Podcast 460: Ask Andrew Anything

Episode Transcript

Andrew Pudewa: The word diligence comes from the Latin verb *diligo,* which means *to love*. So you get diligence out of affection, right? I love the thing I'm writing, so I'm going to work hard to make it as good as possible.

Julie Walker: Hello, and welcome to the Arts of Language Podcast with Andrew Pudewa, founder of the Institute for Excellence in Writing or as many like to say, "IEW." My name is Julie Walker, and I'm honored to serve Andrew and IEW as the chief marketing officer. Our goal is to equip teachers and teaching parents with methods and materials, which will aid them in training their students to become confident and competent communicators and thinkers.

Julie Walker: So hello, everyone. I just want you to know how special this is. Today, we are having a live Ask Andrew Anything podcast. And basically, we take our entire setup from our cloistered closet, where we have packing material on the wall, bring it to this bright studio, so that we can show our ugly mugs or beautiful faces.

Andrew Pudewa: And I had to put on my makeup to do it.

Julie Walker: Well, I did. You probably didn't. And normally, we don't have to do that. But also, it is cold in this studio. And I am, it's not as cold in our podcast recording

Andrew Pudewa: Well, it feels, it should be cold. I mean, there's a pine tree right over

Julie Walker: This is true. This is

Andrew Pudewa: Or a fake one. but it is the season to be chilly. Tra la la

Julie Walker: Tra la la la la. Well, this is being recorded in December, but this is actually launched in January.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, so we'll have to see. Is it going to be colder on the day that it's launched? Then today, we'll make a note.

Julie Walker: 32 degrees this morning when we woke up, so it's a little warmer by then, but

Andrew Pudewa: January could get down to eight. Or negative two, if we're really lucky.

Julie Walker: So this is an Ask Andrew Anything podcast, which means Andrew has not seen my questions that I'm going to ask him. Some of these are from you at home who are watching here now. Some of these came to our customer service team and anything that was submitted to us that we are not able to answer because of time constraints, we will be sure that our highly qualified and capable customer service team gets back to you.

So we're good to go. So no question will be unanswered.

Andrew Pudewa: Oh okay. I think you said no questions. No, nobody has any questions. What are we going to talk about?

Julie Walker: We always find something to talk about. Okay, so these are categorized into what? Well, I'll tell you. This is a technical question. The first one from Johanna. It is technical, a technical question about our writing method. Okay. So, if you don't know what our writing method is, you may be a little confused about the question, but hopefully Andrew will give insight to both the question and the answer.

When using the keyword outline topic clincher rule, is it absolutely necessary…(See I already know the answer is going to be no.)

Andrew Pudewa: Why do I have to answer? If you know all the answers, I could go back into my warm office where I have a heater right under my desk.

Julie Walker: *Is it absolutely necessary that the student has to use the exact words that are in his topic words on the outline or can he, or can the child change the topic words when he writes a paper?*

And of course, when you're doing a key word outline, you don't put any words on the clincher line.

Andrew Pudewa: You just put the word clincher.

Julie Walker: So talk about that too in your answer.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, so in our Unit 4, we introduced that topic-clincher rule, the paragraph structure, and we have many examples both in the teacher course and in the student classes and in the exemplars and all of that. You make an outline, and then when you write, there's no rule anywhere about any unit or any outlines, even Unit 2, that says that you have to use all the words.

Okay. Thanks. Or the exact words. So, the outline is kind of like a rough draft organizationally, at least, it's a preliminary thinking: how am I going to organize and present this stuff? But as you start making those things into sentences, it's very likely you would come up with a different word, a better word, a different way to say a thing. Maybe even move something around inside the paragraph, in the sequence.

And then, in terms of the clincher, a long time ago, the Canadian teachers would always have the kids put: Roman numeral, *two kinds, elephants,* and then all the way down, and then at the bottom: clincher, *two kinds, elephant*, but I found that that was somewhat stifling.

So I eliminated the idea of putting those same key words and just simply putting the word *elephant*. And I did sell Webster on this idea. He actually, at one point, agreed my thought was better than this other way because it allows more flexibility. So they write a first

sentence, write their whole paragraph, they get to the end, maybe they're on the last detail. If they read the topic sentence and just look for two or three words that they can repeat or reflect by using synonyms or similar words, that's fine. And, one little trick that some kids figure out, I never tell them this, but some of them figure it out,

Julie Walker: You're about to hear the trick that he never shares.

