

Podcast 550: Live Ask Andrew Anything

Episode Transcript

Andrew Pudewa: It is something we have worked on here is to keep people aware of the profound benefits of writing on paper and not falling into this, “Let's use technology to make everything easier and faster.”

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: We have probably one of the most complicated Ask Andrew Anything episodes that we are about to embark on today, because we both have video of students who are asking you questions. When I was in Florida, I said, “Hey, really adorable student of Andrew's, do you have any questions for him?” And they gave me some questions.

Andrew Pudewa: Oh, so you, on your phone. You took it on your phone.

Julie Walker: Yes.

Andrew Pudewa: You have recorded questions on your phone.

Julie Walker: I do. I do have recorded questions. And of course, we have a few people that are here in the studio audience today who are going to come and sit in my chair and ask their questions in their best speaker voice.

Andrew Pudewa: Okay.

Julie Walker: And I did warn them.

Andrew Pudewa: Do I have to use my best speaker voice too?

Julie Walker: You always use your best speaker voice. So, but I thought I would kick this off just kind of like a little testimony from a student. We often talk about our goal, I say this at the beginning of every podcast, 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. And the students are in there, but we don't often talk to the students. So today it's all about the students.

Andrew Pudewa: It is. That's good

Julie Walker: So, here is one that Isabella sent in to us. She says, not a question, this is a testimony. Yes, she loves us. “Using the tools I learned in my IEW course, I was able to

successfully reduce a six-minute presentation outline to fit on three note cards. I used the key word technique to slim down what I wanted to say without it taking up an entire note card. Having also been taught how to create sentences from a key word outline, my sentences flowed smoothly as I was able to quickly glance off the note card and articulate my thoughts. Without the knowledge from this course, I would not have been able to use the allotted amount of cards and present all of my material.”

Andrew Pudewa: Oh, excellent. Do we know what course it was?

Julie Walker: This, it sounds like it was a college course, like a public speaking course.

Andrew Pudewa: this course, like...

Julie Walker: Oh, what course did she use?.

Andrew Pudewa: Oh, okay.

Julie Walker: Any one of our courses teach public speaking.

Andrew Pudewa: Might-- Would help, help with that. Yeah.

Julie Walker: Yeah, that's very good. Okay, so if it's possible, what I'd like to start with is one of the questions

Video Guests: Why did the salt go to jail?

Andrew Pudewa: I don't know. Why?

Video Guests: Because it assaulted the pepper

Julie Walker: That's pretty cute.

Andrew Pudewa: That's fair enough

Julie Walker: Have you seen the assault rifles?

Andrew Pudewa: Yes, I want one. Peter has two in his office. He blasts the flies.

Julie Walker: You, you load it with salt, and then you can shoot flies.

Andrew Pudewa: And wasps, evidently

Julie Walker: that's... We need them here.

Andrew Pudewa: I want, I want one. Yep, that'll be my Christmas present.

Julie Walker: There you go.

Andrew Pudewa: But there won't be flies at Christmas, so

Julie Walker: no. Well, maybe next year for your birthday. Okay. Well, let's take a s- let's take a student from, who's here. So Anya, why don't you come up first? Come sit in my chair, and I'll sit in this other chair.

Anya: Hello, Mr. Pudewa

Andrew Pudewa: Hello, Anya.

Anya: How are you doing?

Andrew Pudewa: I'm doing well. Thank you for joining us today

Anya: Absolutely. All right. My question for you is, who was the person who came up with the banned words list?

Andrew Pudewa: That was Dr. Webster's idea. So he kind of created the Structure and Style and composition approach. And one of the ways to help develop vocabulary is to make, temporarily for the most part, some of the more common overused, simple words that people just rely on, to make them illegal. That forces you to go and look for other words, and that forces you to expand your repertoire of active vocabulary.

So as far as I know, that was his idea. It might have been Mrs. Ingham's idea. That was his aunt who started the Blended Sound-Site Program, gosh, a long, long time ago.

Julie Walker: And think oh, wow, Andrew, it would be almost 100 years ago. Wow. In the '30s, right?

