

Podcast 490: Ask Andrew Anything

Episode Transcript

Julie Walker: It just demonstrates the power of IEW's structural models because Unit 5 is preceded by Units 1, 2, 3, and 4. We don't start here. We don't expect kids to come to the table knowing what to write.

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: Andrew, episode 490,

Andrew Pudewa: Ooh, well you're getting excited because that's only 10 away from the big 5-0-0

Julie Walker: But we haven't figured out what we're going to do yet.

Andrew Pudewa: Well maybe people have suggestions.

Julie Walker: Do you have suggestions for what we should do for the big 5-0, not 5 0 500.

Andrew Pudewa: I said 5-0-0.

Julie Walker: I know I'm correcting myself.

Andrew Pudewa: Oh, okay. Yeah, no, you think of Hawaii-5-0. This is true.

Julie Walker: This is true.

Andrew Pudewa: Only if you're really old like we are.

Julie Walker: They redid it. Yes. My husband and I,

Andrew Pudewa: 30 years

Julie Walker: My husband and I watched it for research for when we did our Hawaii trip.

Andrew Pudewa: Ah, okay.

Julie Walker: Probably not really helpful in terms of research, but it was still fun. Thank you. All of you who are here joining us live for this Ask Andrew Anything episode.

Andrew Pudewa: She likes our new look.

Julie Walker: I was just going to comment.

Does anybody see anything different about our background? I want you to know that we, Andrew, me a few other people. As well as our tech team have spent the last four days in this studio giving a much needed update to our video

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah. And we, this is a real thing

Julie Walker: Yeah, yeah. This is not a, yeah, this is, it's a canvas background, a real thing.

It's not ai.

Andrew Pudewa: Not a green screen back or something. Yeah.

Julie Walker: put this behind the video catalog shoot, so we should be,

Andrew Pudewa: I know what we should do for 500. We'll just have our wizards make up an AI podcast of you and me and we can just take the day off.

Julie Walker: I think that would go against everything we've been talking about this year. No Veto. But we'll come up with something fun and we would love to hear your suggestions about what you think we should do for our 500th episode. I can't believe we've been doing this on average of 50 podcasts a year, so for 10 years. It's amazing. So well here we are. You guys continue to ask us some excellent questions and here I am, ready to ask them of you.

Andrew Pudewa: Okay. Let's go for it.

Julie Walker: *My 6-year-old complains about practicing the cello, claiming he hates music even though he is doing well. Do I persevere with lessons? Am I ruining the beauty of music?* This is Sarah, and again, this is a 6-year-old.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, a 6-year-old has no idea what they like or what they're going to like or what they will have liked once they're older. I would just mention, you remember, dear Abby, the newspaper columnist, she went on for decades and decades and decades. She once wrote a column where she said that she had countless letters from people over the years who said, I am very grateful that my mother made me continue playing the piano when I wanted to quit right at ____ age.

Never once did she get a letter from someone who said, I'm really glad my mother let me quit playing a musical instrument when I wanted to. So I, I think it's worth going. Six year olds, they need some kind of motivation system. You've have to have charts, you have to have stickers, you have to have points, you have to have challenges.

There could be other factors involved in here as well. One thing is, does this child have a group lesson or an opportunity to play with other kids? That can sometimes make a big difference as well. Make a video every week, send it to grandma, a kind of performance opportunity.

So I would probably like to answer this question by having a much more in depth conversation and try to identify what is the thing that this child doesn't like about playing the cello, but the stock answer is no, do not give up.

Julie Walker: Don't give up. Adaptations. I'm thinking of your motivation talk. We'll put a link in the show notes where you talk about the four forms of relevancy. One being you don't call it bribery, what do you call it?

Andrew Pudewa: Contrived,

Julie Walker: Contrived. Which is kind of bribery.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, bribery is when you pay someone to do something illegal or immoral. This would not be that. No, I don't bribe you to to work here, do I? But you do get paid.