Andrew Pudewa: If you make your topic sentence a little bit longer, then that gives you more options for key words to fit into the clincher.

And, I think it works quite well if the student has kind of the last detail. And it rolls on into the clincher by pulling a couple words from the topic sentence. That seems to work well without it being too redundant, which is one criticism. But on the other extreme, I knew a special ed teacher, who essentially couldn't get the idea except when she said, "Copy the first sentence and use a thesaurus to change two or three of them."

So you can go on, on both extremes of that, but I would always refer people to look at the student samples in the TWSS seminar workbook. Those are excellent. We chose them and formatted them very precisely so they would be good examples. Number two is the exemplars, if you're going with a theme based book, those are all downloadable for free.

And then number three, our *Magnum Opus Magazine*, we choose compositions for Units 4, 5, 6, and then 7, 8 as well do follow that topic-clincher rule in an effective and not necessarily obvious, but legal way in terms of meeting the rule, must repeat or reflect two to three key words.

Julie Walker: Yep, I will say that there's another, there's a number four that we don't have yet.

Those of you that are live I'm going to share–not a secret because I can't share a secret because it's a 12 days– but I will say that there's another there's a number four that we don't have…

Andrew Pudewa: …yes, I know…

Julie Walker: Don't say it. Don't say it. But we will put a link in the show notes because by the time this podcast actually launches and we have show notes, there will be a link in the show notes for an amazing resource that will help with exemplars.

Andrew Pudewa: We can't share it now because it's not until the 12th day.

Julie Walker: So the other thing that I wanted to share, what I think is so helpful, especially as the students are older and middle school, high school years. A topic sentence really needs to be about the topic in their paragraph, right? And so, one of the things that you talk about in *Structure and Style for Students* is this idea of subject,

Andrew Pudewa: Subject, which is the big thing, what the whole thing is about, like pyramids.

Julie Walker: So there's your, one of your keywords,

Andrew Pudewa: And then the word of the topic, which would be secret passages or something,

Julie Walker: And then one more word.

Andrew Pudewa: And then one more word or a couple: newly discovered or something, so that gives the focus, the big thing to the topic and then a little bit of direction.

And then hopefully if you're writing more than one paragraph, then you reuse the subject word and you have a different word to go with the topic of that sentence.

Julie Walker: It's so helpful for students to not have to come up with something if they know that, Oh, I just have to.

Andrew Pudewa: It's also helpful for people who need to write better emails.

Julie Walker: Oh, yes, it's true.

Andrew Pudewa: And I'm not saying you, I'm just saying in general. All of our emails are awesome.

Julie Walker: Well, we've suffered for each other's emails now for almost 18 years. I would hope so. Okay, Jessica, not our own Jessica that works here, but one of our listeners asked the question, *if a student attempts to use a dress up, but uses it incorrectly, do you give them credit for the dress up*?

Andrew Pudewa: Yes. And the strategy there is just fix it so that is correct. And then they copy it over. Now, if this is a teacher who has a student and the student had a parent or someone edit and that parent or someone didn't edit it to the point where it sounds legal and acceptable, you can understand that. Everybody's busy. But I would just say, they tried. So, fix it, and then give them credit for it. And then they learn. That's one more bit of information about how to do the technique correctly. The other thing that I like to do, and I'm thick in the process of this right now, is if you have a group of students, and you're reading their papers and you see oh, that's kind of goofy. That's awkward. That's flat out not a legal sentence. That's a wrong use of this dress up. Fix it on the kids' papers, hand them back with a smile, but use those to teach little mini grammar lessons at the start of class. Because if one child is doing something that is a little goofy or not quite right, probably others have or will be as well. So you can teach right at the point of need, but don't spend a bunch of time trying to give little mini lectures on their paper explaining everything. Just fix it, hand it back, and then teach something to help everybody with that.

Julie Walker: And of course, we did this with the Structure and Style for Students. Andrew demonstrates this, and probably if your students are watching it at home, they may not have had that exact mistake, but something like that. And we have found over and over again, we've heard parents say…I actually watched a YouTube video of someone reviewing our *Structure and Style for Students: Year One, Level A*, and we'll put a link in the show notes. And she talks about that very thing, that her kids actually really enjoyed that interaction and how personable you were, and they felt like they were in the class with you. So that's, I love that feedback.

