

# *Designer of the Literacy Method Yes, I Can, Passes Away*

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Renowned Cuban pedagogue, Leonela Relys, designer of the literacy method Yes, I Can, with which more than eight million illiterates in the world have learned to read and write, died of cancer in Havana.

Leonela Relys was born in Camagüey, on April 20, 1947, and at the age of 15 she joined the army of students, volunteers and teachers who in 1961 turned Cuba into the first country that get rid of illiteracy on the continent, and later, with her peculiar creative spirit, designed the above mentioned literacy method.

After that, Leonela became the general coordinator of the Yes, I Can Method in Haiti and later in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, as well as contributing to its implementation in countries, such as Bolivia, Nicaragua, Panama, The Dominican Republic, Guinea Bissau and Colombia. The method has been adapted to the realities and languages of each nation and several ethnic groups with the cooperation of experts in more than 30 nations. Due to its results, UNESCO granted Cuba the Seijong King Honorable Mention and, after that, the Seijong King Award.

Leonela published more than 20 books on education and received many decorations, such as the Frank País Order, the Ana Betancourt Order and the Labor Heroine of the Republic of Cuba Award, as well as other prizes and awards in Venezuela, Panama, Spain, Nicaragua, Argentina, Haiti, and other countries.

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