Julie Walker: I do get paid to work here. And I was thinking, Sarah, that your 6-year-old cellist, future player in the orchestra, actually, if you listen to our structure and style, our *Teaching Writing: Structure and Style* music, there is cello in the background of that piece. It's piano, guitar, and cello, and that cello just adds that richness.

I just love the sound of a cello, but I wonder how long he is required to practice every day. Maybe 30 minutes, which is a normal practice time is too long for a 6-year-old.

Andrew Pudewa: If you did want to get a child that age to play for 30 minutes, you would be much wiser to break it into three ten-minutes practice sessions. The other thing is, uh, leave the cello out where it can be seen. Or maybe hanging on a wall because it's a pretty small cello. You could do that. Oftentimes just getting it out and doing it and putting it away whereas if it's just sitting there, it'll walk over, pick it up, sit down, play for five minutes, leave it there. Come back. That works unless there's a baby in the house.

Julie Walker: Going after the cello. Well, and speaking to that, our youngest son, who actually plays the guitar and some of the music pieces that you hear for IEW, he loved music so much. We had a piano in the living room, and he would always do that. He'd be playing all day. And we actually wound up putting that piano in his bedroom because we needed a little more peace and quiet. So having it in front of him, I think that's a really good idea. There's your music question. I thought we'd start off with something somewhat unrelated.

See this is Ask Andrew Anything, and so we get any types of questions. Here is something about Units 5 and 7:

What tips do you have for teaching struggling students with the questioning skills for units five and seven? I have a student who severely struggles with generating her own ideas.

Andrew Pudewa: Just do it together. If you watch the way I teach, I try to do the Robin Hood style. So here's the picture. Here's the subject, whatever, have a conversation and get as many ideas from as many as people as possible, and then kind of floats up, and then hopefully

it settles on someone who doesn't have their particularly own idea. If this is the first year or even second year in particular, then I would just say do it together, feed ideas, bounce stuff off, get dad involved, get another sibling involved, and just make it a group effort. And don't worry about students being able to do that independently the first or second tour,

Julie Walker: Yep. Exactly. And I think about our theme-based books versus the video with theme-based. You're kind of looking, it's kind of like a blank page. You've got questions, but there's nothing on that line. If you're watching Andrew teach the students in the *Structure and Style for Students* video, that's exactly what he's doing. He's definitely culling ideas from all of them, and sometimes choosing the best or choosing the one for the kid that spoke the loudest in the class.

Andrew Pudewa: Can I read something?

Julie Walker: Oh, I'd love for you to.

Andrew Pudewa: It kind of bears on this. I've often said, and you've heard me say a number of times, nobody gets something from nothing. Right? Even Louis L'mour said, a writer's like a coffee cup, you only get something out if you put something in.

So one thing to help students realize is there's stuff all over the place that they can draw on, and so this was really cute. I do not know the age of this child, nor can I actually read the name,

Julie Walker: Eliana.

Andrew Pudewa: No. Someone gave this to me. So she, this student, I know it was a girl, but she evidently had heard me mention my grandchildren's names.

So I do have a granddaughter named Eliana, and I also have a grandson named Finn. But here's what's really interesting. This girl put together a story based on her experience with the writing program, her knowledge of my grandchildren's names, and a restaurant in the Gaylord Hotel in Florida, where the homeschool convention is that she had been to.

So it's called The Freshest Seafood.

One evening, Mr. Pudewa and Eliana, who was his granddaughter, decided to spend some quality time together. They were at the enormous Gaylord Resort because they were participating in an annual homeschool convention. They were seated at a table at the Moor restaurant (that is the actual name of the restaurant), which is on a boat in the Atrium. While they were scanning the menu, Mr. Pudewa noticed a plethora of quality adjectives in the food description. They decided to order the grilled Ahi tuna for Eliana and the whole fried Florida snapper for Mr. Pudewa. Mr. Pudewa was very grateful to spend time with Eliana. (Topic clincher. Nice.)

