



## *Episode 1 - Cheat Sheet*

**Reading Aloud to Older Kids**  
**Guest: Andrew Pudewa**

<b>Meet Andrew Pudewa</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>In this Episode</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Cheater's Guide</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Major Takeaways</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Show Notes</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>6</b>

## Meet Andrew Pudewa

Andrew Pudewa is the founder and director of the [Institute for Excellence in Writing](#). His work has helped many reluctant writers and has equipped educators with powerful tools to dramatically improve students' skills. His talk, [Nurturing Competent Communicators](#), played a major role in the formation of the Read-Aloud Revival Podcast.



## In this Episode

Andrew Pudewa describes the unique benefits of hearing a book read aloud, and why it is often better to hear it out loud than it is to read it from the page.

He dispels the myth that it's better for children to read on their own than to be read to, and explains why the *most* important time to read to your child is the age when they have just begun reading to themselves.

He also answers some listener questions, including *“My teen son struggles with reading. Am I making it worse by reading aloud to him? Should I make him read his assignments to himself?”* and *“What should we do after we’ve read aloud? What kind of discussion should we have?”*

**This is the world we live in,  
and if we're going to recover  
individual, family, cultural and social literacy—  
it's got to happen with reading aloud.**

—Andrew Pudewa

## Cheater's Guide

Use this guide to skip to parts that most interest you, or [listen to the entire podcast](#).

- 5:20** Where do reliable and sophisticated language patterns come from?
- 12:26** What it will take to recover the cultural and social literacy in our world?
- 14:00** Why is it even more important to read to older children than to younger ones?
- 18:48** How does reading aloud impact a child's ability to write well?
- 22:30** Andrew discusses his experience copying the book of John by hand, and how that informed his understanding of the benefits of slow reading.
- 25:26** A listener says her 13-year-old son prefers to have his lessons read to him because his reading is slow going. Is she holding him back by reading everything to him?
- 28:32** Why we often stupefy kids when we start teaching them to read.
- 31:30** Why it was a blessing for Andrew's son not to read a thing until he was 12 years old.
- 32:50** What do you do about a child who thinks he's too old to be read to?
- 37:28** Reading aloud is a family event, not as a method to improve our children but simply because it's how we enjoy time together.
- 38:47** One thing Andrew's family did to get his children to read to their younger siblings every day.
- 41:02** When we're done reading for the day, should we ask for narrations, have socratic discussions, or just let it be?
- 47:00** Andrew's advice for how to choose what to read aloud.

# Major Takeaways

## 1. To get good language *OUT*, you have to put good language *IN*.

The top three influences on language are: Media, peers, and busy adults.

We have to make sure we are putting reliably correct and sophisticated language patterns into our children's brains by reading aloud to them as much as possible. Reading aloud is the most effective way to get excellent language patterns embedded in our children's thinking habits.

## 2. It is at the age when children start to read on their own that they *most* need to be read to at a level above their decoding skills.

We tend to think of our smallest children when we consider reading aloud, but our older children- those who can read on their own independently, need to be read to even more often than our smallest children do!

## 3. Read books you want to read!

If you aren't enjoying it, just stop and find something you'll enjoy reading. Your enthusiasm will either nurture or destroy the experience for your children, so try not to overthink it too much.

Mindful mamas tend to put a lot of thought and care into what they read to their kids. This is a good thing, but sometimes it's important to just read together—even if it's not a tried-and-true classic. Relationships are the most important part of this whole equation, after all. Don't get distracted by the task of finding the best booklists or choosing the just-right title for your next read aloud.

Can you remember a book you enjoyed as a child? Can you remember one that was laugh out loud funny? Does the cover of a book at the library jump out at you? Try it! Make this easy on yourself.

We want reading aloud to be a habit of joy. We aren't swallowing cod liver oil or eating our vegetables here. We're simply training ourselves to get used to sharing books with our children every day.

## Show Notes

[One Myth, Two Truths](#) - Andrew's article on the importance of reading aloud.

[Nurturing Competent Communicators](#) - this talk inspired me to start the Read-Aloud Revival.

[How to Read Slowly](#) by James Sire.

[The Underground History of American Education](#) by John Taylor Gatto.

[Keeping Hands Busy](#) - a printable with ideas for how to keep hands busy during read-aloud times.

[Inspiring Children](#)- the article by Andrew Kern about “playing with the puppy.”

[A Series of Unfortunate Events](#) by Lemony Snicket - Andrew called this “the modern day Hansel & Gretel.”

Many thanks to both Olivia and Hans for recommending books in this episode's edition of **Let the Kids Speak!** The books they recommended are: [The Hobbit](#) by J.R.R. Tolkein, and [Judy Moody and Stink: The Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad Treasure Hunt](#) by Megan McDonald.



## 2. Make a list of things your children can do while they listen to you read aloud.

Often times, busy hands and bodies make for better listening. Group your children into age groups and come up with some ideas for things they can do with their hands that will keep them busy while you read.

Age Group \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

Age Group \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

Age Group \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

### 3. Get an audiobook for the car

You've got a captive audience there! You can get audiobooks from your local library, on [Librivox](#), Amazon, or via an [Audible subscription](#). If you need a place to start, there are some great audiobook recommendations on [Episode 14](#) of the podcast.

List three audiobooks that you could buy or borrow. Then choose one that you could acquire in the next seven days and start listening!

---

Buy or borrow from \_\_\_\_\_

---

Buy or borrow from \_\_\_\_\_

---

Buy or borrow from \_\_\_\_\_

By the way, you really need to put that audiobook *in* the car. It won't do any good sitting on the kitchen countertop, you know ;)

To find more resources to help you build your family culture around books, visit [ReadAloudRevival.com](#).