

# COLD CALL

## OVERVIEW

*Cold Call* means calling on students to answer, regardless of whether their hands are in the air. It trains everyone to pay attention, and pushes *all* students to answer *all* of your questions in their minds.

*Cold Call* can help you maintain pacing (the illusion of speed you create in your classroom) and increase the actual rate at which you can cover material. In addition, it can help you maintain both the energy of the students and your own control of the classroom. Finally, you can't *Check for Understanding* reliably without *Cold Calling*, because testing for mastery by relying on the students who think they're doing well guarantees you a skewed sample of your class.

The following are essential elements of *Cold Calls*:

- Predictable
- Systematic
- Upbeat and positive
- Scaffolded and unbundled (large questions broken into smaller parts, with *Ratio* in mind)
- Focused on curricular substance

17 RATIO

Here are some options:

- Allowing "Hands up" versus requesting "Hands down"
- Timing in your naming the student
- Using the *Cold Call* as an initial question or as a follow-on

## WHERE AM I NOW?

		Proficiency			
		I am brand new to <i>Cold Call</i> ...	I'm in the planning and practice stage, though I haven't tried <i>Cold Call</i> yet in class ...	I'm beginning to try <i>Cold Call</i> in my classroom ...	I <i>Cold Call</i> regularly ...
Comfort & Confidence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ... and excited to try it.	<input type="checkbox"/> ... but know with more practice I'll make it work.	<input type="checkbox"/> ... and love how it basically works.	<input type="checkbox"/> ... and my students answer promptly.	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ... and undecided about my ability to pull it off.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ... because I still have questions about how to do it right.	<input type="checkbox"/> ... with mixed results I need to evaluate.	<input type="checkbox"/> ... but I may be overusing it.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> ... and not at all sure it's for me.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ... because, frankly, I still have serious doubts.	<input type="checkbox"/> ... but it doesn't seem to work or suit me.	<input type="checkbox"/> ... but when class isn't going well, I do it poorly and it doesn't help.	

Work from your strengths. If you find yourself in the bottom left portion, leaf through this technique to locate related ones you might prefer to work on right now.

## ANALYZE THE CHAMPIONS

View each video clip, ideally more than once, and answer the following questions. See the end of the technique for some possible answers.



### Clip 16. Teacher Hannah Lofthus, Grade 2

1. How does Ms. Lofthus's way of *Cold Calling* help her achieve effective pacing?
2. How does it promote student engagement?

18 CFU

3. How does it support effective *Check for Understanding*?
4. Locate evidence that Ms. Lofthus's *Cold Call* manner is each of these: predictable, systematic, and positive.



### Clip 17. Teacher Summer Payne, Grade K

1. What, if anything, surprises you about the reaction of Ms. Payne's kindergarteners to *Cold Call*?
2. What does Ms. Payne do to make their reaction happen?
3. Develop your answer to question 2 into a brief statement of how you might translate what she is doing to promote their reaction for whatever level of students you teach.

## EXPAND YOUR SKILLS AND REPERTOIRE

To review, there are three purposes for *Cold Calling*:

1. **Pacing.** *Cold Calling* makes your class go faster—no time wasted pleading for answers (“Um, I’m seeing the same three hands. Didn’t anyone else do the homework? Do I need to remind you that your participation is being graded?”), and no stultifying perception of slowness from watching the teacher plead for energy.
2. **Engagement.** When students think they are about to be called on (and expected to participate in a real conversation, one that matters) at any time, they will prepare by engaging in the material.
3. **Checking for Understanding.** Check for mastery by relying on the students who think they know, and you’ll always overestimate your students’ success. Make it normal to ask any kid what she can do at any time, and you’ll begin to see where your students—all of them—really are.

### Listen to Yourself in Class

1. Audio-record your next lesson, or listen again to a recent session you recorded. Use a stopwatch to document how much time you spend waiting (and encouraging and cajoling and asking) for volunteers. Then listen to the tape again. What do you notice about the general pacing of the session?

N/A Right now

2. Identify instances you were *Cold Calling* students. In terms of the essential elements of *Cold Calls* noted in the "Overview" section, to what extent were your calls

- Predictably frequent?

It would be.