The waiter whose name was Finn, (oh, there you go) approached their table and took their order. Then he quickly scurried back into the kitchen. Moments later, they observed two fishermen strolling by. While they waited, Mr. Pudewa and Eliana talked about IEW's new exclusive program. Then they recited "The Jabberwocky" by heart because it is their favorite poem. They thought the waiter would return to their table soon.

Sure enough, just a bit later, the waiter came with a covered tray of food. He announced that the grilled Ahi tuna had arrived. When he lifted the cover, Eliana was suddenly frightened.

Julie Walker: This. Okay, hold on. Now I see where this is from. This is the writing from pictures from our SSS 2A.

Andrew Pudewa: The tuna flip flopped off the plate. Mr. Pudewa and his granddaughter wondered if the snapper would be more cooked because the tuna was still alive. But lo and behold, when the waiter brought out the whole fried Florida snapper, it unexpectedly snapped at Mr. Pudewa. I guess they weren't joking when they advertised that they served the freshest seafood, laughed Eliana and Mr. Pudewa. The end.

Julie Walker: Nice.

Andrew Pudewa: But I found this really interesting because it was just this mishmash of information she had about me, Jabber walkie being a favorite poem, names of grandchildren being at that spot in that hotel where obviously she was there too. So, try to help students not feel like they have to think of something that they can't think of. Help them just stir up a bunch of possible experiences and ideas and Unit 5 and 7. You don't worry about whether it makes sense or not. You don't worry about whether it has good logic to it, because then you could pick it apart. But that's not, I mean, a fried snapper shouldn't really snap. It's not fried, but it's okay. Yeah. So anyway, I enjoyed that one. I.

Julie Walker: Well, and I love that this example from a Unit 5, it just demonstrates, sorry, I'm just going to say this, but that's what I do. The power of IEW's structural models, because unit five is preceded by Units 1, 2, 3, and 4. We don't start here. We don't expect kids to come to the table knowing what to write. So I would agree. Just be patient, help them out as much as possible. And if you can, use the videos because then you've got lots of help.

Alright. *Fix It! Grammar*. I actually have a copy of our Fix it Grammar Level 6 to be able to answer this question. Not that you have to note. Okay. Talk.

Andrew Pudewa: If it's a level six question, I don't think either of us can answer it.

Julie Walker: Okay. Speak to that. Why do you say that?

Andrew Pudewa: Well, it's just because if you got through fix it six, you would know more English grammar than 99.99999999% of all English speaking people on Earth. I don't know that a lot of people need to go that far in grammar, but you can.

Julie Walker: Right, but yet it's enjoyable. It's 15 minutes a day. I love our *Fix It! Grammar*. You can get to levels. I've known kids that have gotten through

Andrew Pudewa: I have too.

Julie Walker: And they're happy, and they want to know where level seven is. It's like, just stop. If you need that much more grammar, go to college and become a writing major and you'll get more grammar, but you won't because your peers in college won't know as much as you know. Chances are okay, but here's, here's the question and here's why I brought this out. *Is Fix-It! Grammar enough of a grammar curriculum or do I need to supplement it with another grammar program?* I think you already heard the answer to that.

Andrew Pudewa: I don't know how anyone would judge that, but I do know we have lots of letters from people who said they learned a lot from this. And even some comparing this with a different grammar program they once had and liked this a lot better and said they learned more. And that's a kid's perspective.

Julie Walker: Yeah, so I just for the record, I'm going to read the scope and sequence, and we lay out our scope and sequence differently in *Fix It!* because it's categorized by well categories rather than this is what you learn in lesson one and lesson

Andrew Pudewa: yeah. because it's constantly rotating around.

Julie Walker: So parts of speech, all eight parts of speech, including action linking, helping verbs, ING words, transitive int transitive verbs, mood, voice, conjunctions, coordinating subordinating.

Andrew Pudewa: You're just starting to sound scary.

Julie Walker: I know, right? But there the punctuation, all the different punctuations, clauses, main clauses, dependent clauses. Wait, I'm, I'm now onto page two, and there are three pages of scope and sequence where it goes through all the grammar you need to know to demonstrate that it's comprehensive.