Andrew Pudewa: I don't know. I think she put that book together more in the '50s. But if we wait around long enough, it will be 100 years

Julie Walker: So, do you have any questions for Anya?

Andrew Pudewa: Sure. Why did your parents name you Anya?

Anya: Mm. So my parents went on a mission trip, in the early 2000s to Ukraine, and Anya's a really common name over there. And so they thought, "We love this name. If we ever have a daughter, we'll name her Anya." So here I am, Anya.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, that's a nice story. Yeah, I like the stories of people's names. What, um, of our material or course or experience do you have?

Anya: Yeah, so I've been doing IEW, gosh, since I was probably in fifth or sixth grade. I've loved every part of it. I've loved doing the key word outlines, the *Fix It! Grammar*, though I think the Fix It Grammar is probably my least favorite part of the IEW. Um, but yeah, I've loved being able to see how I can use my key word outlines, whether it's in presentations or in college essays.

I've just been so blessed to be able to have this resource.

Andrew Pudewa: And how old are you now?

Anya: I'm 17

Andrew Pudewa: So you've been doing this approximately six or seven years.

Anya: Mm-hmm.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, and it's served you well. You're not bored yet.

Anya: No, I'm not.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah. Some, some people, "I'm so bored of the checklist." Do you get bored of walking? Do you get bored of eating? Do you get bored of playing music?

Anya: Yeah, and I think as I've progressed, like the checklist, I've been able to be more creative with it as I've gotten better at writing

Andrew Pudewa: That's great. And what do you hope for your future, if anything?

Anya: Yeah, I definitely wanna go on to college. I want to run track in college, um, and I'm thinking either studying, like, exercise science or kinesiology, something in that field. But yeah, I'm excited to take what I've learned in IEW and apply it to college.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, excellent. I hope that works very well for you, and that we'll see you again.

Anya: Thank you. Thanks for answering my question.

Julie Walker: Thanks, Anya Okay. Okay, can we have another question from... Can we have another video question, I guess, is that what I'm asking?

Video Guests: What's your favorite IEW paper that you've published?

Andrew Pudewa: What is my favorite IEW paper that I have published?

Julie Walker: Yes

Andrew Pudewa: That sounds like I've published papers. So I don't quite know how to answer that, but I do know that on Academia I have one paper. Okay. It's called Low Tech Teaching with High End Results.

Julie Walker: Okay

Andrew Pudewa: And every few days I get a little notification that says that someone read your paper.

I don't believe that. I think maybe they looked at it, but at least I know it's still there and people are still looking at it. But, it is something we have worked on here is to keep people aware of the profound benefits of writing on paper with your hand and reading on paper.

Julie Walker: Makes a difference. Yes, it would.

Andrew Pudewa: And not falling into this let's use technology to make everything easier and faster because that doesn't make you necessarily a stronger, better, smarter person.

Julie Walker: So “Low-Tech Teaching with High-End Results”?

Andrew Pudewa: I believe is the title. So

Julie Walker: We'll put a link in the show notes.

Andrew Pudewa: I don't think that's the answer she was expecting.

Julie Walker: Well, that was an article you wrote. So are there any favorite articles that you wrote?

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, that one.

Julie Walker: Oh, that was the one.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, because it gets, I hear that people are looking at it every few days.

Julie Walker: So you like the ones that people like?

Andrew Pudewa: I guess, yeah. Well, who, who wouldn't?

Julie Walker: right? I would say that's a very fair, very fair response. Okay.

Andrew Pudewa: All right. What's next?

Julie Walker: How about a boy? Should we do a boy question? All right. Cy, why don't you come up?

Cy: Hello, Andrew. I would like to ask you this question. How did you start IEW and why?

Andrew Pudewa: That's a simple question with a long answer, but I'm gonna try to give you a simple answer. I was a violin teacher not making enough money to live, and I was always looking for some side business that I could do to make a little more money, so I could afford to be a violin teacher. And I had learned this writing program, and I thought, “I bet I could teach a seminar teaching people how to do this writing program that I had learned years before.”

