Welcome to In2Books! In this tutorial, we'll show you how to approve the pen pal letters. Students will only receive the pen pals' letters after they have been approved by you.
The goal of this tutorial is to:
• show you how to approve pen pal letters
• suggest ways you can celebrate the arrival of the pen pal letters; and
• provide ideas for sharing and discussing the letters with your students.

In this tutorial, we’ll show you how to approve pen pal letters, suggest ways you can celebrate the arrival of their letters, and provide ideas for sharing and discussing the letters with your students.
Sign in to Teacher Place using your In2Books’ user name and password. If you have any questions, email us at i2bsupport@epals.com.
When there are letters to approve:

**Learning Objective**
- Approve pen pal letters

**Key Steps**
Select **My Classroom** on the navigation bar and click on **Approve Letters** from the drop-down menu.

OR

Click on the green Action Items button, **Approve Pen Pal Letters**.

Upon logging in, you will know there are letters to approve if there is an orange exclamation point next to **My Classroom** on the purple navigation bar. To read the letters, select **Approve Letters** from the drop-down menu or click on the green **Approve Pen Pal Letters** link on the Action Items bar.
To locate the letters that need to be approved, make sure you’re on the Approve Letters homepage. On the Approve Letters page, you will see two charts. The chart on top contains all letters, from any unit, that are pending. These letters need to be approved. The chart below shows the status of letters in the current unit you are in.

To read a letter that needs to be approved, click on the blue View hyperlink in the column entitled Letter with a “pending” status.
Approve the pen pal letters.

Learning Objective
✓ Approve pen pal letters

Key Steps
1. Read the letter.
2. If the letter is acceptable, click on the green Approve button.
3. Remember no letters are sent to students unless and until they are approved by you.

After you read a letter, decide whether the letter is acceptable or needs work. If it is acceptable, click on the Approve button. When you approve a letter it is immediately sent to the appropriate student. Remember no letters are sent to students unless and until they are approved by you.
The status of letters will change to “approved” when you approve a letter. Approved letters will go to the students’ inboxes.

The status of the letters will change from “pending” to “approved” after you approve them. The letters will then be sent to the students.
When a letter needs work:

Learning Objective
- Approve pen pal letters

Key Steps
1. Read the instructions on the left.
2. Write a message explaining what you would like the pen pal to do.
3. When done, click on the blue Send button.

If you are concerned about the content of a “Getting to Know You” pen pal letter, you have two choices. If you don’t think the pen pal is right for your classroom, please notify In2Books at i2bsupport@epals.com and we’ll replace the pen pal immediately.

If the letter needs a minor but necessary correction, you can write a message to the pen pal. Click on the Needs Work button. A box will appear on the left-hand side of the page, where you can write the pen pal a note describing what needs to be changed. Don’t forget to personalize the message, start with a positive thought, then add specifics about what needs to be done. When you have completed your message, click on the blue Send button.
When the letter is returned to the pen pal for additional work, its status on the Approve Letters page will shift from “pending” to “Needs Work.”

After you send your “Needs Work” message, the status of the letter will change from “pending” to “Needs Work.”
Help your students celebrate reading their pen pals’ letters!

Key Steps

1. After you approve your pen pals’ letters, they will be sent to your students’ inboxes in the Mail Center.
2. Arrange a time for students to sign into Student Place and read their letters.
3. Make it a celebration. Have copies of the letters available that students can share and discuss with their classmates.

Learning Objective
✓ Approve pen pal letters

Once approved, the pen pal letters will be sent to your students’ inboxes. Have your students read their letters on the computer by clicking on Mail Center on Student Place. If computer access is scarce, you can print out their “Getting to Know You letters,” preferably in color. (You may want to print two copies - one for students to keep and one for the bulletin board.) Students will be excited to share their letters with each other and their families. You may want to make it a math or geography project to identify commonalities and to note where the pen pals live.

Make the arrival of your first batch of mail an exciting time for your students. Play music, have a treat, ask your principal to visit and discuss the letters, or do something to celebrate the event. Tell your students how thrilled their pen pals are to be writing to them and what a special experience this will be.
Some suggestions about how to share and discuss the pen pal letters:

**In small groups…**
- Have each student share and read aloud his/her letter.
- Have a note taker from each group write down what the group learned about their pen pals.
- Have a representative from each group report out their findings to the rest of the class.

