

Effective checking for understanding requires teachers to combine and use multiple techniques flexibly.

# CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

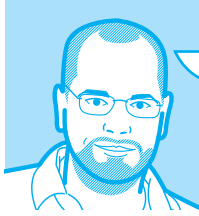
More effective teachers frequently checked if students were learning the new material.



BARAK ROSENSHINE

Use multiple C4U techniques in unison to boost their effectiveness.

## COLD CALL

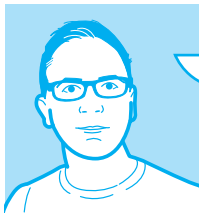


Cold Call can remind a student that their voice matters and, often, that they are capable of participating credibly.

DOUG LEMOV

Cold Call promotes a sense of belonging in the classroom; it tells students that their voice matters and that the teacher cares about their learning. The keys to its success are to provide thinking time and an environment where students can get an answer wrong without being ridiculed by their peers.

## PAIR SHARE



... opportunity to rehearse their ideas, practise explaining and to engage in productive talk using the key vocabulary relevant to the topic.

TOM SHERRINGTON

Pair Share, like Cold Call, gets students talking about their learning. It helps students rehearse their answers before sharing them with the whole class, and it allows the teacher to sample more responses as she roams the room. It's also a good go-to when a student says, "I don't know", during Cold Call.

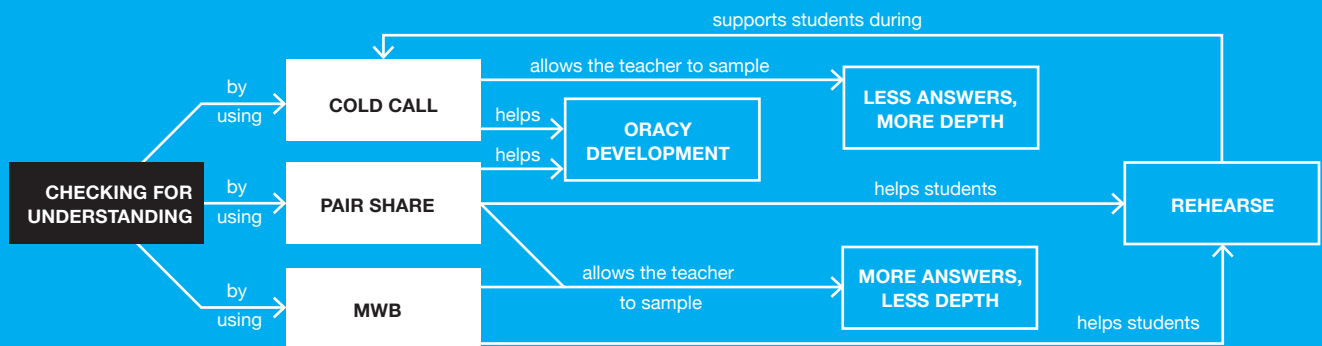
## MWBs



When I use mini-whiteboards, I have a much better chance that students are writing, thinking and doing, even if I am not going to read everyone's.

ADAM BOXER

Mini whiteboards are effective for sampling a large number of responses. Like Pair Share, they allow students to rehearse their answers before publicly sharing them. MWBs can tell the teacher if most of her students have the prerequisite knowledge and are ready to access new material.



The diagram above illustrates how each checking for understanding strategy has its own strengths. It also depicts how combining these different strategies can enhance teachers' checking for understanding routines.

The following sequence demonstrates how you might combine MWBs, Pair Share and Cold Call when checking for understanding. There are, of course, other ways; this is just one example.

Students write their answers on their MWB; the teacher roams the room to check their responses. Depending on what they observe, they might decide to Cold Call and sample a few responses in greater depth, or they might need to give students time to rehearse and refine their answers.



Using Pair Share following MWB work can help improve the conversations as students have had time to outsource their thinking. Students can refine and improve their initial work on their MWB in response to their paired discussion, strengthening students' understanding.



Using MWBs and Pair Share before Cold Call will likely boost students' confidence, increasing the chances of them offering a more polished response. By now, the teacher will likely have identified if most students are getting the gist and, if not, intervened.