If you *Cold Call* for a few minutes of your class almost daily, students will come to expect it and *change their behavior in advance*, preparing to be asked questions at any time by paying attention and readying themselves mentally. At some point in most lessons, students should be asked to participate whether or not they have raised their hands.

- Systematic and calm in tone?

Always

- Spread out around the class in terms of their seating and range of abilities?

Always

- Accomplished without wasting time in "choosing" responders?

Always

- Positive in tone?

Always

An energetic tone of questioning shows your respect and faith in the students' ability to join the conversation. They benefit from the message that *you* thought they could answer the question and that your goal was for them to get it right. They may occasionally surprise themselves with their own capability.

- Focused on the content of the lesson?

Always

Compare this *Cold Call* focused on content ...

"Do you think Lincoln declared war on the South primarily to eradicate slavery? John?"

... to an abrupt question implicitly criticizing student behavior:

"What did I just say, John?"

"Isn't that right, John?"

### Team It Up with Other Techniques

Coupled with *No Opt Out*, *Cold Call* is surely one of the most important techniques in *Teach Like a Champion*. It is also most often the best way to question when you *Check for Understanding*. It lets you control the sample from which you are getting your data for the class as a whole. But make a point of using it *before* you need to check. Normalize it as a natural and upbeat part of your class. Listen to the audio again and notice where you use such techniques.

You can also mix *Cold Call* with *Call and Response*. Move back and forth between whole-group (choral response) and individual responses at a rapid, energetic pace to drive up positive energy. This can also keep students from coasting during *Call and Response*.

1 NO OPT OUT

16 BREAK IT DOWN

18 CFU

24 PEPPER

23 CALL AND RESPONSE

Coming out of *Call and Response*, clarify that *Call and Response* has ended by starting your first *Cold Call* name first.

## 26 EVERYBODY WRITES

Use *Everybody Writes* to prepare for *Cold Call*, letting everyone think in advance about the topic or questions.

## Allow "Hands Up" Versus Requesting "Hands Down"

As you *Cold Call*, you may sometimes allow students to raise their hands if they wish. This lets you to continue encouraging and rewarding students who ask to participate, even while you sometimes call on others. It also allows you to gather data on how many students feel confident and want to participate.

You can also tell students to put their hands down—"Thanks, I'm not taking hands"—and then *Cold Call* whomever you wish. This increases pacing (it's fast when there are no hands) and more forcefully establishes your control of the classroom and makes your *Cold Call* more explicit, predictable, and transparent. "Hands down" also reduces the students' tendency to call out answers and lets you *Check for Understanding* with reticent students in a way that appears less deliberate.

What other advantages can you see for allowing hands ("hands up") or disallowing them ("hands down")?

*Advantages of hands up:*

Students are fully prepared + want to answer.

*Advantages of hands down:*

Keeps students accountable for doing their work

Note that you can move at your discretion between taking hands and *Cold Calling* so that you can scaffold effectively. For example, you could *Cold Call* students for the first three questions in a sequence and then save the last and toughest or most interesting question for a volunteer. How does this compare to what you've generally done in class?

N/A

## Time the Name

Using the sequence of *question, pause, name* generally keeps the student who will be called on undetermined and causes everyone to come up with an answer during the pause. This gives you the highest possible *Ratio* and so is the default for *Cold Calling*. But there are some cases where you might want to say a student's name first. Can you recall some of them from *Teach Like a Champion*? Can you add some others?

~~When~~ answers that pertain to a subject that a student is stronger in than others.

Timing	Effect
"Darren, tell us one cause of World War I, please."	Allows Darren to prepare to hear the question, and may work well also for a student with slow language-processing ability or less strong command of English. But it also lets all others off the hook. They don't even need to catch the question.
"Darren" (pause), "tell us one cause of World War I, please."	May allow Darren more time to get set for the question, but does he even know one is coming? Slows down the class and wastes time for everyone else.
"Tell us one cause of World War I, please, Darren."	May catch Darren short and may fail to give other students sufficient time to think and answer internally.
"Tell us one cause of World War I, please" (pause), "Darren."	<b>Best general effect: During the pause, all begin to answer the question in their heads, in case they might be called. Darren then gets called on to say his answer aloud. Others mentally (or aloud) add their answer to his.</b>

You can also *pre-call*: tell a student to expect to be called on later in the lesson. You can pre-call privately before class or publicly during class.