**Individually…**
- Have students highlight their pen pals’ questions;
- Have students jot down notes in their writer’s notebooks about what they want to write back;
- Write reminders on Post-It notes of related ideas to write about to their pen pals.

Here are some suggestions about how to share and discuss the pen pal letters. Divide your students into groups. Have each student read aloud his or her pen pal’s letter. Assign one group member to record everyone’s comments on a list entitled “What We Learned About Our Pen Pals.” Set aside time for each group to report its findings to the class.

To help students think about the letters as parts of “written conversations,” have them think about what other information they would like to know or ask. Have your students highlight any questions or comments that interest them. Have them make notes in their writer’s notebooks about possible ideas for their next letters. Post the pen pals’ letters on the In2Books bulletin board so the pen pals become a visible part of your students’ lives.

Congratulations! You and your students have now officially completed the Getting Started unit. You are now ready to start the Fiction unit.
In this tutorial we:
• showed you how to approve your pen pals’ letters.
• suggested ways to celebrate the arrival of the pen pal letters; and
• provided ideas for sharing and discussing the pen pal letters.

We suggest you watch Tutorial 9: Write a Welcome Message to Your Students’ Pen Pals.

Thank you!
Please:

(1) Close this window.

(2) Get credit for this tutorial by clicking the large green button on the page you will see.

(3) Continue on to the next tutorial.
Write a welcome message to your students’ pen pals

Welcome to In2Books!

In this tutorial, we suggest how to introduce your class to your students’ pen pals.

In this tutorial, we suggest how to introduce your class by writing and sending a message to your students’ pen pals through the Mail Center on Teacher Place.

Reaching out to your students’ pen pals will make them feel like they’re part of your classroom and make them more engaged in the program.
In2Books pen pals want to help their students become better readers, writers, and thinkers. Adult pen pals become more engaged if they know their students’ teachers are excited about their participation in the program and see them as allies. Pen pals will feel more committed to students if they know that you’ll keep them informed of your expectations and be pleased to receive messages from them.
Why welcome pen pals and introduce your class to them?

When you welcome pen pals, you start many good things. Your welcome:

- helps pen pals feel like they’re part of the classroom,
- opens the communication pipeline,
- allows you to provide guidance,
- shows how you value the In2Books program and the pen pals as mentors, and
- enables you to communicate schedule expectations.

Why introduce your class to the pen pals?

Making a connection to your pen pals early on in the year is important. It makes your pen pals feel like they’re part of the classroom. It gives you the opportunity to share useful information about your students as a class. It allows you to provide guidance and shows you value the In2Books program and pen pals as mentors. Pen pals will know they can reach out to you with questions. Most importantly, it allows you to set the pace and manage expectations. Pen pals are busy people and need to know what you need from them and what they can expect from you and your students.
What might you want to include in a welcome message?

Tell about yourself.
- Your teaching experience
- What you teach
- Why you are an In2Books teacher
- Your interests

Share helpful information about your students and school.
- Grade
- Age
- Setting of school
- Computer access

Here are some suggestions for what you might want to include in your welcome message:
• Tell the pen pals how much you appreciate their participation.
• Pen pals will also want to know something about you and your class. Talk generally about where your school is located. (For safety purposes, do not name the school or its exact location.) Consider discussing your teaching experience and explaining why you decided to participate in In2Books.
• Pen pals also often want to know their students’ grade so that they have a sense of how to write their letters. Please also include information about the school that might be helpful, e.g., demographics, computer access, etc.
Write a message welcoming the pen pals to your class! 

Dear Pen Pals,

Thank you for being pen pals for my 3rd grade students this year. They’re so excited to have adult friends and we all look forward to getting to know you better and having robust discussions about the books. We are creating a map that shows where each of you is from and have put all of your letters up on our In2Books Bulletin Board.

Our classroom is in a small town in Idaho. I have been teaching for about six years and I love to play the piano and read mysteries.

We will be selecting our fiction book this week. I will send you some information soon about our schedule. Meanwhile, we hope you enjoy your first letters from your students. I will send my next message in about a week.

Cordially,
Sharon

TIP: The first message doesn’t have to say a lot – it’s just reaching out to show your appreciation and to begin the dialogue.

