

## Analyze and Plan *Cold Call* Prompts Planning Activity

**Objective:** Improve your use of *Cold Call* by analyzing and critiquing a list of prompts, and then draft two prompts for an upcoming lesson.

**Task:** In this activity, you will read and analyze different *Cold Call* prompts, evaluate and revise the prompts based on four keys for effective *Cold Call*, and then draft two *Cold Calls* to add to an upcoming lesson.

**Adaptation for School Leaders:** You can use the prompts for a mini-PD with your whole staff or a grade level team, adapting or adding in your own examples for your particular school context.

**Estimated Time:** 25 minutes

**Background:** Champion teachers call on whom they want to participate, regardless of whose hand is raised. This allows them to (1) *Check for Understanding* effectively and systematically, (2) Foster a culture of engaged accountability by ensuring that all students think it's possible that they're about to be called on, (3) Drive the pacing of their lesson, (4) Incentivize students to give maximum effort on rigorous questions and tasks as they know they could be called on to share their thinking publicly.

Here are four keys to effective *Cold Call*:

- **Be Positive:** It's not a "gotcha" (e.g., "What did I just say?") but a real question. You want students to get it right. A smile always helps to increase positivity.
- **Be Systematic:** Show that it's universal and not personal; *Cold Calls* come to everyone. Call on multiple students, all around the room. This helps *Cold Call* support *Check for Understanding*.
- **Be Predictable:** Let students know it's coming, either right now or eventually.
- **Unbundle:** Break big complex questions apart into smaller connected ones. This will increase pacing and energy and cause students to listen to one another.

## Analyze and Plan Cold Call Prompts Directions

**Step 1 (10 minutes) Analysis.** Read through the prompts below. Then:

1. Decide whether or not each prompt meets the keys for effective *Cold Call*.
2. If it meets one or more criteria, explain how/when the prompt would be most effectively used in a classroom. If it doesn't meet any of the criteria, revise to make it a more effective *Cold Call*. Consider making additional adaptations to your own grade level or subject area, teaching style, or to make the prompt enact more of the keys.

**Step 2 (3-5 minutes) Optional Discussion.** With a colleague, share 3-4 of the scenarios, your analysis, and your revised language. Questions to drive your discussion:

- What was effective/ineffective about the *Cold Call* prompt?
- What message about classroom participation does the prompt send to the students?
- Do any of the prompts seem to be a “gotcha” *Cold Call*?
- Do any of the *Cold Calls* seem to be based on personal bias?
- Does the teacher seem to be calling on students only because the teacher knows that the student knows the material?

**Step 3 (5 minutes) Draft Prompts for an Upcoming Lesson:** Keeping in mind the four keys, identify two moments in an upcoming lesson when you could *Cold Call* and draft your questions. Note: If this is the first time you're using *Cold Call* with your students, you'll want to explain what you're doing and why.

### Prompts for Analysis

**Prompt:** Can I start with you, Max?

- Predictable
- Systematic
- ✓ Positive
- Unbundled

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

It is a positive invitation to join the conversation. The risk with this prompt would be using it with a student who may try to opt out, so I'd be prepared to encourage them to try.

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

Predictable  
Systematic  
Positive  
Unbundled

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

**Prompt:** *Working on a multi-step math problem: “Now, what do I do next? Take a minute to think it through. Shayna?”*

Predictable  
Systematic  
Positive  
Unbundled

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

**Prompt:** *What words best describe Wilbur’s personality? I’m going to move around quickly and try to hear a lot of opinions. Let’s start with...Donald?*

Predictable  
Systematic  
Positive  
Unbundled

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

**Prompt:** Tell us three major causes of the American Civil War, Ariel.

Predictable  
Systematic  
Positive  
Unbundled

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

**Prompt:** It's time to show what you know. For our vocabulary review today, I'm going to *Cold Call*. Jesse, please give us the definition of "liberate"

Predictable  
Systematic  
Positive  
Unbundled

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

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

Predictable  
Systematic  
Positive  
Unbundled

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

**Draft Your Own:**

**Prompt #1:**

- Predictable
- Systematic
- Positive
- Unbundled

I'm using this prompt at this point in the lesson because....

**Prompt #2:**

- Predictable
- Systematic
- Positive
- Unbundled

I'm using this prompt at this point in the lesson because....