Andrew Pudewa: I just want to point out that grammar is, in a way you could compare it with math. How much math do you need to know? Right? Well, what's your objective? What are you going to do in life and how are you going to judge that? Because certainly you could get a hundred people and they would all have a different amount of math experience. Yep. And then if they were adults, they would all have a different amount of math retention based on do they use it or not. I think I'm probably a little bit better at multiple digit mental multiplication..

But I didn't do calculus.

Julie Walker: I did not do calculus either, but you know who did calculus? My brother, years and years of calculus. Why? Because he is an engineer. He's a rocket scientist, so,

Andrew Pudewa: So with grammar it's kind of the same way, only it's a little different in that grammar is kind of an art. So it's like, how much grammar do you need to, how much piano do you need to know?

So, I wouldn't worry too much. Just start doing it and do it till you're done or until you want to quit or not. And

Julie Walker: And I will say just something else about our grammar program. Do you need to add to it? Of course not. I think we've made that pretty clear. Do we do certain things in our grammar program that other grammar programs do not do? Yes, we do. Are there other grammar programs that do things that we do not do? For example, diagramming? We do not do diagramming in our grammar program. And Andrew, I just want you to speak to that quickly because that does come up. Why do we not do diagramming?

Andrew Pudewa: Right. Well first of all, one of the problems with diagramming is you can study it for a long time, and then someone can give you a five word sentence that kind of defies being diagrammed consistently by different quote experts. So it's not a perfect thing, and as long as you understand that it's fine, but if you think there's always a right answer, you end up on a Facebook group getting really frustrated with the multitude of opinions people have about the right answer.

Second thing is diagramming kind of came into existence when the teaching of Latin started to phase out, and I think it was kind of this replacement. Like, well, we used to learn all this stuff when everybody learned Latin in grammar school, but now that we don't have Latin in grammar school, we need grammar in grammar school. And so I think that's when diagramming became more, more well known. Then of course, around when I was very young, grammar schools ceased to exist. They were replaced with elementary schools, so you'd be hard pressed to find a public school that teaches sentence diagramming. I'm sure there are some somewhere. There are classical schools that do it, but my opinion would be do *Fix It!* because that's your applied side, and then if you really want kind of the analytical side, just study Latin. It's a better use of time.

Julie Walker: Yep. And I think that's the main thing. Whenever you say yes to something, you have to say no to something else.

Andrew Pudewa: How many times have you said that to me?

Julie Walker: I have said that a lot recently.

Andrew Pudewa: But I just want to make clear, because a lot of groups and co-ops and schools we know of do use sentence diagramming, so I'm not opposed to it in any way. Yeah. It's just, is it the best use of time and can you get the help you need?

Julie Walker: Yep. Okay, great. Thank you. Next question, *How can I guide a student who wants to write a novel?* And just so you know, while Andrew's thinking of the answer, he has not seen these questions ahead of time, so.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, there are a few curricular materials out there. One of them is called *Kids Write Novels*, and I really like the woman who put this together. She's very dynamic. She's got not just a book, but also like an online coaching group or something. I'm not exactly sure how it works, but if you, if you check for Kids Write Novels curriculum, I think you'll, you'll find her.

The other one that I've actually used is the novel in a year.

Julie Walker: What is that? The Great Adventure, is that what it's

Andrew Pudewa: The Great Adventure Novel.

Julie Walker: Great adventure novel.

Andrew Pudewa: been a long time since I used it. So they're available. I, I don't have a lot of experience. And I don't want to write a novel, nor do I want to teach anyone to write a novel.

So I would send them elsewhere. I will mention one thing, and this is sometimes a point of frustration for parents. You have a child, let's say they're 13, just pick a random age and they want to write a book. So they start writing a book and they go on for a few months and then they stop and kind of read what they wrote. And they don't like it. And so then they want to start over again. So then they start over again and they write for a few months or half a year, and then they read what they wrote and they don't like it. So then they start over. And this can happen any number of times.

