

ART ENCOUNTERS  
EDUCATION PROGRAM  
2004-2005

# FRIENDLY CLUES STUDY GUIDE



Friends of the Arts  
Regional arts Council PO Box 386,  
Plymouth, NH 03264  
603-536-1182  
[www.friends-of-the-arts.org](http://www.friends-of-the-arts.org)

# FRIENDLY CLUES STUDY GUIDE:

## Rebecca Rule

This Friendly Clues Study Guide provides supplementary information and activities to enhance the upcoming Art Encounters Education Program at your school. The guide was developed to assist teachers in making connections between the arts enrichment program and their curriculum.

### Inside you will find:

- 1. Background information about the artist**
- 2. Student Activity sheets:** Your students can prepare for the experience by thinking about a character and what makes that character interesting.
- 3. Resource Links:** Suggested books/videos, and websites.
- 4. Art Encounters Education Program History:** Serving schools since 1978!
- 5. Audience Responsibility:** Prepare your students for a live presentation.
- 6. Letter to parents:** Let your community know what wonderful cultural program you provide for your students! Invite them to attend part of Rebecca Rule's day at your school.
- 7. Program Evaluation Form:** Help us to continue improving how we serve your school!

# 1. Background Information about the Artist:

## MEET REBECCA RULE

**Who:** Rebecca Rule is a native New Hampshire author and performer, who is best known for her live presentations of humorous New Hampshire stories. Author of two collections of short fiction, including *The Best Revenge* (University Press of New England). Named Outstanding Work of Fiction by the NH Writers Project and listed as one of five “Essential NH Books” by *New Hampshire Magazine*, it has been reissued in paperback this spring 2004. She co-authored two how-to books with Susan Wheeler: *Creating the Story* and *True Stories* (both published by Heinemann). She also writes a column on NH books and writers, *Bookmarks*, that appears in the *Concord Monitor*, *Nashua Telegraph*, and *Portsmouth Herald*. Her audio tapes include: “Perley Gets a Dump Sticker”, “Fishing with George”, and “Mavis Goes to Yoga”.

**What:** Rebecca will share stories and talk about how they came to be in an assembly and will blend a good portion of humor with a smattering of character development, and a hint of storytelling. Young authors can bring their stories to small group workshops where a group discussion will work to highlight and develop elements of writing.

**Where:** Rebecca’s stories reflect the Yankee culture of New Hampshire, both the contemporary culture and past generations’ cultures found in stories that have been passed down in families and communities.

**When:** Rebecca Rule will be coming to \_\_\_\_\_ school on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

### Listen for these Vocabulary words:

**Voice:** The writer’s presence on the page

**Glacial Erratic:** Big rock

**Tolerance :** Being open to differences, embracing them

**Humor.** An attitude that gets us through the tough stuff

**Word Collage;** two or more writers combining pieces of their work in creative ways- using music, movement, simple props- to present to an audience

## 2. Student Activity Sheet

### Mining for Stories

*A great way to prepare for Becky's visit is to think about stories and people you know, and to open your mind to creative connections. Bring your character and/or story to her presentation/workshop!*

#### **Activity One:**

Start by putting on some "mood music"- something that evokes emotion- no words.

Next, think about stories that are "close to home" for you. Begin where you live, mine what you know, imagine possibilities- what if...?

#### **Activity Two:**

Start by looking at abstract art- something strange and evocative, like Chagall. Write in response to pieces of the painting rather than the whole.

#### ***Rebecca says:***

"The most important thing a writer brings to the page is his or her unique experience. Learning to write is learning to observe, analyze, think, be open, and to value your own experience. Writers know they have something to say to readers. Writers know their mission. My main mission is to make people laugh- and I'm very serious about it."

### **3. Resource Links: For More Information....**

**The Best Revenge**, by Rebecca Rule, University Press of New England.

**Creating the Story: Guide For Writers** by Rebecca Rule and Sue Wheeler. Heinemann.

Rebecca's audio tapes: "**Perley Gets a Dump Sticker**", "**Fishing with George**", and "**Mavis Goes to Yoga**".

[www.beckyrule.com](http://www.beckyrule.com)

## **4. History and Mission of the *Art Encounters* Education Program**

*The mission of the Art Encounters Education program is to expose and connect area students to a broad base of arts and cultures, through in-school and bus-in arts performances, hands-on workshops, and in-depth artists residencies. The goal is to introduce schools and students to artists and arts experiences from New Hampshire and around the world, which can be an integral part of school curricula and the overall learning process.*

The Arts Encounters Program serves over 26 schools and 7500 –10,000 students annually, bringing seven-ten diverse artistic programs into our area schools during the school year. These musical, theatrical, dance, ethnic, and visual programs include in-school presentations and bus-in performances held at Silver Cultural Arts Center at Plymouth State University.

