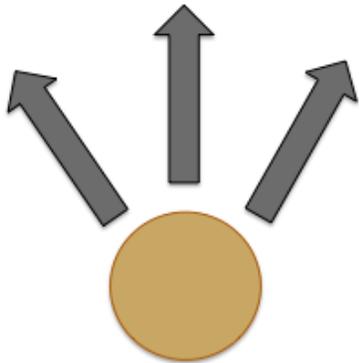


“Hands Down” Approach to Class Participation

“Hands Down” is a questioning technique that keeps your students alert and ready to respond. So what’s the change? Students do not raise their hands to be called on. Instead you randomly select students once you have posed your question and paused so each student can develop an answer.



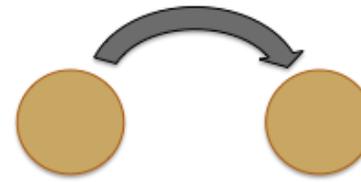
POSE

Pose your question, one that is worth their reflection.



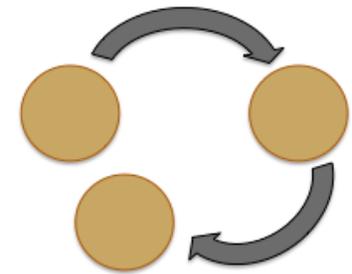
PAUSE

Allow time to develop an answer. Do not be afraid of the silence.



BOUNCE

Call on a student at random to share their response.



POUNCE

Call on another student to respond to the first answer.

Hands Down: Pose, Pause, Bounce, and Pounce

Hands down is a questioning technique that keeps your students alert and ready to respond. So what's the change? Students do not raise their hands to be called on. Instead you randomly select students once you have posed your question and paused (i.e., wait time or think time) so each student can develop an answer.

Before each class session where you will use this technique, prepare your questions ahead of time.

Prior to using this technique, you will want to say something to your class about using a new discussion/questioning technique...it will initially be challenging for students to break the habit of raising their hands.

Step one:	Pose your question – one that is worth their reflection.
Step two:	Pause – do not be afraid of the silence...count to 5 and perhaps to 10...
Step three:	Bounce – call on a student at random (see below for two techniques). This first student (student A) will respond...you may need to wait...refrain from jumping in...you may need to insist he/she responds.
Step four:	Pounce – after student A's answer quickly call on another student randomly (student B) and ask him/her their opinion of student A's response – even if student A's response was incorrect.

You can keep going with the Pounce until you feel the responses have led to an understanding of the concept. Then it is back to step one and your next question.

Random selection

Technique one – For those who have access to an interactive white board, there are random word generation tools. Once you place your students' names in and saved the notebook you can use it all term.

Technique two – You need two decks of playing cards. Select the number of playing cards for each student in your class. Create a stack of cards that match the set for your class from the other deck of cards. Give each student a playing card. Shuffle your stack. Pick the first card. The student with the corresponding card responds. You can either place the card selected at the bottom of your deck or reshuffle for the next new questions.

Resources:

McGill, R. M. (2011). How to move your lessons from good to outstanding. Retrieved from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/teacher-network/2011/nov/17/lessons-good-to-outstanding-afl-questioning?INTCMP=SRCH> Based on an Assessment for Learning (AfL) technique (<http://www.assessmentforlearning.edu.au/default.asp>)

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