

COMPTON PRAXIS INSTRUCTOR MANUAL

Facilitator Training & Implementation Guide

Author: Issa A. Rahman

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1. Program Overview

This Instructor Manual provides a comprehensive framework for educators, facilitators, and community leaders implementing the Compton Praxis curriculum. It establishes the instructional foundations, facilitation protocols, lesson structures, and assessment practices required to deliver the program with consistency, clarity, and professional rigor. The manual is intended to function as the core implementation guide for planning, teaching, reflection, and continuous improvement across all Praxis modules.

Compton Praxis is an educational model rooted in critical consciousness, symbolic literacy, community dialogue, and reflective action. The framework is

designed to help learners connect lived experience, identity formation, narrative analysis, and purposeful decision-making in ways that are personally meaningful and socially relevant. Rather than treating learners as passive recipients of information, Praxis positions them as active interpreters of text, story, symbol, and social reality, Paulo Freire's (Pedagogy).

This manual is intended for K–12 educators, adult-education instructors, youth program leaders, mentors, facilitators, and community-based practitioners who need a structured, district-ready guide for implementation.

In practice, this means instruction should move beyond information delivery and toward dialogue, interpretation, and application. Learners are invited to examine their own assumptions, make connections across stories and systems, and identify concrete actions that align with growth, responsibility, and community awareness.

2. Pedagogical Foundations

Compton Praxis is grounded in adult learning principles that emphasize relevance, self-direction, prior experience, and immediate application. Effective adult learning frameworks consistently show that learners engage more deeply when instruction acknowledges their existing knowledge, connects to real-world concerns, and gives them meaningful opportunities to reflect and act. The instructional model also reflects research-based dialogic teaching practices, which position purposeful discussion as a central tool for reasoning, reflection, and meaning-making.

The manual also adopts trauma-informed facilitation principles that prioritize predictability, psychological safety, trust, learner dignity, and clear boundaries. Trauma-informed educational guidance emphasizes safety, transparency, collaboration, empowerment, and voice as core conditions for participation and persistence. In Praxis, these principles shape everything from lesson pacing to discussion norms to

how instructors respond when emotionally charged topics arise.

- Dialogue-centered instruction
- Identity-first learning
- Reflective practice and action
- Trauma-informed facilitation
- Symbolic and mythic interpretation as structured learning tools
- Inclusive participation and community accountability

These foundations are not abstract ideals; they are operational commitments. Instructors are expected to design lessons that are coherent and accessible, ask questions that open interpretation rather than shut it down, and create a learning environment where challenge is balanced with support. The result is a pedagogy that is academically defensible, culturally responsive, and practically usable in a range of educational and community settings.

3. Instructor Roles and Responsibilities

Instructors are expected to serve as facilitators of learning rather than sole authorities over meaning. Their role is to frame inquiry, establish norms, guide discussion, model reflective thinking, and maintain a respectful environment in which learners can test ideas and examine patterns in their own experiences. The instructor's authority is expressed through preparation, clarity, responsiveness, and ethical judgment—not through domination of interpretation or control of every response.

- Maintain psychological safety and clear classroom agreements
- Use open-ended questions to deepen reasoning and reflection
- Recognize and respond appropriately to emotional activation
- Avoid coercive disclosure or interpretive overreach
- Protect confidentiality within applicable legal and institutional requirements

- Document observations and learning progress using program tools

Instructors should prepare in four dimensions before each module: intellectual preparation, emotional preparation, procedural preparation, and environmental preparation. Intellectual preparation means mastering the key concepts and essential questions. Emotional preparation means anticipating sensitive themes and planning supportive responses. Procedural preparation means organizing materials, timing, and transitions. Environmental preparation means ensuring the physical or virtual space communicates order, dignity, and inclusion.

4. Module Structure and Lesson Flow

Each module should follow a consistent sequence so that learners understand the rhythm of the experience and can focus on meaning rather than procedural uncertainty. Predictable structure is especially important in trauma-informed and discussion-based settings because it lowers anxiety, supports trust, and gives learners a clear map of where they are in the

process. A stable lesson architecture also makes it easier for instructors to adapt individual modules without losing the integrity of the overall framework.

1. **Opening Frame:** Introduce the central theme, essential question, and session purpose.
2. **Context Setting:** Provide shared language, concepts, or narrative background.
3. **Dialogue Circle:** Guide structured discussion using open-ended prompts.
4. **Guided Reflection:** Invite written or verbal reflection tied to personal meaning.
5. **Action Step:** Help learners identify one concrete next move.
6. **Closing Insight:** Summarize key learning and reinforce continuity.