And I did, and it was in Seattle, Washington, and there were 20 people who paid \$40 to listen to me talk for a day. And that was more money than I could make in a whole week of teaching violin as hard as I could. So I thought, “This has potential.” So I did another one and

another one and another one. And then I made some videos, which I thought was a really dumb idea at the time because I thought it would be boring to watch videos. But then we started selling the videos, and then pretty soon I was making more money teaching seminars and selling videos than I was teaching violin. So I quit teaching violin, went full-time, started to get people to help me, and now look where we are today. But the other answer is it really was God's business, not mine. I'm not smart enough or good enough to ever do anything this good. Only God could make that happen.

Cy: Thank you, Mr. Pudewa

Andrew Pudewa: Now wait, I have a question for you. Your name is Cy? Is that short for anything, or is that your complete full name?

Cy: Not my complete full name.

Andrew Pudewa: What, what is your complete full name? Say that slower and louder

Cy: Sy James Alexander Trim.

Andrew Pudewa: Cyjams?

Cy: Cy James

Andrew Pudewa: Cy. Oh, so Cy is the first name. Is it spelled S-Y?

Cy: CY

Andrew Pudewa: C-Y. And then you have James Alexander, two middle names. So your parents probably thought with such a very short first name, you needed extra middle name just to give it more bulk.

Cy: Yeah

Andrew Pudewa: Well, that's good. And you've been doing key word outlines and dress-up checklists and stuff like that?

Cy: No

Andrew Pudewa: No. So the pain is yet to come. Well, I wish you good luck with all that.

Cy: Thank you, Mr. Pudewa

Andrew Pudewa: You're welcome, Cy.

Julie Walker: Okay, my tech team, do we have another video? Okay, let's see what we've got

Video Guests: Hi, Mr. Pudewa. I got a joke for you. What is a tree's favorite drink?

Andrew Pudewa: A tree's favorite drink? Well, the obvious intuitive response would be water, but I don't think that's the joke.

Video Guests: Root beer

Julie Walker: Ooh, you got him.

Andrew Pudewa: I might have had a chance if he said, "What is the drunk tree's favorite drink?"

Julie Walker: That was a good one. Okay, how many more videos do we have? We have two more. Okay, let's play one more video

Video Guests: Mr. Pudewa, I have a joke for you. So a kid, he's going to school, and he forgets his backpack. And on-- When he steps out of the car, he says, "Oh, wait, Mom, I forgot my backpack." And his mom is like, "Well, can't you survive without it just for one day?" And the kid is like, "Well, maybe, possibly. I can try." Um, and the mom comes up to pick him up at three o'clock as usual each and every day.

And they come up to him, the teachers, they come up to the mom in disappointment, and they say, "We're so sorry." And the mom's like, "What happened? Where is he?" He says, "ma'am, you know that, the son forgot his backpack?" And she said, "Yeah. Well, didn't you go turn around and get it?" She said, "No."

He said, "Ma'am, this is a para-- This is a, um, skydiving school."

Andrew Pudewa: I didn't follow this. It was a what?

Julie Walker: Skydiving school

Andrew Pudewa: Okay. A skydiving school

Julie Walker: He was actually, this is, Caleb Chesley

Andrew Pudewa: Yes, I recognize him.

Julie Walker: Yeah, he was our booth helper in Florida at the parent educators.

Andrew Pudewa: His dad is dean or provost or something at a university and loves, loves this stuff. It does remind me of that one-liner, "If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you."

Julie Walker: No, it's true. Very good. Okay. Are you ready for our in-studio Austin question?

Andrew Pudewa: I am

Austin: Hello, Mr. Pudewa.

Andrew Pudewa: Hello, Austin

Austin: I would like to ask you this question: What is your favorite Shakespeare play and why?

Andrew Pudewa: Oh, I like this question very much, and the answer is *Twelfth Night*, and I like it for three reasons. I like it because there's a little bit of trivia associated with the name of the play, *Twelfth Night*, because it has to do with the 12 days of Christmas, but actually-- which actually begin on Christmas, and then there's 12 days of the feast.

And so this play was written to be performed on the last or the culmination of the 12 days of the feast of Christmas. The second reason I like it is because of a certain line that Malvolio gives, and he says, "Some are born to greatness, some achieve greatness, and others have greatness thrust upon them."