Write a message welcoming the pen pals to your class. The message doesn’t have to be long or fancy, it just needs to demonstrate to your pen pals that they’re a part of your classroom and you appreciate their participation. Take a minute to read the sample message above. We suggest you send your message within a week after being matched.
To write your message, go to the **Mail Center** on Teacher Place.

**Key Steps**

1. Sign in to Teacher Place.
2. Click on the **Mail Center** tab on the purple navigation bar.

You can write and send your message through the Mail Center. To do this, sign in to Teacher Place and click on the Mail Center tab on the purple navigation bar.
Click on the hyperlink, “Send a message to your students and/or pen pals.” A new window will open. When you compose your message, be sure the addressee is “All Pen Pals.” This will allow you to send one message to all of the pen pals at once. Compose your message and add a subject such as “Welcome to our class!” Click on the green Send button when you’ve completed your message.
A confirmation box will appear when your message has been sent.

Key Steps

Click on okay to close the box.

The window will notify you that your message has been sent. After clicking on “OK,” the window will close.
In this tutorial we:

• explain why reaching out to your students’ pen pals is a good idea;
• provide suggestions for writing your message; and
• show you how to send your message.

Pen pals will appreciate receiving mail from you throughout the year. The more they know about what you’re doing in your classroom, the better their letters will be. We suggest that you send your first welcome message within a week after your students have been matched.
Please:

(1) Close this window.

(2) Get credit for this tutorial by clicking the large green button on the page you will see.

(3) Continue on to the next tutorial.
Welcome to In2Books’ tutorial on how to use the Schedule Tool. This tool will help you manage the progress of In2Books in your classroom and keep the program running smoothly.
The goals of this tutorial are to:

- Explain the In2Books Schedule and its components;
- Highlight the importance of the Schedule and changes to your classroom and pen pals;
- Explain how to change your schedule.

The goal of this tutorial is to show you the In2Books schedule, how it works and why it is an important part of managing the In2Books process. We'll also show you how to modify the Schedule to meet the unique needs of your classroom.
The In2Books Schedule helps you coordinate your classroom activities with those of the pen pals to keep the program running smoothly. When you view the Schedule, you'll see three main areas on the page: Program-at-a-Glance, Detailed Schedule, and Tools to change the Schedule. Program-at-a-Glance shows you the sequence for each unit, including start and end dates, so that you can see your year-long view of In2Books at a glance. The Detailed Schedule outlines important Teacher, Student, and Pen Pal tasks and due dates for each genre unit. Students and pen pals will see the same schedule that you do and will be able to see what everybody is doing and when. Finally, on the left you'll see tools that allow you, the teacher, to adjust unit start dates and/or letter due dates.
As the teacher, you set the schedule. It highlights what you, your students and their pen pals need to do, and when, to progress smoothly.

### Schedule Details

1. **Learning Objective**

   - **Schedule Details**

   1. The Schedule is automatically set to standard unit lengths and time intervals between tasks, based on best-practices.
   2. All student, teacher, and pen pal tasks and due dates appear in the Detailed Schedule, listed by unit area and differentiated by color:

   - **Teacher tasks are in purple.**
   - **Pen pal tasks are in blue.**
   - **Student tasks are in green.**

   Important! Pay close attention to due dates so that pen pal and student letter exchanges are timely.

As the teacher, you are the master of the schedule! Sticking to a published schedule helps pen pals understand what is required of them and when as well as how their letters fit into your classroom activities. **Pen pals are taking time out of their busy days to volunteer by writing to your students.** By staying on schedule and communicating with them about happenings in your classroom, they will feel like valued partners in educating your class and put more into their relationships with students as a consequence. **It’s a win-win for everyone!**

The Schedule is automatically set to standard unit lengths and time intervals between tasks, based on In2Books best practices. Teacher, Pen Pal and Student tasks are show in the Detailed Schedule in different colors so that they can be easily identified. Teacher tasks are shown in purple; pen pal tasks are shown in blue; and student tasks are shown in green.
Students, pen pals, and teachers also see unique views of their individual tasks and due dates on Action Item Bars and on their homepages.