"Latisha, be ready for when we review the stages of the water cycle!"

"Karen knows I'm coming to her when we get to the subject of Lincoln's goals for the proclamation!"

How do these approaches (including the ones in the table) compare to what you've generally done in class?

N/A

### Use Three Kinds of Follow-On Cold Calls

You can follow on to

- *A previous question.* Ask a question via *Cold Call*—often a warmup; then ask the student a short series of further questions (most teachers ask two to four in total) in which her opinions are further developed or her understanding further tested.
- *Another student's comment.* This reinforces the importance of listening to peers as well as the teacher: "James says the setting is 'a dark summer night.' Does that tell us everything we need to know about the setting, Susan?"
- *A student's own earlier comment.* This signals that once you've spoken, you're not done: "But, James, you said earlier that we always multiplied length and width to find area. Why didn't we do that here?"

Follow-ons can help you scaffold. The following is the beginning of a *Cold Call* scaffolding sequence that aims at a fairly complex answer. For each sequence, fill out the blank lines to continue with a possible *Cold Call* process. Try to use different types of follow-on.

The target answer here is an explanation of how the students simplified this equation:  $3x + 6y = 36/2$ .

- 1 Teacher: What's the simplified form you've worked out on your sheet—Serena?
- 2 Serena:  $x + 2y = 6$ .
- 3 Teacher: Good. Which side did you first start working on—Gerald?
- 4 Gerald: The right side.
- 5 Teacher: Sally, what is the next step? ?
- 6 [Sally]: - explains -
- 7 Teacher: Joe, is this what you got? ?
- 8 [Joe]: Y or N
- 9 Teacher: Taleb - what's next? ?
- 10 [T.]: - response -
- 11 Teacher: WORK ON THE REST WITH ?
- 12 [ ]: OTHER CLASSMATES
- 13 Teacher: ↓ ?
- 14 [ ]: ↓ ?

Do the same with this next sequence, whose aim is a brief review of causes of the Civil War. For example, the teacher may want students to mention North-South regional differences regarding industrialization and social life, economic tensions between them, and the Southern perception that Lincoln favored Northern interests.

- 1 Teacher: So we're agreed that the Civil War wasn't just about the long-standing question of slavery, important as that question was. What other tensions were building up between North and South—Wei-wen?
- 2 Wei-wen: Well, Lincoln had just been elected.
- 3 Teacher: Right ... ?
- 4 [W-W]: CAN YOU ELABORATE? ?
- 5 [W-W]: - DOESN'T ANSWER -
- 6 Teacher: MATTHEW? DO YOU KNOW? ?
- 7 [M]: - ELABORATES -
- 8 Teacher: - CONTINUE WORKING THROUGH THE LESSON ?
- 9 [ ]: ↓ ?
- 10 Teacher: ↓ ?
- 11 [ ]: ↓ ?
- 12 Teacher: ↓ ?

Critique your sequences using the criteria of an effective *Cold Call*.

## Learn Your Students' Names

To *Cold Call* effectively, you need to know your students' names and where they are sitting. If you don't already know their names, make learning their names one of your goals in your *Cold Calls*. For example, consult your roll sheet as you *Cold Call* on as many students as you can in each session until you have all the names at your command.

If classes have already begun, circle any name on your class list you still can't now associate with a face. Then, before or during class, locate faces for which you don't know the name. Ask each one to say his name, thank him, and repeat the name back for yourself.

Consider a class activity in which you allow students to test you. *Cold Call* a student by name and say, "Please point to someone else whose name I need to learn."

## Scaffold Cold Calls

*Cold Calls* should take advantage of *scaffolding*. Draw students in and help them succeed by starting generally with simple questions and progressing to harder ones. Emphasize what they already know and reinforce basic knowledge before challenging them for greater rigor.

You can subtly scaffold by letting students begin answering *Cold Calls* about work they have already done, whose answers they have in front of them. Then follow up with more rigorous questions—for example, asking them to explain how they got that answer.

Consider this sequence as Mr. Williams teaches his third graders strategies for answering multiple-choice questions. The multiple-choice question they are analyzing has required the student to find the "complete sentence."

