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			
6.	How is the child's parent's visit to school?						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			

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7.	What is the child's performance like in school?						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			
8.	How is the physical appearance of the child?						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			
9.	What is the child's attitude towards exam?						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			
10.	Ability to get along with peers						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			
11.	Tardiness of the child.						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			
12.	How does the child perform in Physical Education						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			
13.	How is the child's attention in class?						
	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor			

AppendixIII

Name Indian martinez.....

Class M.

Comprehension

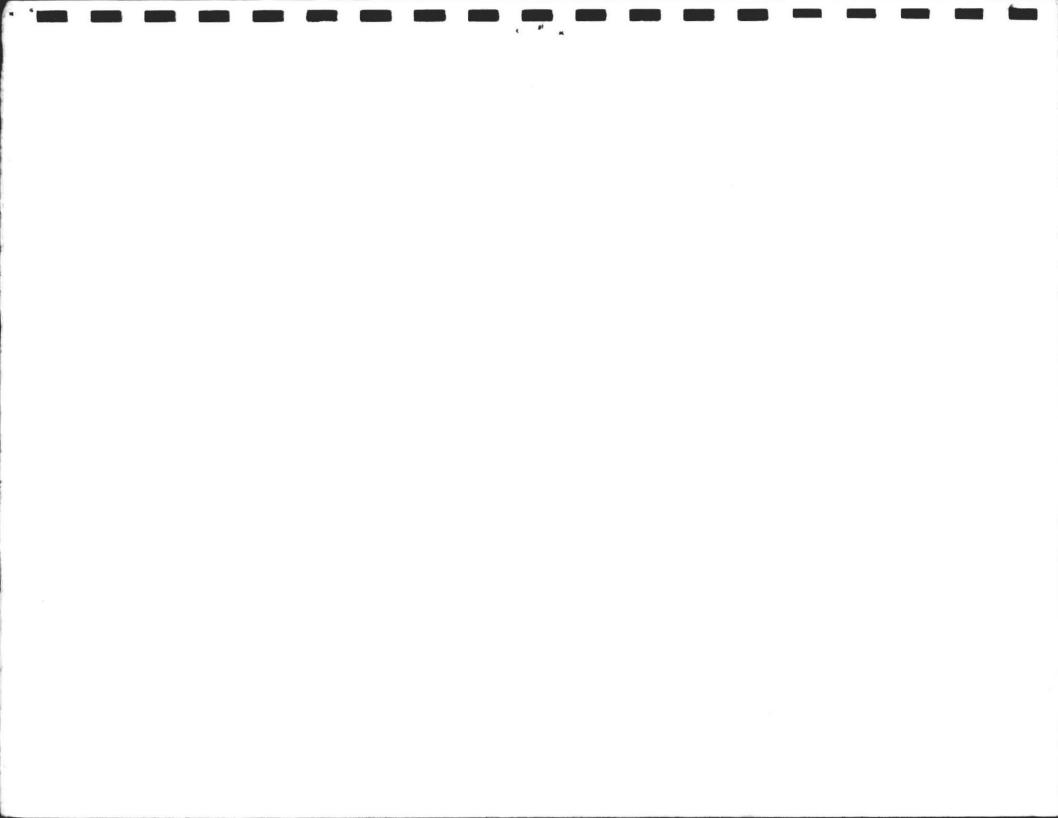
The Garden of Dreams

It had everything -everthing a garden can have or ever has had. There were wide: wide lawns with carved stone seats, green with moss. Over the lawns hung weeping willows, and their feathery bough-tips brushed the velvet grass when they swung with the tidewind. The old flagged paths had high, slipped yew hedges, either side of them, so that they looked like the narrow streets of some old town; and through the hedges, doorways had been made; and over the doorways were shapes like vases and peacocks and half moon all trimmed out of living trees. There was a lowly marble fish -poind with gallen carp and blue water-lilies in it and a big green fregs. A high brick wall alobe the side of the kitchen garden was all covered with pink and yellow peaches ripening in the sun. There was a wonderful great oak hallow in the trunk big enough for four men to hide inside. Many summer-houses were there, too some of wood a disome of stone; and one of them was full of books to read.

ANS	WER THIFOLLOWIN QUESTION .
1.	This story is about a Leautiful Quality.
2.	Write the n mes of four things to be found in the garden in the garden in the garden there.
13.	What sort of paths were there cond old placened south
waterd.	Why was it possible to go through the hedgest lecure Mapped your hedge
5.	What kind of fish ,b)flowers c) creatures were to be found in the pond?
	What was so wonderful about the oak tree?
191	What were the summer houses unde of? The some work of was blue on
8.	What kind of trees formed the bedges on either s de?
150	Med Inches

i) It word a dark preen overgoat e) It spoke to itself It scurried alone (a) It corried an unrarely It strolled culmin aloge () It for a valstocat

It was a white rabbit



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