

The R Rules

Facilitator's Guide

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1. Title

Stories from *Think Rather of Zebra: Dealing with Aspects of Poverty Through Story* by Jay Stailey and Ruby K. Payne © 1998 by aha! Process, Inc. Used with permission of the authors.

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-Elizabeth Souther

Preface

Several years ago my son and his new wife came home to spend their first Christmas with us as a family. My daughter-in-law, a teacher in Texas, brought me a little book that she “thought would be of interest to me.” As a manager of GEARUP and Comprehensive School Reform grants, I was always looking for new information and best practices. While reading a book at Christmas when my kids are home is not a priority for me, the relationship with my daughter-in-law is, so I read the book. Then I read it again. After I read *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* for the third time, my youngest son suggested I purchase another book: specifically, one with information about obsessive-compulsive disorder!

A Framework for Understanding Poverty and the insights it provided literally changed the way I viewed myself and the world. In a series of what are referred to as “aha! moments,” I gained new respect and understanding of resources and how they impact the way we think, learn, and act. Those insights were further expanded by *Bridges Out of Poverty* and the work aha! Process does with businesses, organizations, and entire communities.

Becoming an aha! Process Certified Trainer for my school district in New Mexico allowed me to present the information to adults, and over time a pattern emerged. While a profound shift in individual perceptions and development of resources with adults was occurring, the information was not being taught to students. Having worked for several years presenting leadership and management skills to young people, I began to consider how aha! Process concepts could be presented to kids in a meaningful and engaging way. *The R Rules* was created in order to meet that goal.

I titled this book *The R Rules* based on two formulas that became mental models referred to by students as “R rules.” The first formula, Rules – Relationships = Resentment and Rebellion ($R - R = R + R$) was developed from a statement made by Grant East. Basically it states that when there are rules or regulations without relationships, resentment, rebellion, or refusal will occur. The second formula is based on the work of Dr. Ruby Payne. This asset-based model serves as the foundation of the work and is stated: Rules + Rigor + Relationships = Resources + Results + Respect ($R + R + R = R + R + R$). When individuals know the rules or the rigor and how they relate to the people, goals, or things that are important to them, they can and will develop resources to get the desired results, and mutual respect can exist.

Two things that help individuals advance are relationships and education. While the traditional three R’s of education (reading, writing, and arithmetic) are very important and supported in *The R Rules*, other R’s are just as essential for learning and earning. *The R Rules* provides information, tools, and learning processes to explore and develop additional R’s that are vital for success and living well in the 21st century – R’s like resources, re-views, realities, rules, reframes, responses, and most important, relationships of mutual respect – all in a context that supports young leaders. Welcome to *The R Rules*.

$R + R + R = R + R + R^{YOU}$

A Note to Facilitators

Your *R Rules* set contains:

1. *The R Rules* student workbook
2. *The R Rules* facilitator's guide
3. A DVD included with the facilitator's guide containing:
 - Slide presentations to accompany each chapter
 - Two bonus video clips from *Rita's Stories*, a companion piece to *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* by Ruby Payne
 - Two bonus video clips from *Jodi's Stories*, a companion piece to *Bridges Out of Poverty* by Phil DeVol, Ruby Payne, and Terie Dreussi Smith

The R Rules workbook was developed for flexible delivery in middle schools, high schools, and alternative and adult learning centers, with optional activities and choices. The facilitator's guide contains instructions for using the slide presentations and the various tools, charts, worksheets, and activities found in *The R Rules* workbook. The course is organized into 45 days that may be delivered over a nine-week grading period or extended to 90 days to be used over a semester. Pacing guides are provided on pages 106 and 107 in the appendix for convenient reference. Also in the appendix are at-a-glance chapter outlines that simplify the highpoints of teaching a chapter for quick reference. A sample letter to families is also provided and can be used if appropriate.

The R Rules was developed for flexible delivery, and to that end formal certification is not required to use this material. It will however be essential that as a facilitator you have a deep understanding of the principles, information, and concepts shared in *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* and *Bridges Out of Poverty*, both available from aha! Process, Inc. You will also need to set and use a foundation conducive to a learning community and commit to a process that includes follow-up and feedback with young leaders as they inquire and use what they learn. Several options are available to facilitators. They include workshops and certification training, on-site training, technical assistance, and access to information and technical support at www.ahaprocess.com.

The R Rules has been presented to various groups of young people in workshops, programs, and training sessions. The curriculum has also been used for the past two years as the foundation for a high school life skills class. One agency uses the "life is like a card game" activity as an intake and planning tool for young offenders to reframe resources and addictions issues. A student senate president shared what he learned about resources and making a difference at a state conference, challenging other young people to do the same. The results have been very positive and support the premise on which *The R Rules* is based: When individuals understand the rules and rigor in relationship to what they want to do, be, or have, they will develop the resources needed to get the desired results, and mutual respect can exist.

Rules + Rigor + Relationships = Resources + Results + Respect

The R Rules is about developing resources and choices. Not *which* resources, or *which* choices; *The R Rules* encourages the development of resources so there *are* choices. All people are problem solvers

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and have resources. Often unnoticed because of environmental or cultural norms, individual resources may be undervalued. Resources are generally thought of in terms of financial assets, but the reality is that financial resources, while very important, do not explain the differences in the success of individuals. Other resources, just as vital for success and wellbeing, are presented in *The R Rules*. The more resources available to an individual, the more choices that individual will have.

When young people set goals or develop a future picture, the items in those goals and pictures tend to be similar: high school diploma, college degree, job, family, nice house, car, and a lot of money. Too often these outcomes are simply abstract words, ideas, and concepts. In order to transform them into realities, concrete processes, strategies, tools, access, and the opportunity to learn in relationships of mutual respect are needed. *The R Rules* was designed to provide those tools, processes, and relationships. As a facilitator you will set the structure and create a culture of inquiry, mutual respect, and hope as you work *with* participants to identify and increase resources and skills.

Thank you for your commitment to this important work. I look forward to learning how you use *The R Rules* to make a difference. I hope the information will be beneficial in your work with young people as you build resources to invent and discover, to fight injustice and fear, and to create the world we all want to live in.