The articles in this issue offer what some might consider radical rethinking about commonplaces of teaching English. Reading them alongside each other in this issue, I hope, will give readers the chance to rethink in some significant ways their classroom practices and approaches. Briefly, I outline how each piece asks readers to rethink assumptions about what they do in the classroom.

Mara Lee Grayson’s “Race Talk in the Composition Classroom: Narrative Song Lyrics as Texts for Racial Literacy” and Daniel Collins’s “Writing as Reckoning: Composition and Collage” each take nontraditional texts as the subject of inquiry. Grayson articulates the exigence for her research study of using song lyrics to open up classroom conversations about race and racism, noting, “Despite the workings of institutional racism on our students’ lives, there are too few opportunities for young people to discuss their experiences with racism or the social and cultural ideologies these experiences represent.” Describing the results of a research project centered on students’ engagement in a second-semester research class with narrative song lyrics, Grayson invites readers to consider the power of lyrical language as a springboard for discussion of difficult and sometimes traumatic topics. Weaving analysis with student voices, this article offers readers an opportunity to think about the ever-more pressing need to address race and racism as part of the learning goals of higher education.

Collins’s article takes an even more radical approach, calling for recognition of the collage as a genre in the composition classroom. Written in the style for which the author advocates, Collins’s collage article integrates scholarly sources with student voices and multiple other “mini-genres” so that readers need to define and redefine how or whether a collage assignment or approach fits with their writing classroom goals. Presented as a collage itself, Collins’s article helps readers interact with both the idea of and the reading experience of collage.

Two additional feature articles will get readers thinking about how to radically assess—and ask students to radically reassess—their own approaches to literacy in the classroom. Annie Del Principe and Rachel Ihara’s article, “A Long Look at Reading in the Community College: A Longitudinal Analysis of Student Reading Experiences,” is a striking report on their study of student reading practices across the curriculum at their two-year campus. Drawing from the case studies of their student participants, Del Principe and Ihara gathered qualitative data to trace how students’ reading practices evolve as they progress through their college coursework.
As teachers, we no doubt understand the reciprocal relationship between reading and writing, and the findings in this study may be dismaying—or may energize you and your colleagues to attend to the role of reading in the college classroom more carefully. Inviting students, as well, to undertake radical rethinking is Sheryl Lyn Bundy’s “Playing by (and with) the Rules: Revision as Role-Playing Game in the Introductory Creative Writing Classroom,” which describes the results of a pedagogical approach for the creative writing classroom, drawing from the framework of “obstructions”—in particular, how to build a foundation for and impose “obstructions” on students as creative writers in order to press their creativity and resourcefulness.

Shorter pieces are here as well, including Darin L. Jensen’s assessment of Clifford P. Harbour’s book John Dewey and the Future of Community College Education and Caitlin Martin’s review of Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for a Socially Just Future, by Asao Inoue. “What Works for Me” pieces offer some strategies for helping students “resee” their surroundings, including importing the “still life” artistic staple into the online writing classroom and applying classic Greek thinkers to contemporary technology.