Slide 1

A Framework for Understanding Poverty

Ruby K. Payne, Ph.D.

**Overview
Presented by Beth Mills
BPS Office of Title I**

aha!
Process, Inc.

aha! Process, Inc., Highlands, TX
www.ahaprocess.com

1

Slide 2

My Personal Experience with Class

Place a check next to each of the following that applies to you:

NOTE: The purpose of this exercise is simply to illustrate that the broader a person's experience, the greater the potential understanding of different economic realities. There is no assigned value (good or bad) for any item.

☐ have ever lived in a trailer/mobile home
☐ have ever lived in a home larger than 10,000 square feet
☐ have ever lived in an inner city
☐ have ever traveled to a Third World country
☐ have two friends who grew up in poverty
☐ have flown in an airplane
☐ have taken a vacation more than 50 miles from home and did not stay with a relative
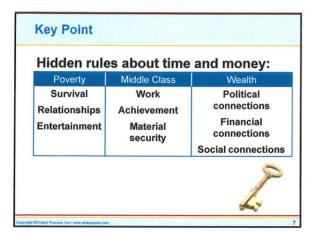☐ have had private music lessons … MORE

2

Slide 3

Continuum of Resources

UNDER-RESOURCED	RESOURCED
Instability/crisis	Stability
Isolation	Exposure
Dysfunction	Functionality
Concrete reality	Abstract representational reality
Casual, oral language	Written, formal register
Thought polarization	Option seeking
Survival	Abundance
No work/intermittent work	Work/careers/larger cause
Poverty	Wealth
Less educated	More educated

3

Slide 4

Key Point

Generational and situational poverty are different.

Generational Poverty — Situational Poverty — Middle Class — New Money — Old Money

4

Slide 5

Key Point

Most schools and businesses operate from middle-class norms and values.

5

Slide 6

Key Point

Individuals bring with them the hidden rules of the class in which they were raised.

6

Key Point

Hidden rules about time and money:

Poverty	Middle Class	Wealth
Survival	Work	Political connections
Relationships	Achievement	Financial connections
Entertainment	Material security	Social connections

7

Key Point

Three things that help one move out of poverty are:

- Education
- Relationships
- Employment

8

10 ACTIONS

	Action	Why?
1	Build relationships of mutual respect.	Motivation for learning.
2	Teach students the hidden rules of school.	Hidden rules break relationships, and without relationships learning is decreased.
3	Analyze the resources of your students, and make interventions based on resources the students have access to.	Interventions do not work if they are based on resources that are not available.
4	Teach formal register, the language of school and work.	To understand written text, which is essential for success at school and work.
5	Teach abstract processes.	All learning involves what, why, and how. The how piece must be directly taught for tasks to be done.
6	Teach mental models.	Mental models translate between the abstract representational world and the sensory concrete world.
7	Teach students how to plan.	To control impulsivity for task completion.
8	Use the adult voice and reframing to change behaviors.	To maintain relationships and get the appropriate behaviors.
9	Understand the family resources and dynamics.	To better understand the resources the child has access to and better select interventions.
10	Teach how to ask questions.	So students can get past the third grade reading level so they can get inside their head and know what they know and what they don't know.

9

ACTION 1

Build relationships of mutual respect.
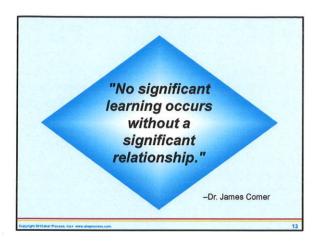
WHY?
Motivation for learning.

10

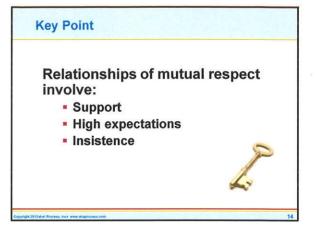## What makes the biggest difference in the success of a child?

ONE GOOD ADULT

In a study of 14,879 individuals aged 12–25 years against 1.5 million data points.

—Dr. Tony Bates, in a speech in Dublin, Ireland, April 19, 2012

Key Point

Four reasons one leaves poverty are:
- Too painful to stay
- Vision or goal
- Key relationship
- Special talent/skill

12

"No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship."