And of course the mother doesn't quite understand why they want to keep starting over. Why don't you just stick with the one you started and finish it? Well, here's the problem. When you're 13 years old, you are growing so fast, you're maturing, your sense of language, your logical faculties, your general life experience is growing so fast that you're a different person in six months. So that's why you know, these young and mid teenagers, they're kind of dissatisfied when they read what they wrote six months ago because they're so much smarter now. And then to make it good enough, they would have to rewrite. And that's harder than just starting all over again in their mind.

I think it tends to level out a little bit around 17, 18, the kids. Okay. sometimes 16. Okay. They have their adult sensibilities in place and so now they can write, they're more willing to rewrite. They are probably talking to real writers and getting some advice on that. We had an episode with Taylor Bennett. We can link to that. She got her first book published I think at 16. She talked about,

Julie Walker: and not self-published. An actual publisher picked up her book.

Andrew Pudewa: She talked about her experience in doing that, going to writers, conferences and all that. So there's curriculum, there's resources, there's networks of people. But just keep in mind, if they're in that younger zone, they may be less than totally happy with their efforts of even a few months ago.

Julie Walker: I do see we have a question. I'm not sure we can read it. I love that we have live people.

Andrew Pudewa: SAT scores, testimonies from my students credit IEW and Fix It! for their high scores in SAT writing. There you go. One of my students scored a 750 last fall on the SAT writing portion. In high school he attended weekly virtual classes or some private tutoring and completed through Fix It! 6.

Julie Walker: Amazing.

Andrew Pudewa: Not all of my students finish through level six.

Julie Walker: There. It does. It's just a testimony. Thank you for sharing that. That's really, that's really helpful. Good. Okay. I have another question. This one is from Jennifer. *My 10th grader has used IEW since third grade, and we love it. We completed Introduction to Public Speaking in the ninth grade. What writing should we use for the rest of her high school years?*

She's specifically asking about possibly *The Elegant Essay*, *University-Ready Writing* and perhaps the dual enrollment option with Christian Hall's International.

Andrew Pudewa: All those are good options, or just the Year 2 level C.

Julie Walker: Well, she didn't do, see it's year one, level C, and I actually have that book handy.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, but if she's been doing this for seven years, but if

Julie Walker: But if wants to get college credit, two semesters of college credit, this is going to be really easy for you.

Andrew Pudewa: It would be easy.

Julie Walker: So, okay. Not too, not that easy. I'm just thinking because the..

Andrew Pudewa: But the kids that were in this had little or no previous experience. So if you're coming in with five or six or seven years of experience, this is going to be very familiar.

Julie Walker: Very familiar. I think the topics that we chose are enjoyable.

Andrew Pudewa: Pirates. That was fun.

Julie Walker: So there's, we call it a thread, not really a theme of pirates throughout. They start learning about the pirate ship that was found off the coast of somewhere in New England, the widow and uh.

Andrew Pudewa: End with modern day piracy

Julie Walker: Yes, modern day piracy, and then even doing literary analysis on *Treasure Island*.

Andrew Pudewa: treasure Island. So yeah, that's a good course.

Julie Walker: And this one

Andrew Pudewa: If you want the university credit you, you pay extra. You can get that. The other thing is you could just take a writing class. Somewhere as well. And see how that goes.

Julie Walker: So dual enrollment I think would be what you want to do. I, we talked about dual enrollment before and how. Our kids are older and so. Did your kids do much dual enrollment.

Andrew Pudewa: My two youngest..

Julie Walker: We didn't, we didn't really do that. That wasn't so much a thing.

Andrew Pudewa: My youngest daughter, Ellie, took her English comp class, dual enrollment. And it was funny, she used to say when we were going to be somewhere and she's going to miss class. Oh wow. because she was doing it live here in person in Tulsa. And she said, good. I hate it when we have peer editing.