**Learning Objective:**
Understand how the schedule is reflected on homepages.

Tasks and activities highlighted in the Schedule can also be seen on Pen Pal Place, Teacher Place and Student Place. Pen pals, teachers, and students each see a custom view on their homepages that shows the tasks each need to complete in the Action Items Bar and in the due dates section in the center of the page.
Before you set or change your classroom Schedule for In2Books make sure you understand the impact of changes on the program.

In2Books requires a series of tasks to successfully complete each unit and many of them require a certain amount of time to complete. The tasks have been organized in order for you and allocated time to complete and include the following:

Starting the unit
Select topic and books
Approve and order books
Teach the unit
Students read their books
Read and discuss books in class
Pen Pals write letters to students
Students write letters to pen pals
Move to the next unit

The Tools allow you to make changes to the day you want to start a unit in your classroom, to the due dates of pen pal letters, and to the due date of student letters.

As you think about the Schedule you’d like to implement in your classroom, try to plan around interruptions such as testing or vacations. For example, you may want to extend due dates for letters if you have a week of testing in the middle of a unit. Or you may want to postpone a unit start date until you return from vacation. We recommend however that you strive to keep changes to a minimum and do your best to keep things moving by limiting units to about 6 weeks in length. As you can imagine, frequent changes or long time lapses between letters demotivate both students and pen pals and slow down progress in general.

Pen pals will be sent notifications when you make changes to your Schedule so that they are aware of changes. We also recommend that you send your pen pals a message explaining the change so that they understand what is happening in your classroom. For example, if snow days delay your class and you need to extend student letter due dates, let your pen pals know! It will keep them interested and engaged when inevitable delays occur.
Changing a unit start date is easy! You can adjust the start date by one week increments and the Schedule will automatically adjust all tasks and due dates to reflect the new start date. To change the start date, go to the left side of the page and find the Change Start Date drop-down menus. First select which unit you would like to change (Social Studies for example) and then select the number of weeks by which to change the date and click on apply. When you click Apply, you will see a small box that asks you to confirm that you’d like to change your Schedule. Click yes to confirm, or no to cancel the change. If you click yes, you will see a confirmation page – Your Schedule has been changed! If you want to reset your calendar to the original default dates, simply click on “Reset to default calendar” on the bottom left of the page.

The change you made to the start date will be reflected in the start date of the unit on the Program-at-a-Glance and the start date and new task dates will also be reflected in the Detailed Schedule for that unit. *Pen pals will receive an email notification that the Schedule has changed.*
The process for changing the letter due dates for students or pen pals is similar. You can adjust pen pal and/or student due dates by one-week increments. The Schedule will automatically adjust all tasks and due dates to reflect the new due date. To change a letter due date, go to the left side of the page and find the “Change Letter Due Dates” drop-down menu. First, choose the unit for which you’d like to change the due date. Then, choose the amount by which you’d like to change the due date. To do so, go to either the Extend Pen Pal Letters Box or the Extend Student Letters Box. Open the drop-down menu and choose the appropriate length of time. When you’ve completed all changes, click on “Apply”. When you click “Apply”, you will see a small box that asks you to confirm your changes. Click yes to confirm, or no to cancel the change. If you click yes, you will see a confirmation page – Your Schedule has been changed! If you want to reset your calendar to the original default dates, simply click on “Reset to default calendar” on the bottom left of the page.

The change you made to the letter due date will be reflected in the Detailed Schedule for that unit and the unit end date in the Program-at-a-Glance. Pen Pals will also be notified by email that the Schedule has been changed.
As you set your schedule we ask you to keep a few points in mind:

Set your schedule and then stick with it. This will maximize pen pal engagement. Also regular exchange of correspondence both builds strong intellectual bonds and spurs student progress. The schedule provides pen pals with an important view into what is going on in the classroom and lets them know what they need to do and when they need to do it.

Keep up the momentum – We recommend that you limit each unit to approximately 6 weeks, to keep the program moving as well as to keep students and pen pals engaged.

Keep changes to a minimum – while we understand that events such as snow days are inevitable, please keep schedule changes to a minimum so that you don’t confuse pen pals. We also recommend that you accompany any change with a message to your pen pals telling them the reason for the change. This connects pen pals with your class!