–Dr. James Comer

Copyright 2012 aha! Process, Inc• www.ahaprocess.com   13

Key Point

Relationships of mutual respect involve:
- Support
- High expectations
- Insistence

Copyright 2012 aha! Process, Inc• www.ahaprocess.com   14

Mutual Respect

Relationships of mutual respect must have three things present:

- **Support:** the direct-teaching of process and mental models.
- **High expectations:** the approach that says, "I know you can do it, and you will."
- **Insistence:** the motivation and persistence that come from the relationship.

Copyright 2012 aha! Process, Inc• www.ahaprocess.com   15

Mutual Respect

For mutual respect to exist, there must be *structure, consequence, and choice.*

Structure is the external parameters and internal boundaries.

Consequence is what happens when structure is not honored.

Choice is an individual decision regarding those parameters and boundaries.

Copyright 2012 aha! Process, Inc• www.ahaprocess.com   16

Creating Relationships

DEPOSITS	WITHDRAWALS
Seeking first to understand	Seeking first to be understood
Keeping promises	Breaking promises
Kindnesses, courtesies	Unkindnesses, discourtesies
Clarifying expectations	Violating expectations
Loyalty to the absent	Disloyalty, duplicity
Apologies	Pride, conceit, arrogance
Open to feedback	Rejecting feedback

Note: Adapted from *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, by Stephen Covey, 1989.

Copyright 2012 aha! Process, Inc• www.ahaprocess.com   17

Creating Relationships

DEPOSITS MADE TO INDIVIDUAL IN POVERTY	WITHDRAWALS MADE FROM INDIVIDUAL IN POVERTY
Appreciation for humor and entertainment provided by the individual	Put-downs or sarcasm about the humor or the individual
Acceptance of what the individual cannot say about a person or situation	Insistence and demands for full explanation about a person or situation
Respect for the demands and priorities of relationships	Insistence on the middle-class view of relationships
Using the adult voice	Using the parent voice
Assisting with goal setting	Telling the individual his/her goals
Identifying options related to available resources	Making judgments based on the value and availability of resources
Understanding the importance of personal freedom, speech, and individual personality	Assigning pejorative character traits to the individual

Copyright 2012 aha! Process, Inc• www.ahaprocess.com   18

Creating an Environment of Mutual Respect

1. Know something about each student.
2. Engage in behaviors that indicate affection for each student.
3. Bring student interests into content and personalize learning activities.
4. Engage in physical behaviors that communicate interest in students.
5. Use humor when appropriate.
6. Consistently enforce positive and negative consequences.

–Robert J. Marzano, *The Art and Science of Teaching*, 2007

ACTION 2

Teach students the hidden rules of school.

WHY?

Hidden rules break relationships, and without relationships learning is decreased.

20

Hidden Rules

- Hidden rules are the *"unspoken cues and habits of a group."*
- These rules become part of your belief system and guide how you behave.
- Relationships can be broken when you don't know the hidden rules.
- A lack of knowledge of hidden rules can limit your interaction with people who are different from you.

21

Hidden Rules of Economic Class

	POVERTY	MIDDLE CLASS	WEALTH
POSSESSIONS	People.	Things.	One-of-a-kind objects, legacies, pedigrees.
MONEY	To be used, spent.	To be managed.	To be conserved, invested.
PERSONALITY	Is for entertainment. Sense of humor is highly valued.	Is for acquisition and stability. Achievement is highly valued.	Is for connections. Financial, political, social connections are highly valued.
SOCIAL EMPHASIS	Social inclusion of the people they like.	Emphasis is on self-governance and self-sufficiency.	Emphasis is on social exclusion.
FOOD	Key question: Did you have enough? Quantity important.	Key question: Did you like it? Quality important.	Key question: Was it presented well? Presentation important.
CLOTHING	Clothing valued for individual style and expression of personality.	Clothing valued for its quality and acceptance into the norms of middle class. Label important.	Clothing valued for its artistic sense and expression. Designer important.
TIME	Present most important. Decisions made for moment based on feelings or survival.	Future most important. Decisions made against future ramifications.	Traditions and past history most important. Decisions made partially on basis of tradition decorum.