Okay, one more technical. And this is Mikhail. Or Michelle,

Andrew Pudewa: Okay?

Julie Walker: *What are the best types of writing exercises?* Oh, this isn't technical, this is more general.

What are the best types of writing exercises to instill and engage a foundational base to grow into more advanced writing techniques?

Andrew Pudewa: Well, it would be handy to know what age this person is thinking because you would answer it differently. So if you're dealing with a primary age student, then copywork wins, hands down, because that patterns spelling, vocabulary, complete sentence patterns, and if it's something that's creative or beautiful, poetry or a fairy tale, then you're also patterning creative and beautiful use of language.

If this is say, an upper elementary, middle school student, I would say just use our checklists and use our models, use our Structure and Style system because that is exactly what it is supposed to do: be exercises that give a foundation for more advanced writing. And some people will, they'll feel like, Oh, this checklist is kind of constraining or they'll bring in their experience from a college teacher. And say, well, this is really different than what my college teacher said we should do. Well, we have to understand, you're working with middle school, plus or minus a little bit, aged kids. They need a lot of whatever you want to call it, training wheels, scaffolding, structure, order. They need to know what to do in order to learn what to do. They can't just intuit what to do. So it's using the principle of imitation, but in this very, almost a game-like way. Here's all the pieces, here's the diagram. You put it together, see what you come up with. And a lot of people have made the analogy, Oh, IEW is like the Legos of language and that.

So I would say just do that. Now if you are an adult, perhaps she's asking for herself or an older student who has already had experience. Well, that's where I like to point people toward this idea of imitation, author imitation. In fact, we even include a few of those in our more advanced units and courses. And so that's where you would say, okay, well, what makes, Twain sound like Twain or Dickens sound like Dickens or anybody? What do great authors do? And can you figure out something you want to write and for practice try to imitate that author? Because that then expands your repertoire of stylistic techniques and basis points.

And then I might just throw into there: good proofreading and editing is going to make a big difference. Whether you're young or middle or old or turning in a master's thesis, right? Good proofreading and editing is going to be part of that foundation. And that would be developed two ways. Number one, through a program like *FixIt!,* which is a proofreading-based approach to teaching grammar. And then also having a good editor who can make the edits and changes that give you the information. Oh, that should have been a period in the capital, or oh, that word just doesn't fit right there, or oh, the word order would be better if it were reversed, or that whole idea would have gone better after the next idea.

So those kinds of things an editor can bring some objectivity to. So I always tell my students, if you want to be a writer, you better have an editor. All good writers have editors.

Julie Walker: We're not going to get to this question today, but sometimes we hear from our full time school teachers, what if my students can't get an editor? So well, we are actually having an all-day conference, well, most of the day conference in February, our Winter Retreat, and we're going to be talking a little bit about marking and grading and how to get some help, and this is specifically geared toward our Schools Department, but anybody is welcome to join and we'll unpack that a little bit more then.

I also want to mention that you and I have had conversations over the years about do we need to create a separate writing program, for example, for university students, for business writing, for even special needs students. And what we have come to the conclusion is no, we don't need to because what we're teaching is good writing, and good writing translates universally.

We have created, of course, our *University-Ready Writing* course, which. It builds on those structural models and does take it to a higher level. And we are actually using real live college level assignments for our students to practice on.

Andrew Pudewa: On a slight tangent, people sometimes will ask me, well, do you teach, expository, narrative, persuasive, as though these are different things that need to be taught differently, when really it's not, they're a different purpose, but the skills you learn will naturally flow into any of those things. So if you learn good structure and style skills and someone says, explain something, you'll do good expository writing. If someone says, tell a story, you'll do good narrative writing. If someone says, try to argue or persuade, you'll do it well because good writing is good writing. And you don't have to work real hard on distinctions between those things that sometimes become very confusing and distracting for both teachers and students, and parents.

Julie Walker: And it kind of goes back to that author imitation. What do you want, prof? Well, find out what has already been written and just imitate that. So, all right. So Rita asks, all right, this is a little technical too. And I might have to have you, I might have to read this a couple of times.

Andrew Pudewa: I'll do my best.

Julie Walker: *What do you think are the top three necessary skills for visual learners with regard to communication, getting their ideas out of their heads and translating into words?* And then how do we practice those skills?