And the third reason I like this play is because when I was teaching in a very small school, I was quite young, 20-something, and I was teaching, and they had kids who were doing this play, and they were lacking enough people for the cast. So I got to be in the play with the kids in the school, and so I kind of know it better than most of the Shakespeare plays.

But I also like *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* and *Othello* because tragedies are by far the most inspiring of Shakespeare, don't you think? What's your favorite Shakespeare play?

Austin: *Romeo and Juliet*

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah. See, you're right in there with the tragedies with me. Yeah, that's excellent. And you are named after the capital of Texas. Have you ever been to Austin, Texas?

Well, I highly recommend you take a trip down there sometime. And just north of Austin, Texas, is Round Rock, Texas, which has a claim to fame, and that is the Kalahari Resort, which according to them, has the largest waterpark, indoor waterpark on the continent. So do you like waterparks?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Andrew Pudewa: Then I recommend you go almost to Austin, Texas. Thank you for your question.

Austin: Thank you

Julie Walker: Okay. Are we ready for the other Austin's question? It's, I don't know if he actually has a question

Andrew Pudewa: Is it a lot of jokes here.

Julie Walker: Yeah, maybe he has a joke.

Video Guests: Hey, Mr. Pindwa. Um, um, I am so excited to be in this podcast. Um, as you know my name is Austin. I hope you remember that. And I decided to give you hot sauce, some more hot sauce.

Andrew Pudewa: Oh

Video Guests: And

Andrew Pudewa: TRUFF hot sauce. I know this

Video Guests: knew that this, we knew that this was your favorite brand from last time I handed to you, and so we decided to give you some. And I also wrote you a note hat,

do you have any questions for him, Austin? Uh... You have a joke to tell him? Yes. Okay, let's hear a joke

Video Guests: I actually made this joke. I'm not sure if I've told you this one yet or not, but I actually made this joke when I was really young.

It's a knock-knock joke. Knock, knock. Knock, knock

Andrew Pudewa: Who's there?

Video Guests: Apple

Andrew Pudewa: Apple who?

Video Guests: Applelanch. Applelanch. Thank you, Austin

Julie Walker: That was very fun, and Austin's watching this podcast right now, so

Andrew Pudewa: That is a good one. And this, I don't know if you know, but this is truly the best hot sauce.

Julie Walker: Okay. The pinnacle of heat experience.

Andrew Pudewa: It does say the pinnacle of heat experience

Julie Walker: Which kind of goes along with his knock-knock joke with the apple-anche

Andrew Pudewa: That's true. Pinnacle Avelon. This has truffle in it.

Julie Walker: Oh, like the mushroom truffle,

Andrew Pudewa: I

Julie Walker: truffle oil? Hmm

Andrew Pudewa: Black truffle essence

Julie Walker: Oh, amazing. I will not be partaking of this, Austin, because it's going to be way too hot for me.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, maybe not. I mean, you bought me an even smaller bottle of hot sauce once.

Julie Walker: I did. Did I, do you think I had any of it?

Andrew Pudewa: It was called The End. Period. I still have it. I can only use, like, the tiniest little toothpick worth at a time, and even that's dangerous.

Julie Walker: Okay.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, thanks to Austin and his family for this gift and this lovely note

Julie Walker: So I have a few lightning round questions. All right? Is there a certain style of writing, short stories, research, that you don't like writing?

Andrew Pudewa: I don't like writing anything. I don't know why people think I like writing. I don't. It's hard. You know.

Julie Walker: I do know

Andrew Pudewa: You've come into my office with a, well, not quite, but almost a gun and a box of chocolate and said, "I'm not leaving until you finish this thing." The thing is,

Julie Walker: The chocolate is true. The gun is not.

Andrew Pudewa: You don't have to like writing to be half decent at it. You just have to do it. And so that's what I say to everybody. You don't have to like it, just do it, and then you'll get better at it. But you know what I do like? I like having written something. I just don't like getting from here to there. So, I don't really understand people who write in their free time for fun. But there are such people, I know that, and I'm grateful for them.

Julie Walker: Yes. You, they, some of them have sent you books.