22

Hidden Rules of Economic Class
(continued)

	POVERTY	MIDDLE CLASS	WEALTH
EDUCATION	Valued and revered as abstract but not as reality. Education is about facts.	Crucial for climbing success ladder and making money.	Necessary tradition for making and maintaining connections.
DESTINY	Believes in fate. Cannot do much to mitigate chance.	Believes in choice. Can change future with good choices now.	*Noblesse oblige.*
LANGUAGE	Casual register. Language is about survival.	Formal register. Language is about negotiation.	Formal register. Language is about connection.
FAMILY STRUCTURE	Tends to be matriarchal.	Tends to be patriarchal.	Depends on who has/controls money.
WORLD VIEW	Sees world in terms of local setting.	Sees world in terms of national setting.	Sees world in terms of an international view.
LOVE	Love and acceptance conditional, based on whether individual is liked.	Love and acceptance conditional, based largely on achievement.	Love and acceptance conditional, related to social standing and connections.
DRIVING FORCES	Survival, relationships, entertainment.	Work and achievement.	Financial, political, social connections.

23

Key Point

Hidden rules about time and money:

Poverty	Middle Class	Wealth
Survival	Work	Political connections
Relationships	Achievement	Financial connections
Entertainment	Material security	Social connections

24

Key Point

We can neither excuse nor scold students. We must teach our students.

25

Key Point

We must teach students that there are two sets of rules.

Example: Basketball does not have the same rules as football.

26

Time

POVERTY
- Present most important
- Decisions made for the moment based on feelings or survival

MIDDLE CLASS
- Future most important
- Decisions made against future ramifications

WEALTH
- Traditions and past history most important
- Decisions made partially on basis of tradition/decorum

27

Destiny

POVERTY
- Believes in fate
- Cannot do much to mitigate chance

MIDDLE CLASS
- Believes in choice
- Can change future with good choices now

WEALTH
- *Noblesse oblige*

28

ACTION 3

Analyze the resources of your students and make interventions based on the resources the students have access to.

WHY?

Interventions do not work if they are based on resources that are not available.

29

Resources

To better understand people from poverty, the definition of poverty will be:

"The extent to which an individual does without resources."

30

Resources

Financial
Having the money to purchase goods and services.

Emotional
Being able to choose and control emotional responses, particularly to negative situations, without engaging in self-destructive behavior. This is an internal resource and shows itself through stamina, perseverance, and choices.

Mental
Having the mental abilities and acquired skills (reading, writing, computing) to deal with daily life.

Resources (continued)

Spiritual
Believing in divine purpose and guidance. Having hope or a future story.

Physical
Having physical health and mobility.

Support Systems
Having friends, family, and backup resources available to access in times of need. These are external resources.

Resources (continued)

Relationships/Role Models
Having frequent access to adult(s) who are appropriate, who are nurturing to the child, and who do not engage in self-destructive behavior.

Knowledge of Hidden Rules
Knowing the unspoken cues and habits of a group.

Formal Register
Having the vocabulary, language ability, and negotiation skills necessary to succeed in school and/or work settings.

Resources

Interventions work only if they are based on resources to which a student has access OR if the resource base is provided.
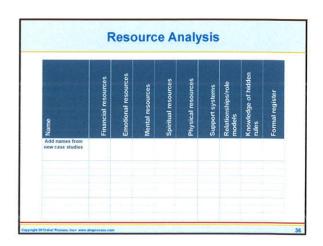

Video Clip

People Like Us

"Tammy's Story"

Resource Analysis

Name	Financial resources	Emotional resources	Mental resources	Spiritual resources	Physical resources	Support systems	Relationships/role models	Knowledge of hidden rules	Formal register
Add names from new case studies									

Creating Interventions

RESOURCE	QUESTIONS TO DETERMINE BEST INTERVENTION
Financial	• Can the student afford the field trip, or is a scholarship needed for him/her? • Can the student afford supplies for the project/science fair/other activity? • Is the student hungry, or must a linkage to food be found?
Emotional	• Can the student verbalize choices? • Does the student have the language to mediate situations without resorting to fists?
Mental	• Can the student read at his/her grade level? • Can the student identify the final product or task? • Does the student know what will be evaluated and how?
Spiritual	• Does the student believe he/she has some control over the situation, or does he/she say there is nothing he/she can do? • Does the student have a future story and a plan to go with it?
Physical	• Is the student clean? • Are the student's clothes clean? • Can the student physically take care of himself/herself?