Andrew Pudewa: Top three skills for visual learners…

Julie Walker: I'm going to read the rest of her question because that might give some background.

How can we practice these skills that lessen anxiety associated with getting the brain to stretch into the expression of ideas using organized sentences? Is there one specific IEW lesson topic that you've discovered that most visual learners spend a lot of time on mastering before they're able to advance with the easy plus one approach?

So she definitely knows our system. But this idea of visual learners–what do they need to get ideas out of their heads and translate it into words? And she wants you to go top three. She's very specific.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, I'm going to go back to copywork because that's just a foundation. And I think a lot of people think, oh yeah, copywork is for six year olds, but once you're in second grade, now you have to be, you have to move on and go into some advanced writing or something, but I see really high value in copywork at all of the primary and even into the elementary grades. It is good for a nine, ten, even eleven year old child to copy something. and as I said, if it's beautiful, that's double good.

But I'm thinking about visual learners, they're going to attend to the details visually. Probably that's very comfortable. I'm guessing that the discomfort is, I have a thought, but I can't say it. And if I can't say it, I can't hear it. If I can't hear it, I can't write it down. So I'm thinking that's the disconnect there. So copywork is the foundation. And then, I would guess that using just the Unit 2 where you are making sentences out of key words and then continuing that verbal process into Units 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 because that's really the way the kids can see the keywords they wrote and then add in a few words and hopefully make a decently complete sentence out of that. So speaking aloud from the key word outline would be the second thing.

Julie Walker: And we teach that in Unit 2, but the idea is for that to extend.

Andrew Pudewa: And a lot of people kind of discontinue it, which is understandable because you're very busy and you want to get into all the technical things and it's a lot to do. But for a student who's kind of having a hard time just verbally recreating something. And then the extension off that would be if they can dictate the sentence, then you can write it down and then they could copy it. And then they're doing all of the parts of the process. They're thinking and narrating the sentence. Then they're seeing it go into text. That's going to anchor it for them because they're more visual than auditory. I'm guessing someone who says, I have a visual learner, what they're really saying is I have a kid who would prefer to see things because they're kind of weak on auditory memory.

And kids who hear something, but then they don't remember what they heard, but they're more likely to remember what they saw. So if they can say it and see it go into writing, so they talk, you put it on a whiteboard. That's the best thing. Then hopefully they could copy it from the whiteboard onto the paper and they're doing all parts of the process, but not overwhelmed by having to do all parts of that at the same time.

Julie Walker: Right. Good. Three steps.

Andrew Pudewa: Hope that answers that.

Julie Walker: That was amazing.

Andrew Pudewa: If not, she can write again, and we'll get someone else to answer it.

Julie Walker: Yep. Okay, Laura asks, this is a motivation question,

I have some students who like to summarize a reference paper related to facts and change it all around as if it's a creative writing paper. In fact, they like to make most papers a silly creative writing assignments.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, well, the thing about teaching is you do have the power to make rules. And this is one thing I think that's great about Webster's syllabus is it alternates between your Unit 2 Aesop fable and then your unit two article on the Sphinx. And then Unit 3, you can play with it like crazy, as I have a sample here. Then you go to Unit 4, and so you just say, these are the facts. You can't change them. Now, I think there are creative ways you can frame facts, and some kids will be looking to do that, and I would say the younger the students are, the more I'm going to, the more leeway I'm going to give, but then again, you might just say, Oh, changing facts. Well, that's called modern journalism. What? No, I'm sorry.

Julie Walker: Ha, ha, ha,

Andrew Pudewa: I couldn't resist.

Julie Walker: Right, but I was also thinking Dave Barry, but that's not a Unit 4-6 assignment.

Andrew Pudewa: No, that's a Unit 7

Julie Walker: Satire. He's a great columnist

Andrew Pudewa: So you just make the facts. I mean, you just make the rules. You have to stick to the facts. You can't change the facts. And if you do, you have to redo it. And then they'll conform to it, knowing that right around the corner is Unit 5, and they can go back to insanely, ridiculously wild, creative writing from pictures.

Julie Walker: There you go. Reign in those silly boys. And I say that because she actually says it's about the boys being silly in class.

Andrew Pudewa: It always is. And two thirds of my class right now is boys. So I'm right there with them.

