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YOU MAY HAVE detected a bit of a change in our cover art for the past few issues. In keeping with the idea that quiet observation of the nonverbal world helps us improve our evaluating, we offer a thought-provoking painting by Katie Croke. We think that even the picture’s title, “Lyrical #9,” says something about pausing to silently connect. Katie also offers her thoughts on the creative process and the link between art, language, and thinking Beyond the Rectangle.

Joseph Hutchinson’s senior psychology students had an exciting opportunity to “learn by doing” in a unique project combining math principles and artistic ingenuity — with a remarkable conceptual twist. Hutchinson describes the challenges of developing this innovative two-week project, and he offers some of his students’ artful interpretations in Integrating Psychology and Mathematics via Art: The “Impressionism Project.”

But what does “education” mean? Rather, just what do we mean when we use the terms “education” and “training”? Longtime ETC columnist Philip Vassallo holds that we often aren’t quite sure, but the selection of one word instead of the other can influence people’s opinions and behavior, and the quality of our schools. Vassallo asks Are Educators Training or Trainers Educating?
Social Darwinism and the Language of Racial Oppression: Australia’s Stolen Generations tells a powerful story of language, culture, and mechanisms of societal transformation. In the late 1800s, as Europeans spread across the world and conquered territories occupied by people of other races, they employed the concepts of the recently publicized theory of evolution to justify actions that now seem less than enlightened. Jeffrey Dafler shows how phrases like “survival of the fittest” led to government programs aimed at the extinction of Australia indigenous people, and how today’s Australians now seek a multicultural society.

Time-binding doesn’t necessarily mean improvement. On the positive side, Marty Levinson reminds us that we can learn from history by Mapping the Causes of World War I to Avoid Armageddon Today. On the other hand, we do not necessarily benefit from everything we inherit through time-binding, as David Maas points out in The Deleterious Effects of Negative Time-Binding.

“What do you believe is true even though you cannot prove it?” In a reprint from the New York Times entitled God (or Not), Physics and, of Course, Love: Scientists Take a Leap, scientists respond to this question, and, like the rest of us, exhibit a wide variety of belief structures and modes of communication.

Finally, in our new quarterly feature, Calling out the Symbol Rulers, we continue our GS-perspective examination of recent events. It’s not so much which words we use, but how we perceive them, asserts Steve Stockdale in A Word by Any Other Name. Since words trigger perceptions in others, he suggests that we consider what perception a speaker hopes to trigger and how the words used match the “facts” behind the story. In this vein, Gregg Hoffmann detects a certain amount of apparently intentional verbal substitution in recent Presidential language in his Rhetoric of Bush Speeches: Purr Words and Snarl Words. And Nora Miller reports growing interest in the words-work of George Lakoff, a well-known cognitive scientist and linguist from Berkeley, in an overview of Lakoff’s recent efforts to level the propaganda playing field by educating the Democratic Party on the critical art of Thinking Inside the Frame.