- 1 *Mr. Williams:* We're reading down the set of possible answers. Read the third choice for me, please, Kyrese.
- 2 *Kyrese:* (reading) "Have you seen a pumpkin seed?"
- 3 *Mr. Williams:* Do we have a subject, Japhante?
- 4 *Japhante:* Yes.
- 5 *Mr. Williams:* What's the subject?
- 6 *Japhante:* You.
- 7 *Mr. Williams:* You. Excellent. Do we have a predicate, Eric?
- 8 *Eric:* Yes.
- 9 *Mr. Williams:* What's the predicate?
- 10 *Eric:* Seen.
- 11 *Mr. Williams:* Seen. Excellent. Is it a complete thought, Rayshawn?
- 12 *Rayshawn:* Yes.
- 13 *Mr. Williams:* Is that our complete sentence?
- 14 *Rayshawn:* Yes.
- 15 *Mr. Williams:* So, on to the next page? Or what do we need to do, Shakaye?
- 16 *Shakaye:* We need to look at the other two [answer choices] because that might sound right, but one of the other two might sound right, too.

Before you read on, reread the preceding sequence. What evidence do you see of the five main criteria of an effective *Cold Call*?

preparedness, Quick Answers, Supportive, elaboration, and Completeness.

### 16 BREAK IT DOWN

By parceling tasks out to five students, Mr. Williams ensured fuller participation and created the expectation that participation is a predictable and systematic event. He dispensed some opening questions in rapid sequence, carefully increasing difficulty. The first, low-difficulty question merely asked a student to read what was in front of him. The second (“Do we have a subject?”) was a simple yes-no question designed for the struggling student of whom it was asked to ensure his getting it right. Based on that success and the fact that the student was now engaged in the process of thinking about sentence structure, Mr. Williams came back with a more difficult third question (“What’s the subject?”). At question six, he raised the bar again, and his eighth and last question in the series (“Or what do we need to do, Shakaye?”) was the hardest.

### Analyze Some *Cold Call* Prompts

Read the prompts here and judge whether they satisfy any of the effective keys to *Cold Calling*. Then circle “would” or “would not” to indicate whether or not you would use this as a *Cold Call*, and justify your reasoning. Here are some questions to apply:

- In what ways is the prompt not aligned with the *Cold Call* technique?
- What message about classroom participation does the prompt send to the students?
- Does the prompt seem to be a “gotcha” call, rather than one that aims at success?
- Does the call seem to be based on personal bias? Does the teacher seem to be calling on a student only because the teacher knows that the student knows the material?
- Does the prompt send any strong message about classroom participation? What is the message?

**Prompt 1:** To a student who is staring out the window: “Do you know the answer, Sara?”

Evaluation of prompt: draws their attn back to the class + alerts others not paying attn.

I would not use this as a *Cold Call* prompt because if:

There needs to be full attn + respect given to the teacher / speaker

**Prompt 2:** “Jamal, earlier you said that snakes are reptiles. Do you still think that after what we’ve learned?”

Evaluation of prompt: elaborates on the difference + relates back to prev. questions/ans



I would / would not use this as a *Cold Call* because/if:

It helps to relate previous thoughts to current knowings

**Prompt 3:** "Mitch, you love multiplication. What's 16 times 9?"

Evaluation of prompt: associates relationship

I would / would not use this as a *Cold Call* prompt because/if:

it relates a relationship to the topic →  
std that isn't clearly known

**Prompt 4:** After taking only raised hands from the entire class, "Tell us one cause of the Civil War, Darren."

Evaluation of prompt: previously allowed prepared  
stds

I would / would not use this as a *Cold Call* prompt because/if:

It is depends on the grade — deep type  
of question + requires details

**Prompt 5:** "Who can tell us what the verb is in the sentence 'The elephants were trampling through the jungle'? I see three hands, five hands, ten hands. [To a student whose hand is not raised] Brandy, what do you think?"

Evaluation of prompt: calls out the amount of hands  
raised — only picks not raised.

I would / would not use this as a *Cold Call* prompt because/if:

there were plenty of hands raised vs. not

**Prompt 6:** "Jordan, in about a minute I'm going to ask you to tell me the name of the  $x$ -axis on the graph. Be ready!"

Evaluation of prompt: prepares stnt for the questioned material

I would / would not use this as a *Cold Call* prompt because/if:

It give the stnt time to answer the q + other stnts a different voice.