Julie Walker: Okay, Lauren asks, *how can I encourage perseverance when writing is a challenge? And how can I be a better editor to encourage improvement without defeating their spirit?*

Andrew Pudewa: Well, I would recommend some kind of economic system. In my class, I use the idea that Lori Versigen, who wrote our theme based original history-based writing lessons a long time ago, she would give the kids tickets, right, so they could get a ticket for using a vocabulary word

So most all kids, especially in a group, respond to some kind of economic system. So, do this. Do it acceptably well, you get a ticket, you get enough tickets, you can use it for something, you can buy something. In our case, we're going to have an auction.

Julie Walker: Oh, nice.

Andrew Pudewa: I'm collecting up junk that parents want to get rid of, that kids might be duped into buying, but it's very interesting to observe the shift, right?

And kids say Do we get a ticket? Can I get a ticket? And so, this really does encourage diligence, at least until the point where they get involved in their own project enough that their love for what they're doing carries it. The word diligence comes from the Latin verb diligo, which means to love. So you get diligence out of affection, right? I love the thing I'm writing, so I'm going to work hard to make it as good as possible. I love my teacher, so I want to make that teacher happy. I love tickets. I love coupons, I love points, I love money. So, so you just go to where the affections are. That's the starting point. But very often what you find is that you start by an economic, superficial type of motivation, and you run with that for a while, but very often the kids get to the point where they would do it anyway because now they love doing it.

The other thing is with the editing– you have to be very careful to just fix up the paper and hand it back. And I think that's where most kids get deflated. It isn't on the paper that has the marks, but on the comments that come with the paper or the explanations of all that because they just translate that into, I'm dumb, I don't know how to do this, I'm stupid, I hate it. So I think you can get to a point with a student where they know that you're helping them, with the spelling, with the punctuation, with the things they don't know yet and they shouldn't be expected to know.

I've got one student who really likes to use very sophisticated vocabulary. He doesn't know how to spell any of the words that he wants to use. But he knows that's okay, because I said, “Don't worry about it. I don't expect you would know how to spell those words. Get your editor to put the correct spelling. And then when you copy it over, it'll be good.”

Julie Walker: I want to, I just want to camp on that just for a second because I want to be sure that everybody is hearing Andrew. Creative spelling is not okay unless it's in the rough draft and then it's going to be as creative as you want, but we're expecting the right, the spelling to be correct.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, creative spelling as you got it in the schools was telling kids just do whatever and it's fine and we live with that. No, it's, you're, you're separating the complexity, you're teaching English, you want to encourage advanced vocabulary use. You want them to attempt to write any word that their little mind and heart want to safely.

Then you fix it up, hand it back. I love this story, these are great words, fantastic. Copy it over, okay, now you're done. And then the finished product is something, it'll go in the trash eventually anyway, but it's something you can momentarily have some pride in.

Julie Walker: See Andrew's article, "Process over Product." Throw it away. Okay, I've got one more question for you. And then I know that you have something to share. I can't wait for you to share it. So stick around. We've got something fun to share with you. This is a special needs question.

Andrew Pudewa: Okay.

Julie Walker: *I have an 11-year old son with a learning disability. That includes slow learning and weak working memory. My primary concern is comprehension. I worry about the potential impact on my child's future college aspiration if this issue persists. My child's decoding skills are intact, but I'm thinking about using primary arts of language to improve paragraph writing skills.*

Do you have any thoughts?

Andrew Pudewa: Well, I would. I don't know the reading level here. It says decoding skills intact. I'm assuming that means basic foundation of phonics and the ability to identify common words. I would probably lean toward *Adventures in Writing*, right? Which is our third/fourth grade reading level book. If you can do that, I think that would be better than PAL and the thing I would say is–don't hesitate to read the source text several times. Because if the breakdown is, "I read the source text and then I forgot it and now I have to read the first sentence and choose key words, and I don't even remember what anything was…" then read the source text several times, talk about it, define any words that might possibly try to get as much talking happening before going to start the key word outline process. Then key word outline process.

If in looking at the key words, the student cannot remember what was the idea that went with those keywords. Go read the source text again. If the source text in *Adventures* are still just too stiff, then I would suggest try to make some source texts that you know that that student could read.

Maybe I would go to Aesop fables because they're short, they're familiar. The narrative line is a little easier to remember than just a set of facts about submarine or whatever. And maybe in the beginning here, you just write some source text to yourself that you know he can understand.