37

Creating Interventions

RESOURCE	QUESTIONS TO DETERMINE BEST INTERVENTION
Support systems	• Is the student the primary support system for his/her household? • Is there enough stability in the home that the student can have a place to keep and do work?
Relationships/role models	• Does the student have at least one adult who is nurturing and caring? • Does the student have three or more adults who care about him/her? • Are all of his/her significant relationships with peers?
Knowledge of hidden rules	• Does the student use the "appropriate" school response to situations? • Does the student try to be invisible?
Formal register	• Does the student have access to formal register at home? • Does the student get right to the point when telling a story? Does the student begin at the end of the story and tell the story in no particular order?

38

ACTION 4

Teach formal register, the language of school and work.

WHY?

To understand written text, which is essential for success at school and work.

39

Registers of Language

REGISTER	EXPLANATION
FROZEN	Language that is always the same. For example: Lords Prayer, wedding vows, etc.
FORMAL	The standard sentence syntax and word choice of work and school. Has complete sentences and specific word choice.
CONSULTATIVE	Formal register when used in conversation. Discourse pattern not quite as direct as formal register.
CASUAL	Language between friends, characterized by a 400- to 800-word vocabulary. Word choice general and not specific. Conversation dependent upon nonverbal assists. Sentence syntax often incomplete.
INTIMATE	Language between lovers or twins. Language of sexual harassment.

Adapted from Martin Joos

40

Formal Register

Most of the abstract words are in formal register.

41

Research About Language in Children, Ages 1 to 4, in Stable Households by Economic Group			
Number of words exposed to	Economic group	Affirmations (strokes)	Prohibitions (discounts)
13 million words	Welfare	1 for every	2
26 million words	Working class	2 for every	1
45 million words	Professional	6 for every	1

Note: From *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children*, by B. Hart and T. R. Risley, 1995.

42

To survive in poverty, one must rely upon nonverbal, sensory, and reactive skills.

To survive in school or at work, one must use verbal, abstract, and proactive skills.

43

ACTION 5

Teach abstract processes.

WHY?
All learning involves *what, why*, and *how*. The *how* piece must be directly taught for tasks to be done.
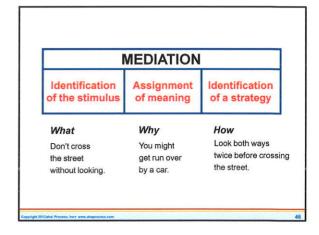
44

Mediation

STIMULUS	MEANING	STRATEGY
What	*Why*	*How*

Mental Prowess

45

MEDIATION		
Identification of the stimulus	Assignment of meaning	Identification of a strategy
What	*Why*	*How*
Don't cross the street without looking.	You might get run over by a car.	Look both ways twice before crossing the street.

46

What Does This Mean in the Classroom?

When a student cannot:	One will often see this:
Use planning behaviors ...	Does not get his/her work done; is impulsive.
Focus perception on a specific stimulus ...	Misses parts of the task; cannot find the information on the page.
Control impulsivity ...	Cannot plan.
Explore data systematically ...	Does not have a method for checking work, for getting all the work done, and for finding complete answers.
Use appropriate and accurate labels (vocabulary) ...	Does not have the words to explain; cannot label processes; uses generic words, e.g., "Get that thing."
Organize space with stable systems of reference ...	Cannot read a map; cannot use the procedures in math.

47

What Does This Mean in the Classroom?

When a student cannot:	One will often see this:
Orient data in time ...	Cannot sequence or plan; cannot follow directions.
Identify constancies across variations ...	Cannot make judgments or generalizations; cannot identify patterns.
Gather precise and accurate data ...	Cannot tell specifically when, where, and how something happened.
Consider two sources of information at once ...	Cannot compare and contrast; does a different assignment the way the first one was done, whether appropriate or not.
Organize data (parts of a whole) ...	Cannot explain why; does not recognize when something is missing.
Visually transport data ...	Cannot cheat because he/she cannot copy.