**Prompt 7:** "Let's see who was listening ..."

Evaluation of prompt: calls out those that were distracted.

I would / would not use this as a *Cold Call* prompt because/if:

It has helped in the past in classes I have taken.

### Draft a "Rollout Speech" to Introduce the Class to *Cold Call*

Extend this activity into your group work (see the "Practice with Study Group or Partners" section), but write your own draft before you convene.

Write a brief script that introduces *Cold Call* to your class at the beginning of the school year. Write another you could use midyear.

Consider these challenges:

- *Cold Call* may be new to the students, or they may have experienced surprise calling in the past mainly as a punishment for lapses in participation.
- Students probably want to know the reasoning behind a new routine in class—how it will serve their learning. They may also want to know who will be called on; how they should respond if called; and whether there will be particular times, if any, that they can expect *Cold Call*.
- You want *Cold Call* to become a norm.
- It's good to introduce required behaviors positively, with some element of humor, and to exercise them immediately.

Here's the introductory speech Colleen Driggs gave her fifth graders one year at Rochester Prep.

In some of your classes, your teachers do something called *Cold Calling*. In fact I do it. It's when you don't raise your hand and a teacher calls on you, just to see what you know. And it's not like a "gotcha"; it's

really just a way to do a quick review. I don't call it *Cold Calling*, though; I call it "hot calling" because you get a chance to shine and to show that you are *on fire*. So almost every day when we're talking about genre we're going to do hot calling. It's a great way to review all of these definitions and terms that we've learned.

Here's the hardest part about hot calling: you've got to keep your hands down. Your hands are folded, and I will call on a person. When I call on that person, you track just like you normally do and then you track me when you hear my voice again. Nod if you understand. Nod if you are ready for hot calling. Beautiful. Keep your hands down. Please don't call out. Sit up. Remember *SLANT*.

32 **SLANT**

What is the definition of genre? Hands down. Robert, what's the definition of genre?

## Add Rigor

Part of the power of *Cold Call* lies in students' pride at answering demanding questions on the spot. Although as mentioned, sometimes questions must be simple, others can and should be rigorous and demanding, even without scaffolding.

This transcript of a recent *Pepper* (rapid-fire) *Cold Call* session by teacher Jesse Rector shows you a level of rigor that students can reach. How many of the following *Cold Call* questions, asked in rapid-fire succession, could you answer correctly?

24 **PEPPER**

1 *Mr. Rector:* I'm a square field with an area of 169 square feet. What's the length of one of my sides, Janae?

2 *Janae:* 13.

3 *Mr. Rector:* 13 what? [Asking Janae for the units is an example of *Format Matters*.]

4 *Janae:* 13 feet.

5 *Mr. Rector:* I'm a square field with a perimeter of 48 feet; what's my area, Katrina?

6 *Katrina:* 144 square feet.

7 *Mr. Rector:* Excellent. I'm a regular octagon with a side that measures  $8x$  plus 2; what is my perimeter, Tamiisse?

8 *Tamiisse:*  $64x$  plus 16.

9 *Mr. Rector:* Excellent. I am an isosceles triangle with two angles that measure  $3x$  each; what is the measure of my third angle, Anaya?

10 *Anaya:* 180 degrees minus  $6x$ .

11 *Mr. Rector:* Excellent, 180 degrees minus  $6x$ . The square root of 400 is . . . what, Frank?

12 *Frank:* 100.

13 *Mr. Rector:* No, the square root of 400 isn't 100; help him out.

14 *David:* 20.

15 *Mr. Rector:* That's right, it's 20. Tell him why.

16 *David:* Because if you multiply 20 by 20, you'll get 400.

4 **FORMAT MATTERS**

Considering your work in this chapter and elsewhere, how do you think Mr. Rector brought his students to this level? ~~How might that translate to your own teaching context?~~

by being able to build off of each others right + wrong answers.

### Prepare to Cover the Class Systematically

To address the need to be systematic in your use of *Cold Call*, prepare a reminder and note-making tool (perhaps a simple chart or checklist) you can use next time in class to record evidence of “system,” including whom you called on in the session.

### PRACTICE WITH STUDY GROUP OR PARTNERS

Together, review and compare your individual work in the “Expand Your Skills and Repertoire” section.