Share the class calendar with your students; help your class understand that due dates are important (just like with their homework) and that pen pals are disappointed too when letters are late or don’t come.
In this tutorial we reviewed:

1. The In2Books Schedule, its components, and how it connects to the homepage and the action items bar for teachers, students, and pen pals;
2. The importance of setting a schedule and maintaining it in terms of keeping the class and pen pals engaged;
3. How to make changes to your class schedule.

In review, we’ve shown you the In2Books Schedule and how it connects to the Teacher Place, Pen Pal Place, and Student Place homepages. We’ve also highlighted the importance of setting a schedule and how this maintains a high level of pen pal and student engagement. And we’ve reviewed the steps for making changes to your classroom Schedule. Now you’re ready to set your schedule!
Please:
(1) Close this window.
(2) Get credit for this tutorial by clicking the large green button on the page you will see.
(3) Continue on to the next tutorial.
Welcome!

In this tutorial, we’ll teach you how to move your class and your pen pals from one unit to the next.
The goals of this tutorial are to:

• Explain what happens when you start a new unit;

• Show you how to move your class to a new unit.

The goal of this tutorial is to explain the what happens when you change from one genre unit to the next. You will learn that the action of moving to a new unit causes content changes all three In2Books websites: Teacher Place, Pen Pal Place, and Student Place. You will also learn that a unit change causes notifications to be sent to pen pals, alerting them to upcoming due dates. We'll also show how to take the steps needed to move your class to the next unit.
As the teacher, you initiate the transitions from one genre unit to the next for you, your students, and their pen pals.

**Learning Objective**

What Changes When You Start New Unit

**Teacher Place Homepage**

**Changes when you start a new unit...**

1. **Content** on Student Place, Pen Pal Place, and Teacher Place changes to show content specific to the new genre unit.

2. **Action Items Bars** and the **Schedule** change too! Be sure you’re ready to start because it will establish due dates for pen pals.

**Student Place Homepage**

As the teacher, you decide when to move your class to the next unit. When you start a new unit, content on the homepages of Pen Pal Place, Teacher Place, and Student Place also change, to reflect the new genre unit being studied. Action Items Bar and Schedule update to reflect new tasks and due dates.
Starting the next unit is easy! Just go to the Start New Unit Page and click on the Move To Next Unit button.

1. Access the Start New Unit Page from the My Classroom Tab or by clicking Move To Next Unit on the Action Items Bar.

2. Click on the Start Next Unit Button

When you're ready, you can move your class to the next unit in two easy steps. First, go to the Start New Unit Page. You can get there by either clicking on the My Classroom tab on the purple navigation bar and selecting Start Next Unit or by clicking Start New Unit on the Action Items Bar. From the Start Unit page, simply click on “Start New Unit.” This will activate the necessary changes and Teacher Place, Pen Pal Place, and Student Place content will be adjusted!
Know the steps! Keep these guidelines in mind when you want to start the next unit.

- You must approve at least 80% of student letters from the current unit before you can progress to the next unit;
- Review your class roster and make sure it is up to date;
- Be sure to message any pen pals who may be receiving letter late (after your unit change) to minimize confusion and to keep them engaged with your classroom.

Not ready to change the content? That’s OK, you can start on your own schedule. But be sure to let pen pals know and don’t forget to start the new unit when you are ready.

Please remember a few simple guidelines for moving your class to the next unit:

1) You must approve at least 80% of student letters from the current unit before you can progress the class to the next unit.

2) Be sure to review your class roster. If any students are no longer participating, please delete them from your roster so that their pen pals are not kept waiting.

3) As a courtesy, message any pen pals who may be receiving late letters (letters from the former unit, which will be sent after you’ve already changed units). This will minimize confusion and keep them engaged with your classroom. Pen pals enjoy getting letters as much as your students do and appreciate being notified of potential delays.

A final note: You don’t have to start the new unit until you are ready, but you will need to remember to start the new unit when you are ready or your class will not progress.
Review: How to move your class to the next unit

In this tutorial we reviewed:

1. Key steps to starting a new unit;
2. Guidelines to remember to ensure a smooth transition to the next unit.

In review, we’ve shown you the In2Books Start Unit page, reviewed the steps to move your class to the new unit and guidelines to understand. Thank you!
Please:

(1) Close this window.

(2) Get credit for this tutorial by clicking the large green button on the page you will see.

(3) Continue on to the next tutorial.