And then once you've kind of got that process going, you should be able to segue into the *Adventures* book. That would be my thought.

Julie Walker: Yeah, *Adventures in Writing* is one of our easiest theme-based books, so I would think that that would, that's a really good recommendation. I was thinking of our *Structure and Style for Students: Year One Level A*.

Andrew Pudewa: That yeah.

Julie Walker: But that is a step up, but I do know that there were students in that class

Andrew Pudewa: read at

Julie Walker: who couldn't read at the beginning of the year, but by the end of the year, they were reading.

And so that in and of itself,

Andrew Pudewa: The three free lessons from SSS 1A. And if those first three lessons go pretty well, then that would be a strong indicator that it would be appropriate, and if not, then back up a little

Julie Walker: to *Adventures in Writing*. We'll link in the show notes, and we'll be sure to help you with that. So, all right, Andrew, what do you have?

Andrew Pudewa: So, I'm teaching a group of children right now. I've started again, which has been good for my spirit. And one of the students, so I have a really wide age range: on the low end, I have just turned 9. On the high end, I've got 15.

Julie Walker: Mm. Wow.

Andrew Pudewa: 9 to 15 years old.

Julie Walker: It's possible.

Andrew Pudewa: I also have a very wide range of reading ability.

One can't actually read a sentence without help. And on the other end I read this whole book, in three days. And obviously the reading ability is not connected with the age, right? It's not like the younger ones aren't, yeah,

Julie Walker: in the 15 year old

Andrew Pudewa: It's generally a couple of the older ones that really dislike reading.

So one of the students, 12 years old, he said to his mother, he's said to many people. “I hate reading. I hate writing.”

Julie Walker: Ah, our specialty.

Andrew Pudewa: “I don't want to do this class.” Well, it wasn’t an option. So we're nine weeks in. Got a little bit late starting the school year, but we're nine weeks in. We did some Unit 1, some Unit 2. We did a Unit 3. And I guess something clicked for this child. I would, what I would do is I would give you a little bit of background. He hates reading, but he loves audiobooks. And his mother said that he's probably pathologically addicted to audiobooks because that's all he ever wants to do. And he also is read to a lot. So, and this has been going on for years. So, this kid's got four or five years of audiobooks being read to. Lots and lots of great literature.

Julie Walker: So great vocabulary then.

Andrew Pudewa: And once he could be cajoled into reading if he can watch the movie after. That's the big motivator.

Julie Walker: So that, that reminds me of your *Lord of the Rings* story and *Nurturing Competent Communicators.* We'll put a link to that talk if you haven't heard it.

Andrew Pudewa: Anyway, I just wanted to read this for a couple of reasons. Number one, it really shows the power of the auditory language input. It also shows the tremendous progress that can happen once you get over the hump. And he spent many, many hours on this thing.

Julie Walker: So he was motivated.

Andrew Pudewa: It's much longer than it would have needed to be to pass, to accept. And it also characterizes the violence typical of many 12-year-old boys. Not all, but some.

Midas Meets His Fate.

Once there was a selfish and greedy king named Midas, but the people would call him the tax collector. He had fifty servants guarding fifty rooms full of gold. He greedily, insatiably desired gold. He lived in a palace on the edge of the sea, with cliffs on either side of it. One day, a black cloaked stranger came erupting from a crack in the earth. But Midas did not notice him because he was daydreaming about gold. The stranger flew onto the turret where Midas was dreaming. The stranger grunted through his scraggly and stinky beard, “You may have one wish.” Midas looked up and announced promptly, “Gosh, you stink.” Then, when he rethought what the stranger had told him, he sprinted up and screeched, “I want anything I touch to turn to gold.” Little did he know that the stranger who stank was Hades. And that he would lead him to his destruction.

First Midas touched his throne, which was partly silver and partly gold. Instantaneously, it turned to solid gold. He picked up a book, and it turned to gold. So he called one of his

servants to read him a book. The servant coincidentally grabbed the book, The Bottom of the Cliff.

Okay, now this is significant because the previous assignment, which is a Unit 2 assignment, was “The Boy and the Nuts.” Right, where the boy sticks his hand in the jar, can't get the nuts out. Well, Aidan had killed his character in that story. As he tried to get the nuts out, he fell off and down a cliff and died. So the title of his previous story was called, “The Bottom of the Cliff.” So here, he's making an allusion to his own previous composition.

