



**ESRA Chat Away** is part of ESRA's English Tutoring Program (ETP) and offers students from 8th to 12th grades the opportunity to improve their English speaking skills. Students are registered for a series of 30 to 40-minute chats on various topics that interest them once a week with volunteer tutors. These one-on-one meetings take place on Zoom, with cameras, after school hours.

**ESRA Chat Away** tutors are native speakers of English and mainly retirees; they are not teachers, but they receive guidance on basic conversation strategies. For that reason, this program does not benefit students struggling with English (ESRA ETP offers in-school or online individual tutoring for weak students). ESRA Chat Away is for students who have good grades and are able to hold a conversation but do not have the opportunity to develop their speaking skills. The program does not deal with schoolwork or exams.

In 2022/23, there were 210 volunteers in 90 schools.

Teacher Feedback on students reported over 80% increased confidence and marked improvement in students' oral English.

The program is available for all sectors and requires parents' consent and students' commitment. English teachers choose 5 students for a series of about 15 meetings. It is our policy to reach as many students as possible, but this is clearly determined by how many volunteers we have available.

#### **ESRA Chat Away Advantages:**

- Little ongoing involvement of English teachers (initial presentation, student selection, periodic contact with coordinators, completion of short online feedback).
- Tutors receive pedagogical guidance, together with resource material, to stimulate conversation.
- No need for geographic proximity so that volunteers can operate from different countries.
- Students hear and speak English in a natural setting.

#### **The Procedure:**

- Introduce the program to your students and select those who can handle spontaneous conversation.
- [Register](#) your students online, including parents' consent and students' details.
- After the registration, an ESRA Chat Away volunteer will contact the student via WhatsApp or email to schedule a meeting (please ensure that the students expect a message).

Thank you,

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Founded in 1979 as a non-profit volunteer-based organization, ESRA is Israel's largest English-speaking community network, aiding the integration of immigrants while working toward bridging equity gaps in Israeli society through its Education and Welfare projects.