And so she didn't want to go. And I said, why do you hate pure editing? She said, because then I have to be that girl who has to fix everybody's stupid stuff, and nobody does anything smart on my paper. So it's a total waste of time.

Julie Walker: Yes, exactly. Well, and I, let me just comment on this. We did a podcast on this one time, which is basically when do you stop doing *Structure and Style for Students*? And I love that this, that Jennifer has talked about having done it for seven years and still getting value of it, and that's kind of what we talk about in our podcast. As long as you can keep them interested and engaged, keep them writing, it's going to be helpful for them in the long run.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, and pretty much every one of the kids who's come through three or four years does go off to college, either dual enrollment or university freshmen at that age and just write circles around their peers and the professors are grateful. And of course, now, with AI and Chet, TPT, you have to embed spelling errors intentionally in your paper so it doesn't look too perfect. Crazy world.

Julie Walker: He is only half kidding.

Andrew Pudewa: Oh no, I'm serious.

Julie Walker: Okay, I have another question for you. It's about specifically *Structure and Style for Students: Year 1, level A*, and *Year 2, level A*. I don't know who wrote this, so the name was removed. *I saw that the next recommendation course is SSS-1B. Will that seem boring after completing the other levels? What other options are available for my student after two courses at Level A.*

Andrew Pudewa: Well, a lot of people will go from 2A to 2B.

Julie Walker: I wouldn't recommend that. 2B is significantly harder than 2A. They need that bridge.

Andrew Pudewa: on the age. Yeah. It really depends because if you start a little bit older 1A and you do 2A, you could go into 2B if you're on the upper age range,

Julie Walker: 2B is hard, but I will tell you that it's worth getting through 2B because then you can get through. Can you have favorites?

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah. 3B is your favorite.

Julie Walker: It is my favorite. I love 3B. It was, we had a lot of fun.

Andrew Pudewa: We did a lot of things in there that we didn't do anywhere else.

Julie Walker: Right? One of the things that we cover in 3B is we do have a section on poetry, so we spend. I think six weeks on poetry. And we also, the thread, we talked about the thread in 1C being pirates. The thread for this one was mysteries. One of the source texts that we have in there is the Unit 6. We do the escape from Alcatraz, Alcatraz Island, and how that whole mystery. And then we did early, I think it's Unit 1 or Unit 2 where the Cottingly fairies. This is two young girls in England before Photoshop was a thing. Pretty much duped the world.

Andrew Pudewa: old style photographs. They tricked people into believing they really saw fairies. And took photographs of them.

Julie Walker: Including Sir Arthur Conan Doyle of Sherlock Holmes fame. And we include, if it's mysteries, we have a little bit of Sherlock Holmes in there. So we do Sherlock Holmes in there. So yeah, get through 2B, so that you can do 3B, but you don't have to. You just need a few years of IEW under your belt.

These kids were pretty sharp and they knew IEW Structure and Style pretty well. We always start at the beginning. We always start with units one and two. We just move through it a little more quickly. We also start with the very beginning of the dress up checklist because we know we've got a lot of schools, a lot of schools who are using our materials and whenever you start a new year at school, you're going to have new students come in. So

Andrew Pudewa: Well, and kids forget things over the summer. Can you believe it?

Julie Walker: really, no, I don't know about that, so. Okay. Very good.

Andrew Pudewa: Can I read a short little note from Kayleigh?

Julie Walker: A hundred percent, yes.

Andrew Pudewa: Kayleigh wrote, dear Andrew Pudewa, thank you so much for founding IEW, which helped me improve my grammar, vocabulary, and writing. I have learned so much from it. I love writing. I even wrote short stories when I was four.

Julie Walker: Wow.

Andrew Pudewa: I used to have terrible grammar and I gave up on my stories for years. When I was in fourth grade, I started IEW, and now after three years of it, I'm writing chapter books that are outstandingly interesting and even adults are willing to read. I am going to implore my mother to email what I have of my book so far. When I finish it, I will list your name in the dedication. Thank you again, your friend, Kayleigh.