#### *Cold Call* Role Play

*Cold Call* takes nerve the first few times you do it. This activity gets you to break that barrier by practicing it in a supportive group of peers. You need at least four participants.

Well before you meet, your group’s *Facilitator* should go over these instructions and remind everyone how to prepare. In the session, the *Facilitator* can use a *Cold Call* to appoint a different participant to play *Teacher* in each round. All other participants are *Students*.

The best topic matter for this exercise is material about which you *all* have already taken notes. In all the rounds, you can use the same topic, such as “How to *Cold Call*,” or you can use different topics, such as how to perform some other champion technique that you all have already studied. (The *Facilitator* will help you as a group decide.)

All participants should bring their various notes to the session, and everyone should be informed of what notes or topic the others will be addressing.

In advance, each participant reviews her notes on each topic and plans elements of a *Cold Call* sequence to review the topic when she is in the *Teacher* role.

1. When you convene, for each round appoint one *Student* to also be the *Timer*.
2. In each round, the *Teacher* stands “up front” and leads the session. *Students* answer to the best of their ability.
3. At around ninety seconds, the *Timer* pauses the session, allowing *Students* to give feedback (about a minute total), including
  - Something the *Teacher* did well and should continue doing. (“I really like how you are using follow-on questions to keep engagement high.”)
  - Some way the *Teacher* might have altered what she did at some particular point. (“We might have been helped by some scaffolding when you turned to what’s meant by ‘predictable.’”)
4. The *Timer* asks the *Teacher* to continue for another sixty to ninety seconds. The *Teacher* resumes charge until the *Timer* calls an end.

5. For about thirty seconds, everyone notes down something he or she wants to say or ask later about the round.

6. Go on to the next round until everyone has been *Teacher*.

7. The *Facilitator* leads a discussion about what the group has experienced. Everyone should be free to ask questions, such as these:

To ask of the *Teacher*:

- How did it feel? Were you nervous? Why or why not?
- Did anything surprise you?
- What did you think you did best? Were there any moments you wish you had back?

To ask of *Students*:

- How did it feel to be a student?
- Was anybody nervous? When?
- Was the tension a *good* thing—productive?
- Were all of the questions clear?
- What was one good moment? What was one moment that could have been improved?
- Which rounds seemed most effective in helping us cover the topic? What made them stand out?

For everyone: What's one useful thing you learned from this activity?

Learning how to better cater to the students  
needs in order to fully learn

### Introducing *Cold Call* to the Class

In the group, practice delivering the rollouts you've written (in "Expand Your Skills and Repertoire"). After each has presented, discuss the following points as a group:

- What do you expect will be challenging about introducing *Cold Call* to your students?
- What do you expect will be different about introducing *Cold Call* in the middle of the year?
- Are there any objections from students that you anticipate having to overcome?
- As a group, find good ideas among the introductions you just gave.
- Suggest specific improvements you might make on *your* introduction, and get feedback from the group.

### TRY *COLD CALL* IN THE CLASSROOM

1. If *Cold Call* is new to the class, study your lesson plan for a place to explain it. Go directly from that explanation to several actual *Cold Calls*.

2. In the lesson plan, review your objectives and note places you want to be sure to use *Cold Calls*. *Script your questions*. (You only have to try it without scripting to know why; if you're not sure of the answer or if the question is worded poorly and there is no clear answer, your *Cold Call* will be a disaster.) Be sure that some *Cold Call* questions occur early in the session, as part of your strategy of making them the norm and engaging your students *before* they might tune out.

**6 BEGIN WITH THE END**

3. Think about which students in your class you would like to see more engaged and what sort of *Cold Call* might work best for them.

4. Note where your *Cold Call* goal is to *Check for Understanding* or to enhance some other technique.

5. Considering the range of abilities in your class, where may you need to scaffold?

6. Without feeling that you need to memorize them, review the variety of possibilities described in this chapter and construct a few *Cold Call* questions and sequences that might come in handy. But also *decide* what your first, second, and third *Cold Call* questions could be, and to whom you might put them.

7. Try using *Cold Call* at some moments when you *could* choose from a show of hands.

8. After class, make brief notes based mainly on the "Overview." Look back at this chapter to notice variations you might build into your next lesson plan.