48

ACTION 6

Teach mental models.

WHY?

Mental models translate between the abstract representational world and the sensory concrete world.

A mental model is a story, analogy, or a drawing.

Mental models translate between the sensory and the abstract.

Video Clip

John Q
(explanation of disease including "sponge")

Vocabulary and Mental Model Development for Early Childhood Education

Mental Models for English Language Arts Grades 6–12

- We have mental model publications for math and language arts for elementary and secondary students.

ACTION 7

Teach students how to plan.

WHY?

To control impulsivity for task completion.

If an individual depends upon a random, episodic story structure for memory patterns, lives in an unpredictable environment, and HAS NOT DEVELOPED THE ABILITY TO PLAN, then ...

If an individual cannot plan, he/she CANNOT PREDICT.

If an individual cannot predict, he/she CANNOT IDENTIFY CAUSE AND EFFECT.

If an individual cannot identify cause and effect, he/she CANNOT IDENTIFY CONSEQUENCE.

If an individual cannot identify consequence, he/she CANNOT CONTROL IMPULSIVITY.

If an individual cannot control impulsivity, he/she HAS AN INCLINATION TOWARD CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR.

55

ACTION 8

Use the adult voice and reframing to change behaviors.

WHY?

To maintain relationships and get the appropriate behaviors.

56

Voices

Parent (telling)	Child (whining)	Adult (asking)
• You shouldn't do that. • It's wrong to ... • That's stupid, immature. • You are good, bad, worthless, beautiful.	• Quit picking on me! • You don't love me! • I hate you! • You're ugly. • It's your fault. • You made me do it.	• I need ... • What's your plan? • What are your choices? • If you did know, what would you say?

Note. Adapted from work of Eric Berne

57

Voices

If you are forced to become your own parent while quite young, you tend to have two of the three voices:

- **Child**
- **Negative parent**

58

Voices

The adult voice allows one to resolve a conflict, yet still maintain the relationship.

59

Voices

If you have only two voices (child and negative parent), everything is about power and control.

60

Voices

The voice you start in is usually the voice that determines the outcome.

61

Video Clip

Finding Forrester

62

Reframing

- Reframing uses the adult voice to view the situation differently so that the desired behavior is compatible with the identity.

- Reframing doesn't work if the individual has a biochemical issue or an addiction.

63

ACTION 9

Understand the family resources and dynamics.

WHY?

To better understand the resources the child has access to and better select interventions.

64

Family Structure and Function

Family function is the extent to which a child (individual under the age of 18) gets these needs met:

- Material necessities
- Learning
- Self-respect
- Peer relationships,
- Harmony and stability

Note. From The Developing Person Through the Life Span, 7th ed., by K. S. Berger, 2007, p. 359.

65

Family Structure

Function and structure are related to family income.

"If economic hardship is ongoing and parents have little education, that increases stress, making adults tense and hostile toward their partners and children."

Note. From The Developing Person Through the Life Span, 7th ed., by K. S. Berger, 2007, p. 362.

66

Family Structure

Two factors interfere with family function:

- low income
- high conflict

Many families experience both—because financial stress increases conflict and vice versa

Note. From The Developing Person Through the Life Span, 7th ed., quote by McLanahan in K. S. Berger, 2007, p. 362.

67

ACTION 10

Teach how to ask questions.

WHY?

So students can get past the third-grade reading level—and so they can get inside their head and know what they know and what they don't know.

68

10 ACTIONS

Action	Which do you already do?	Which of these will you add?
1 Build relationships of mutual respect.		
2 Teach students the hidden rules of school.		
3 Analyze the resources of your students, and make interventions based on resources the students have access to.		
4 Teach formal register, the language of school and work.		
5 Teach abstract processes.		
6 Teach mental models.		
7 Teach students how to plan.		
8 Use the adult voice and reframing to change behaviors.		
9 Understand the family resources and dynamics.		
10 Teach how to ask questions.		

69