Modules may range from 45 to 90 minutes depending on learner age, setting, and depth of discussion. Each module should include learning objectives, key concepts, required materials, and instructor preparation notes. As a planning standard, instructors should identify one cognitive goal, one reflective goal, and one application goal

for each lesson so that the session moves beyond exposure into interpretation and transfer.

A strong module opening should answer three questions for learners: What are we exploring today? Why does it matter? What will I be asked to do? A strong closing should answer a parallel set of questions: What did we notice? What did we learn? What will we carry forward? This beginning-to-end coherence is what turns a lesson from a collection of activities into a meaningful sequence.

5. Facilitation Protocols

Dialogue Circle Protocol. Establish agreements, clarify speaking norms, invite equitable participation, and use prompts that encourage reasoning, evidence, and perspective-taking. Structured classroom dialogue supports deeper thinking when it is purposeful, cumulative, and inclusive. In practice, this means instructors should begin with a framing prompt, use follow-up questions that extend thinking, and monitor airtime so that the conversation does not become dominated by a few voices.

Conflict De-Escalation Protocol. Acknowledge the tension without judgment, restate shared agreements, slow the pace of the exchange, and redirect the group toward inquiry rather than accusation. If needed, pause the discussion and return to structured reflection. The goal is not to suppress disagreement but to keep disagreement within a container of dignity, clarity, and accountability.

Sensitive Disclosure Protocol. Listen without interruption, validate the learner's effort to speak, avoid probing for details, communicate any relevant reporting obligations, and connect the learner to appropriate school or community support channels when necessary. Trauma-informed guidance consistently emphasizes that educators should not force disclosure, should remain transparent about their responsibilities, and should offer options that preserve learner dignity and agency.

Classroom Culture Guidelines. Maintain consistency, clarity, respect, confidentiality, and accountability. Learners should understand what participation looks like, what support is available, and

how the group will protect dignity while engaging difficult material.

Facilitation Decision Rule. When a moment in class becomes intense, instructors should prioritize safety over pace, clarity over speed, and containment over improvisation. A useful question is: What does the group need right now to stay engaged without being overwhelmed? This decision rule helps instructors remain steady and aligned with the program's values.

6. Content Delivery Guidelines

Instructors should introduce symbolic and mythic concepts as interpretive tools rather than fixed doctrines. The goal is to help learners notice patterns, themes, metaphors, and relationships between story and experience without imposing a single authorized reading. A strong symbolic lesson moves from observation to interpretation to application: learners first identify what stands out, then explore what it may mean, and finally consider how that meaning connects to personal life, community realities, or future choices.

- Define unfamiliar terms in accessible language.
- Use examples that connect abstraction to lived experience.
- Encourage multiple interpretations supported by reasoning.
- Avoid over-explaining or collapsing metaphor into literal instruction.
- Return regularly to learner voice, context, and application.

To preserve rigor, instructors should ask learners to support interpretations with evidence from a text, image, prompt, dialogue, or lived example. This keeps symbolic work grounded and teachable. The purpose is not to produce a single correct reading but to cultivate disciplined interpretation, reflective language, and personal insight.

7. Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment in Compton Praxis should emphasize growth, reflection, participation, and application rather than narrow content recall alone. Reflection prompts are most effective when they are specific,

scaffolded, and clearly connected to learning goals and future action. Research on reflective questioning and social-emotional learning also supports the use of open-ended prompts that help learners become more aware of their thinking, choices, challenges, and growth over time.

- Reflection journals and written responses
- Dialogue participation observations
- Action step completion
- Module exit reflections
- Instructor observation checklists
- Student self-assessment of growth

When evaluating growth, instructors should look for evidence of increased self-awareness, stronger use of reflective language, deeper participation in dialogue, more nuanced interpretation, and greater ability to identify constructive next steps. Assessment records should help instructors improve facilitation and support learners—not merely sort or rank them.

8. Module-Specific Instructor Notes

Use this section in each future module to record the module summary, key themes, symbolic interpretations, anticipated learner questions, common misunderstandings, instructor talking points, and additional resources. Over time, these notes should become a living professional archive that captures what worked, what challenges emerged, and what refinements improved learner understanding and participation.