### About Friends of the Arts, Regional Arts Council

*Mission : To present quality visual and performing arts that are affordable and accessible to children and adults both as observers and participants. We are dedicated to arts education, enrichment and improving the patronage and support of New Hampshire artists.*

### **The History of Friends of the Arts**

**Friends of the Arts**, a non-profit regional arts council, was founded in 1973 by a group of faculty members and representatives from the Plymouth State College community. The organization now serves a geographic region of over 36 small towns (POP.500-5000) in Central New Hampshire. Our programs are designed to reach year-round residents of all ages and backgrounds, and to provide both visual and performing arts experiences at affordable prices. Two major programs provided by Friends of the Arts are the Performing Arts Series and the Art Encounters school performance program. Each year we serve approximately 20,000 children and adults throughout the region. We use the art, music, and theater facilities at Plymouth State College for classes, performances, exhibits and office space; an in-kind donation.

## 5. Audience Responsibilities: Preparing Students for a Live Presentation

When students attend a live presentation for the first time, they often do not realize how different it is from watching a movie or show on TV. A live presentation has not been pre-recorded, with mistakes edited out. This makes it riskier for the artist and more exciting for the audience. It also means that the audience has a real contribution to make to the overall event. Each audience member affects those around him/her as well as the artist. The more the audience gives to the artist, the more the artist can give to the audience. Because of this important audience role, we suggest teachers pass on the following guidelines to their students:

- **Prepare for the experience** by reading any background information available.
- **Welcome the artists** to your school by clapping after they have been introduced.
- **Give your energy and attention** to the artists. Laugh when you think something the artist is doing is funny. Clap after a song or section you particularly enjoyed.
- **At the end** of the show, clap to show respect for the artists' time and energy. If you were disappointed in the show, clap softly. If you think it's the best show you've ever seen, give the artists a standing ovation.
- **Do not** eat, drink, or chew gum in the presentation space.
- **Use the bathroom facilities before** the performance begins. Please do not get up during the presentation unless absolutely necessary, as this disturbs the people around you as well as the artists.
- **Do not talk** during the presentation as it disturbs the people around you.
- **If there is a question/answer period**, consider asking appropriate questions about what you saw/heard in the presentation, about what it is like to create that kind of presentation, about the country or culture the artist has come from.
- **ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE!**

Dear Parents,

Your child will be experiencing an Art Encounters Education Program presentation on \_\_\_\_\_ at your school. The visiting artist is New Hampshire author, Rebecca Rule.

Rebecca's stories reflect the Yankee culture of New Hampshire, both the contemporary culture and past generations' cultures found in stories that have been passed down in families and communities.

Rebecca will share stories and talk about how they came to be in an assembly and will blend a good portion of humor with a smattering of character development, and a hint of storytelling. Young authors can bring their stories to small group workshops where a group discussion will work to highlight and develop elements of writing.

Please join us for the experience, if you are able!

Sincerely,

Cynthia Robinson  
Program Director  
Friends of the Arts Regional Arts Council

For more information about this or other Friends of the Arts Regional Arts Council programs, visit our website at [www.friends-of-the-arts.org](http://www.friends-of-the-arts.org) or call our office at 536-1182.

## 7. Art Encounters Education Program Evaluation Form 2004-2005

Thank you for including this Friends of the Arts Art Encounters Education Program presentation in your school's plan this year! We want to continue to serve you to the highest standards with age-appropriate and curriculum-based performances for your students. We value your professional evaluation and input about the recent Art Encounters performance. Please take a moment to complete this form and return it. Thanks!

- Art Encounters Education Program Presentation: **REBECCA RULE**
- # of students attending \_\_\_\_\_ What grades attended? \_\_\_\_\_
- How did teachers use the Friendly Clues Study Guide?(check all that apply)
  - Students read Rebecca Rule's stories in advance of the presentation
  - Students completed one or both of the writing activities in advance of Rebecca's visit
  - Teachers followed up the presentation with discussions about collecting stories
  - Other? Please Explain \_\_\_\_\_
- Please rate the Friendly Clues Study Guide information:
  - Not enough info       Somewhat useful       Useful       Excellent
- How do you rate the overall quality of **Rebecca Rule's** presentation?
  - Low quality       OK       Good       Excellent
- How do you rate the educational content of the presentation as a whole?
  - Not educational     Some applicable content       Valuable Educationally     Excellent
 Educational Content
- To what extent was there interaction between **Rebecca Rule** and the students?  
(1 being low, 5 being high)    1    2    3    4    5
- To what extent was the performance appropriate for the age/grades that attended?  
1   2    3    4    5
- What do you think your students learned from this experience in **collecting stories**?
- Do you have any suggestions for the kinds of performers you would like to see us sponsoring?  
Any specific curriculum enrichment needs we could research?

- Do you use the NH State Frameworks for the Arts as a guide in your curriculum planning?
- Is there any part of the registration and performance procedures that we could change or improve?
- How can Friends of the Arts be more effective in serving you?
- Other comments?

Please return this form to:

Friends of the Arts Regional Arts Council, PO Box 386, Plymouth, NH 03264      603-536-1182