

## Introduce the book and word list

Tell children this story is about the character Ettabetta. Look at the front cover, and ask what Ettabetta is doing in the picture. (*putting a letter in a mailbox*) Discuss what a **letter** is. (*a message you mail to someone*) Then read the title of the book with children. Explain that a **pen pal** is someone, usually in another country, whom you write letters to, and the pen pal writes back to you. Tell children that in this book, Ettabetta gets a new pen pal. Have them discuss why they think Ettabetta is excited about having a pen pal from another country. (*She probably thinks it'll be fun to write letters and get letters back and learn about what it's like in another country.*) Then have children share some of their own experiences getting letters or cards in the mail.

Read the word list on the inside front cover with children. Explain that **Japan** is the country where Ettabetta's pen pal lives.

## Guide reading

Listen and give support as individuals read the book in a small group. Pause every few pages to ask comprehension questions.

**Page 1** How do you think Ettabetta feels about having a pen pal? happy, excited What does it mean that she will get a letter back after sending her letter? Her pen pal will send her a letter. (Draw conclusions)

**Page 3** [Point out that the girls are inside the old bus, their clubhouse.] What kind of



**Key vocabulary:** letter, pen pal, Japan, pad, address, stamp

**pad** does Ettabetta use for writing? a pad of paper What does she say about herself in her letter? her name, how old she is, some things she likes What does she want her pen pal to do? send a letter back fast (Understand characters)

**Page 5** How does Ettabetta get her letter ready to mail? She puts it in an envelope, writes the address, and puts on a stamp. What's the **address** for? to tell where to take the letter What's the **stamp** for? to show she's paid for the letter to be delivered Where does she put the letter to mail it? in a mailbox (Understand steps in a process)

**Page 7** What is Ettabetta looking in her mailbox? a letter from her pen pal Does she get one? no How does it look like she feels? sad (Draw conclusions; use pictures)

**Page 9** Why does Ettabetta send a second letter? Cass says maybe the first letter got lost and never got to her pen pal. (Determine cause and effect)

**Page 11** Why does Cass feel sad for Ettabetta? Ettabetta still hasn't gotten a letter. Why do you think Cass takes an envelope

**and paper?** Answers will vary. (Understand characters; make predictions)

**Page 14** What does Ettabetta mean by saying she didn't get a letter? She got two letters, not one. Who are the letters from? one from her pen pal and one from Cass How can you tell she's happy Cass sent a letter? She's hugging Cass and smiling in the picture. (Understand characters)

### Discuss the book after reading it

1. Do you think Cass acted like a good friend? Why do you think so? Most children will say yes because Cass tried to make Ettabetta feel better by sending her a letter. Good friends try to cheer each other up. (Give and support opinions)
2. Why do you think it took so long for Ettabetta to get a letter back from her pen pal? Answers will vary, but let children know that it can take several weeks for mail to travel from one country to another country. (Draw conclusions)
3. Would you like to have a pen pal in another country? Why or why not? Answers and reasons will vary. (Connect text to self)

### Focus on using pictures

Tell children that sometimes the pictures in a story help readers understand more of what's happening than just what's said in the words. Have children turn to page 1 of *Ettabetta's Pen Pal* and listen as you read what Ettabetta says. Point out that the words don't say how Ettabetta is feeling, but the picture gives clues. Have children discuss how the picture shows Ettabetta is happy

and excited about getting a pen pal. (*She's smiling and running to tell Cass about her pen pal.*) Then have them turn to pages 6 and 7 and listen as you read the pages. Point out that the words don't say what Ettabetta does every day or how she feels, but the pictures tell us. Ask what she's doing in the pictures (*checking her mailbox*) and how the pictures show the days going by. (*Each day is shown in a different box, and the plant by the mailbox looks like it has grown from day to day.*) Ask how we can tell Ettabetta is feeling sad about not getting a letter. (*She's frowning in the pictures.*)

## Independent Activities

- Have children reread the book several times for fluency practice.
- On Practice Page 23, have children cut apart the strips, write numbers in the small boxes, and glue the strips onto another piece of paper to show the sequence of events.
- Tell children to pretend they have a pen pal. Have them draw and write to tell their pen pal a few things about themselves.