9. Appendices

- Glossary of key terms
- Sample lesson plans
- Sample worksheets
- Instructor self-assessment form
- Program evaluation form

Recommended appendices include reusable lesson-plan templates, observation forms, reflection prompts, module planning sheets, and referral/resource protocols. These tools help instructors maintain fidelity while still adapting

delivery to local context, learner needs, and session length.

COMPTON PRAXIS STUDENT MANUAL

Learner Edition

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1. Welcome to Praxis

Praxis is a learning journey into your story, your voice, and your growth. This manual gives you space to think, write, ask questions, and connect what you learn to the choices you make in everyday life. It is not just a workbook to complete; it is a place to notice patterns, test ideas, and keep track of how your thinking changes over time.

2. What Praxis Is

Praxis connects experience, identity, reflection, and action. In each module, you will explore ideas through dialogue, short readings or prompts, symbolic interpretation, and personal reflection. The goal is not to memorize the “right” answer. The goal is to notice patterns, think deeply, and build understanding you

can use. You are encouraged to bring your own observations, questions, and examples into the learning process.

Some modules may focus on identity, story, conflict, community, decision-making, or symbolic meaning. Others may ask you to connect a reading or image to your own experience. In every case, Praxis asks you to move from noticing to interpreting to choosing what to do with what you learned.

3. What to Expect

- Dialogue circles and guided discussion
- Short reflection activities
- Writing prompts that connect ideas to your life
- Symbolic or story-based interpretation
- Action steps you can carry beyond the session

4. How to Use This Manual

Each section of this manual is designed to help you move from thought to reflection to action. Some pages ask you to write. Some ask you to discuss. Some ask you to pause and notice what matters. You can use this manual in class, in a group, or on your own as a

record of your learning process. The more honestly and carefully you engage with the prompts, the more useful this manual will become to you.

A helpful way to use each module is to follow four steps: read or listen carefully, notice what stands out, explain what you think it means, and identify one action or insight you want to carry forward. You do not need perfect wording. You need honest attention and a willingness to reflect.

5. Community Agreements

- Listen with respect.
- Speak from your own experience.
- Protect confidentiality.
- Ask questions with curiosity, not judgment.
- Give others room to think and respond.
- Take care of yourself and ask for support when needed.

6. Symbols and Stories

Symbols help us look beneath the surface of a situation. Stories help us notice patterns, choices, conflicts, and possibilities. In Praxis, symbolic thinking

is a way to explore meaning, not a test you have to pass. Your interpretation matters when you can explain what you notice and why it matters.

Sometimes a symbol will feel personal. Sometimes it will connect more to your community, culture, or goals. Both kinds of insight can be useful.

For example, a story about a journey might raise questions about change, fear, courage, or belonging. An image might suggest power, conflict, hope, or memory. You do not have to guess what the instructor wants you to say. Instead, focus on what you can support with observation, connection, and reflection.

7. Reflection Pages Template

Reflection Prompt: What stood out to you, and why? Try to be specific. Instead of saying only that something was “interesting” or “powerful,” name the detail, word, image, or idea that caught your attention.

Symbolic Insight: What deeper meaning, pattern, or metaphor do you notice? Ask yourself what this might represent beyond the surface and what larger idea it connects to.

Personal Meaning: How does this connect to your life, community, or goals? This is your chance to explain why the idea matters and what it helps you understand about yourself or the world around you.

Action Step: What is one next step you can take? Your action step can be practical, reflective, relational, or creative. The important thing is that it is clear enough for you to remember and meaningful enough to matter.

You may want to revisit your reflection pages later and notice how your answers change. Growth often becomes visible when you compare what you thought at the beginning of a process with what you understand after more discussion, practice, and reflection.

8. Dialogue Questions Template

- What stood out to you most, and what makes it important?
- What does this remind you of in your own experience or in the world around you?
- What pattern do you notice, and what might that pattern mean?

- What questions does this raise for you?
- How does this connect to your life, your community, or your goals?
- What is one idea from someone else that made you think differently?

When you respond in dialogue, try to speak clearly, listen carefully, and build on ideas rather than rushing to win an argument. Good dialogue is not about having the fastest answer. It is about paying attention, asking honest questions, and making thoughtful connections.

9. Closing Insight

At the end of each module, write down one idea, one realization, or one commitment you want to carry forward. This manual is a record of your learning, your interpretation, and your growth. Over time, these closing insights can become a map of how your thinking has developed and what matters most to you.