Andrew Pudewa: I guess if I had to say the thing that I like having written the most would just be articles that I truly believe are gonna be helpful to parents and teachers and, and readers. It's the sharing of valuable, helpful information. That's what I find satisfying.

Julie Walker: Okay. How do you choose your employees?

Andrew Pudewa: I don't. I have fished for employees, but it's kind of biblical fishing. I just keep my eyes open and wait for God to tell me if I should talk to someone, and then once we got bigger, I just wait for God to send them, and then I let other people figure out whether it's a good fit or not

Julie Walker: Yep. Yep

Andrew Pudewa: But I don't know, was that person hoping?

Julie Walker: not yet. Maybe in a few years. Maybe in a dozen

Andrew Pudewa: good question for a kid

Julie Walker: It is a really good question.

Andrew Pudewa: if you were a kid and you were thinking, "How do I get picked by a really great company to have a really great job in a really great place?"

Julie Walker: Yeah. Yeah, that's true. Okay, what's your favorite book?

Andrew Pudewa: Ooh.

Julie Walker: I know.

Andrew Pudewa: Is that really a fair question? Um

Julie Walker: I'm just reading them. I didn't come up

Andrew Pudewa: My favorite book is generally the one that I am reading to grandchildren at the moment, which at this moment is *The Princess Bride*.

Julie Walker: Aw, the actual book.

Andrew Pudewa: actual book. I've, I've seen the movie too many times, but I always wanted to read the actual book. It's quite well-crafted.

All-time favorite novel? probably *Anna Karenina*.

Most significantly impactful book, that's a tough one. I mean obviously, you kind of have to throw out a few things that are too common or broad, like the Bible.

Julie Walker: Right. Okay

Andrew Pudewa: Um, but I think impactful for me personally would've been *The Restoration of Christian Culture* by John Senior, and right behind that, *Why We Sleep* by Matthew Walker.

So quite a, quite a broad range there.

Julie Walker: Yes, I remember before you read that book, you basically lived by the philosophy that sleep is overrated, you have too much to do.

Andrew Pudewa: Yes

Julie Walker: And then you read that book, and it literally changed your life.

Andrew Pudewa: It really did. Yes. And if I had read it 20 years before, I would probably be smarter, healthier, better, less likely to have Alzheimer's or some degenerative disease, and I could probably live longer. But so all you young dads out there, get that book.

Julie Walker: Yep. My son has read it. It's easy to remember the author

Andrew Pudewa: Walker, yeah

Julie Walker: Right. Why We Sleep. All right, I'm gonna end with another testimony from a student. It says, "Thank you so much," all in caps with about 18 exclamation points.

Andrew Pudewa: Oh, okay

Julie Walker: "I really love your curriculum, and I have so much fun doing the assignments. Me and my sister both do IEW, and we use it in our everyday talk." Although she probably should have said

Andrew Pudewa: My sister and I

Julie Walker: My sister and I, but that's okay. We're just gonna go straight, right? "We noticed after we started using IEW, when we would play together, we would always use strong verbs, LY adverbs, and quality adjectives. Instead of saying our game-- Instead of saying in our game, 'He walked over,' we would say, 'He smoothly strolled over,' without even noticing we were using an LY adverb and a strong verb.

Andrew Pudewa: I like that

Julie Walker: Also, after I started IEW, it started to drive me crazy when people used say, said, get, got, and other banned words.

Andrew Pudewa: Fair enough

Julie Walker: IEW has changed my life in an excellent way."

Andrew Pudewa: Well, I love that very much. How old is that student?

Julie Walker: I don't even have a name

Andrew Pudewa: with 18 exclamation marks

Julie Walker: know, right? It's...

Andrew Pudewa: probably not too old

Julie Walker: I'm thinking it's probably a girl who's 10.

Andrew Pudewa: That's a good guess

Julie Walker: I would love to know differently, but I don't know that we can find that out. So Ask Andrew Anything, episode 550 with kids. Loved it.

Julie Walker: Thanks so much for joining us. If you enjoyed this episode and want to hear more, please subscribe to our podcast or just visit us each week at IEW.com/podcast. Here you will find our show notes and relevant links. One more thing: would you please rate and review our podcast? This helps other smart listeners like you find us. Thank you.