The servant coincidentally grabbed the book, The Bottom of the Cliff*, and right when the servant had got to the part where the boy tried to rip his fingers and broke them, he noticed that his pet monkey was trying to get a banana out of a jar and couldn't. He walked over to him to help because he did not want the same fate to happen to his prized monkey. He tried to get it, but he could not because it turned to gold. So he grabbed an axe. And it turned to gold. He could barely lift it because he was short and fat, and he wasn't very strong either. So he grabbed his servant, but he turned to gold. Midas, who was certainly stunned, fell to the ground. But, as he did, he knocked over the table that the monkey was balancing on. The unstable monkey fell into Midas' arms. He immediately turned to gold. Midas' servants rushed to his aid. Since Midas was so enormous, it took ten servants to pull him up. But as they touched him, there were ten gold statues in the room.*

The next day, after Midas' uncomfortable and unnerving sleep on the ground with twenty fixed eyes of gold staring straight at him all night long, he managed to pull himself up and shuffled across to his dining hall. He met his father and embraced him. Forgetting that he had the gold touch, he realized that he had sent his aged father to the grave. He was so sad that he tried to tear his garments. But as soon as he touched them, they too turned to gold. He implored the black cloaked stranger to restore his father to life. Immediately, the stranger, who had been about another evil business, appeared and slyly spoke. “The only way is if you go with your daughter to the edge of a precipice and chant, Let the gold touch pass from me to another.”Midas, doing this thing, was relieved of the evil touch. Thus, he touched his daughter who was with him on the edge of the cliff, but the one who received the touch was his daughter, and Midas himself turned to gold. His gold weight made him lurch off the cliff and he broke into a hundred pieces. His daughter despaired and jumped off the rocky cliff and met her fate as well.

Now, in the original, I have to note that,

Julie Walker: I just want to comment. I'm hearing the who/which clause. I'm hearing the L Ys.

Andrew Pudewa: There was the -ly, who-which. it was just two dress ups. He's got all sorts of other stuff in there. I mean, he's probably got every one of the dress ups many times. And a couple of the sentence openers. But the checklist is the checklist. But, I just want to point out, this is what he put, “the end of first story.”

And then, he went on and continued,

The gold filled palace was now an easy target. The Turks gathered all their strength, which equaled 11, 000 soldiers. They marched to the palace and began to siege it. And then he's got a whole long, long second story about the siege of this palace. And he had just come off a

book about the Crusades. So that's why he had Turks attacking. And just got to read this one sentence.

This is what happens when a very artistic child gets some tools for writing.

That night had left droplets of water on the silk threads of a spider web. The sunrise was gleaming through the droplets, making them look like diamonds. I couldn't write that.

Julie Walker: Beautiful.

Andrew Pudewa: I couldn't think of that,

Julie Walker: Yep.

Andrew Pudewa: *But he had no time to look at sights. He was gazing across the hard, rocky terrain at a dust worn rider racing at rapid rate*, and it goes on…

Julie Walker: Amazing. Amazing. This is the kid who hates to write.

Andrew Pudewa: So, I think it's very interesting. This is kind of an extreme case, but what it shows is, Yeah, you can have a kid who thinks they hate to write, but if it's all in there, if they've got that vocabulary, that syntax, that sentence structure, that imagination that's been cultivated for years, you go from zero to 60. Now it's just, he's got to work on some spelling. I'm going to recommend our spelling program.

Julie Walker: Yes, I think probably a good idea. Good idea. Okay. Well, do we have any questions? I don't see any questions from those of you that are here live. So I think we'll just say, Ask Andrew Anything.

Andrew Pudewa: We'll do it again

Julie Walker: We'll do it again. All right.

Andrew Pudewa: Now we can go back to our much warmer offices.

Julie Walker: It's true. Bye everybody. Thank you for joining us.

Julie Walker: Thanks so much for joining us. If you enjoyed this episode and want to hear more, please subscribe to our podcast in iTunes, Stitcher, or Spotify. Or just visit us each week at IEW.com/podcast. Here you can also find show notes and relevant links from today's broadcast. One last thing: would you mind going to iTunes to rate and review our podcast? This really helps other smart, caring listeners like you find us. Thanks so much.