



# ESRA Chat Away

Taking English out of the Classroom

**ESRA Chat Away** is part of ESRA's English Tutoring Program (ETP) and offers students from 7th to 12th grades the opportunity to improve their English speaking skills. Students are registered for a series of 30-40 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). Teacher Feedback on students reported over 80% increased confidence and marked improvement in students' oral English.

In 2022 there were 284 volunteers in 67 schools.

**ESRA Chat Away** is for students who have good grades, are able to hold a conversation but do not have the opportunity to develop their speaking skills. The program does not deal with school work or exams.

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. After each series teachers choose 5 additional students and repeat the procedure.

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

- Little ongoing involvement of English teachers (initial presentation, student selection, completion of short online feedback).
- Tutors receive pedagogical guidance, together with resource material to stimulate conversation.
- No need for geographic proximity so volunteers 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.
- [Submit](#) parents' consent and students' commitment.
- After the registration, an ESRA Chat Away volunteer will contact the student via WhatsApp to schedule a meeting (please ensure that the students expect a message).

Thank you,

Dr. Helen Osimo,  
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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.