Julie Walker: Aw. I know you know this. I'm telling our listeners, you do receive some of these novels in the mail. Like, Hey, read this book. Let me know what you think. And Andrew does not have, I'm just going to tell you right now, he does not have time to read all the books that were sent to him, but we have someone on our staff that is happy to read and review them, and she's a voracious reader and actually is a novelist in her own right?

Andrew Pudewa: Well, this is really long.

Julie Walker: Okay. Well.

Andrew Pudewa: We're kind of out of time.

Julie Walker: Yeah, we're almost out of time, but do read, like, Dr. Webster said that the university trick is you read the opening paragraph and the concluding paragraph and you could skip the middle. We would never do that, but.

Andrew Pudewa: Congratulations. Dear Andrew Pudewa. Congratulations. IEW has successfully won the award for the best writing curriculum in the world, is a grand accomplishment. I don't know how Jake here. Is qualified to make this statement, but

Julie Walker: We'll take it.

Andrew Pudewa: at the end of seventh grade, I now right to tell you that IEW has been a very enjoyable, informative experience.

Although there are many benefits to IEW, I will communicate three main topics in particular. Firstly, the immense privilege of being able to meet and hear you at the FPEA homeschool convention in Orlando, Florida. Secondly, the great advantages of IEW, as well as a couple of

improvements that you might be willing to consider. Finally your teaching videos, which have certainly been the best part of this course, obviously because I was previously a rather reluctant writer. The simple achievement of being able to have hit upon a way to make a five paragraph composition tolerably endurable is enough to congratulate you.

Julie Walker: Okay. I'm interested to hear what suggestions he has to improve this course. Not that we're redoing it anytime soon, based on a seventh grader.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, you really want to hear this?

Julie Walker: I do, of course you guys want to hear

Andrew Pudewa: we, we've actually talked about this after a solid dose of story starters in italic and a small but sufficient draft of writing lessons, an adaptation of Writing Strands, which was atrociously boring. IEW was an exceedingly welcome change.

Julie Walker: So this is other curriculum that he's used. Okay.

Andrew Pudewa: From a single paragraph and one -ly dress up, you gradually added four more paragraphs, five more dress up techniques, band words, and more units. One to three were the easiest. Units 4 to 6 proved to be slightly more challenging, but because of the many possibilities, Unit 7 was the best of all. The three preceding compositions were about the Revolutionary War, and the latest was a full two pages when printed.

I regret to announce that I do have minor objections on two points. The first is that the numbering system is a hair confusing,

Julie Walker: Hair.

Andrew Pudewa: a hair confusing, instead of one A, two A, one B, two B. It seems that one a, one B two A two B would make more sense, but perhaps I am too used to Singapore math

Julie Walker: There you go.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, if we went back in time, we'd do it A one, A two B one, B two.

But anyway, the second and more serious is that the binders provided are really too minuscule to fit all the papers within it. And I was obliged to transfer to a three inch binder. Wow.

Julie Walker: Wow. Okay. Lemme just speak to that. If you've not used *Structure and Style for Students*, just know that at the end of every class, Andrew says, okay, pack up your books. We tell students how to organize their binder and where to put the notes, where to put their keyword outline, where to put the finished compositions. We're teaching paper management, which is a very valuable skill.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, so anyway, Jake had, so here's the funny thing. I looked at the date on this. It was 2022, and now he wrote. PS This letter was penned two years ago. I have now

just completed the Lochinvar story for SSS1C, which was most enjoyable. Although the checklists have indeed grown longer, the opinions related in this epistle have remained essentially the same. You can tell, these kids can have fun with this thing. You give them the, give them the pieces, give them the tools they can play with it.

Julie Walker: Yep. Very fun. Well, don't know what we're going to do for episode 500. I think we'll both be surprised when we figure it out. So.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, someone's going to send a book. We'll just read that.

Julie Walker: I don't think we're going to do that. Well, thank you, Andrew.

Andrew Pudewa: Thank you, Julie.

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.