## TROUBLE-SHOOT

### Steady On

1. "Anyone? ... Anyone? ..." laments the comic teacher in the movie *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* (1986) when none of his teenagers raises a helping hand. Use *Cold Call* to banish those tedious, sapping moods and moments.

38 **STRONG VOICE**

42 **NO WARNINGS**

45 **WARM/STRICT**

2. *Cold Calling* is superb preventive medicine, but less effective as a cure. It's an engagement strategy, not a discipline strategy. Once a student is off task, the opportunity to *Cold Call* has passed. Use a *behavioral* technique instead.

3. If your *Cold Call* surprises students, they may learn a lesson ("Darn, I should have been ready"), but unless they know they'll surely be *Cold Called* again *very soon*, they won't have cause to change their behavior *before* you ask your question. They may just feel ambushed and annoyed. Do you need to break a habit of "gotcha" calls? How might you do that?

by NOT always choosing those w/o hands up.  
- or the same stnt

4. Are you prone to lapsing into any one of these inner thoughts?

"How do I give everyone a chance?"

"Whose turn is it?"

"Who will give me the answer I want?"

18 **CFU**

If so, specify in your lesson plan a systematic method of calling. Also think about what better questions to be asking yourself during the actual *Cold Calls*, in line with *Check for Understanding*.

Specify stnts in certain rows/outward appearance  
ex. "Those in the 2nd row" OR "those wearing red..."

Other Challenges

Possible Challenge	Possible Solutions
I worded a question unclearly, causing an informed student to have unnecessary trouble with it.	Slow down your delivery of the question. Spend more effort on writing questions into your lesson plan. Deliver a complex question in written form instead.
Students can't keep up with my pace. I think they know the answers, but the <i>Cold Call</i> stresses them out.	Allow for a bit more <i>Wait Time</i> : ask the question, pause a bit longer, then say the name.
	Frame the rollout or the question itself positively.
	Make your <i>Cold Calling</i> a challenge. Ask students to stand for the <i>Cold Calls</i> and turn them into <i>Pepper</i> . Or ask them if they can, as a class, get ten out of ten in rapid succession. <i>Break It Down</i> .

26 EVERYBODY WRITES

25 WAIT TIME

24 PEPPER

16 BREAK IT DOWN

BE CREATIVE

Some teachers emphasize the systematic nature of their *Cold Calls* by keeping visible charts on which they track who's been called on. It sends a clearer message that everyone gets his or her share.

Ms. Driggs, in her rollout, has renamed *Cold Call* to make it her own. Champion teacher Summer Payne (clip 17) also introduces *Cold Call* to her kindergarteners by renaming it.



COLD CALL

SUSTAIN YOUR PROGRESS

1. Using feedback from your study group or other peers, and reviewing your own lesson notes and observations, monitor your progress on *Cold Call*.

N/A

Date	Things I'm Doing Well	Ways I Can Sharpen <i>Cold Call</i> and Broaden Its Use or Value

2. Revisit "Where Am I Now?" Are you ready to build out to some other new technique?

## ANALYZE THE CHAMPIONS: SOME OBSERVATIONS



## Clip 16. Teacher Hannah Lofthus, Grade 2

From a scripted curriculum, Ms. Lofthus asks very short, same-format questions that each child can answer by reading a word. Because each question and answer is so brief, she can poll everyone's understanding and keep them all expecting to be called on not just once but shortly again. She calls on students in rapid succession and in a rhythm, reinforcing engagement by keeping students on their toes. She doesn't just want the answer; she wants it right after the snap. She calls on a student in the front twice in a row—this lets students know that just because they have answered doesn't mean that they won't get another question. She keeps the tone positive with a smile.



## Clip 17. Teacher Summer Payne, Grade K

Many teachers perceive *Cold Calling* to be inherently stress inducing and perhaps too intense for kindergarten. But do the students in this clip even know they're being *Cold Called*? If they do, they're having too much fun to worry.

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Ms. Payne adds a ditty, "Individual tur-urns, listen for your na-ame," and all of a sudden *Cold Call* is a game—one her students are dying to play. The use of the word "turn" (it's your chance) is critical to pulling this off. Making a game of *Cold Call* is doable at any grade level ... even if it might look different from this game.