ATS3097
German Advanced 1

Writing an Essay: Start to Finish

Anna Rubinowski, Stephanie Jury
Sir Louis Matheson Library
9 May 2017
Contact

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Overview

- What are you having trouble with?
- Getting started
- Refine your essay question and research
- Refining your argumentation via debate
- Introductions and conclusions
The process of writing an essay

1. Analyse the topic
2. Brainstorm ideas
3. Research and read sources
4. Construct an outline/plan
5. Draft versions, revisiting steps 1 and 4
6. Edit and proofread before submitting
Before we start

https://goo.gl/OvH2bc

ATS3097 - Library Research and Essay Writing Workshop
9 May 2017

I'm a...

- First year student
- Second year student
- Third year student

Before the workshops begins, how would you rate yourself across the following aspects of research and essay writing assuming 1 = I have no clue and 5 = I'm an expert?

1 2 3 4 5

Choosing my essay topic
Your assignment

Due date: Week 11

Details of task: Students must write an essay *on one of the texts discussed in class*, including at least 6 *titles* of relevant research literature (use the library’s sources!).

Word limit: 1,500. The essay is to be written in English.

Value: 25%
Your assignment

Criteria for marking:

In general:
- content (60%),
- use of research literature (20%),
- style (20%).
Criteria for marking

The goal is an HD. To achieve this, you must demonstrate:

1. Excellent understanding of the text and the critical and interpretive issues and debates raised by the question

2. A sophisticated grasp of methodology, original and independent thinking

3. An argument which *is supported by evidence* from the text

4. An ability to incorporate original and personal insights into the text.

5. A commitment to presenting work to the highest standard (i.e. coherent argument, correct spelling, grammar and citation)
The process of writing an essay

1. Analyse the topic
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The process of writing an essay

1. Analyse the topic
Finding your topic

- Tonio Kröger
- Der Tod in Venedig
- Mario und der Zauberer

Thomas Mann

Tonio Kröger (1902), Tod in Venedig (1913) und Mario und der Zauberer (1930)
Drafting your essay question

How do you choose ‘the one’?

First seek an essay topic that is interesting to you.
Second, make sure your topic is manageable in size.
Third, your essay topic should preferably be phrased as a clearly defined question, rather than a statement.
I’ll prepare special and mysterious love tea for you.
**Example Question**

**Topic:** Der Tod in Venedig

**Question:** *Death in Venice* includes a lot of imagery and reference to Greek mythology. What were the Greek understandings of the concept of love and how are these alluded to in the novella?
How do I like to argue?

Ask yourself:

What sort of question do I want to answer?

– Do you want to do a comparison?
– Do you prefer a close reading of the text?
– Are you interested in the genre of writing?
– Do you want to answer a yes/no question?
– Do you want a contentious statement that you can explore?
– Do you like responding to a quote?
Where to start?

To establish one of the ‘debates’ that are to be found in the writing on the topic.

Finding this debate is what your research is to help with.

Read the topic thinking about:

- What you do know
- What you don’t know
- What you need to know
The process of writing an essay

2. Brainstorm ideas
Brainstorming

- **Bullet points and mindmaps**
  - set out the basic details, ready to be expanded
  - good for creating: plans, organizing free writing, brainstorms
  - useful for setting up placements for: headings, subheadings, quotes

- **Free-writing**
  - write down everything you know on a topic
  - it is a place to clarify your thinking or find new insight into the question
  - don’t try to compose perfectly, just write everything you know, what you think about the question and see what happens
  - only do it for 10-15 minutes at a time!

How to brain storm

1. Begin at the centre of blank page with your main question. Or a blank wall.
2. You can use words or pictures – or post it notes! Try to keep the words to a minimum.
3. Use a variety of line widths to show importance and relationships.
4. Radiant hierarchy, branching out from centre.
The process of writing an essay

3. Research and read sources
Research

German Studies: ATS3097 - Thomas Mann

Guide to German Studies Information resources in the Monash University Library

Thomas Mann

*New image for guide needed*

http://guides.lib.monash.edu/german-studies/thomasmann


German Studies - Thomas Mann

Thomas Mann (1875-1955)

- Mann, Thomas, 1875-1955
- Mann, Thomas, 1875-1955 — Criticism and interpretation
- Mann, Thomas, 1875-1955 — Themes, motifs
- Mann, Thomas, 1875-1955 — Tri in Venedig
- Mann, Thomas, 1875-1955 — Tonio Kröger
- Der Tod in Venedig (1912)
- Mario Und Der Zauberer (1930)

The Library has a large collection of works written by and written about Thomas Mann. Click on the subject headings above or the call number below to view some of the Library’s resources in library search:

830.912 M282

The tabs above present a small selection of what is available in the Library.

Secondary sources

What are scholarly sources?

- Secondary sources are also known as academic, refereed, peer-reviewed, or scholarly sources
- They are written by experts in the field and are intended for an audience with knowledge of the subject
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- They are written by experts in the field and are intended for an audience with knowledge of the subject
- They can include journal articles, books, chapters, monographs, conference papers, encyclopedias,

Why use scholarly sources?

- Scholarly sources provide an analysis and/or commentary on the subject and usually have a high level of expertise
- They offer insight in the wider discussion in the field and the theoretical framework
- Scholarly sources provide crucial background information that allows you to write more knowledgeably about the topic
- Can support your argument or show alternative points of view

Use the right source for the right job

- Handbooks and encyclopedias are good initial sources to gain an understanding of the wider context and main topics
- Monographs provide in-depth analysis and broad examination of a topic
- Journal articles cover a very specific aspect that is analysed in-depth
Developing the essay question

Topic: Der Tod in Venedig

Question: *Death in Venice* includes a lot of imagery and reference to Greek mythology. What were the Greek understandings of the concept of love and how are these alluded to in the novella?

What I know

- Mann was likely homosexual
- Following the trend of the era, his novella focuses on homoeroticism
- Mann travelled to Venice and made Aschenbach a mask for himself
- Greek mythology is used as metaphor in *Der Tod in Venedig*

What I don’t know

- How does myth represent 20th century German views of homosexuality
- How did Mann come to know of Greek mythology
- Why did he use Greek myth over other literary devices or metaphors

What I need to know

- The underlying motivation for writing *Death in Venice*
- The influence of *Knabenliebe* on his work
- Whether or not *Death in Venice* is a social commentary on homosexuality or a personal exploration of Mann’s own conflicted sexuality
Frauen in schwedischer Turnkleidung, am Ribbstol -
The process of writing an essay

4. Construct an outline/plan
What is an argument?

- States a position
- Gives reasons backed with evidence as support
- Considers the opposing arguments
Questions to ask yourself

1. What is the question actually asking you?
2. What are the key reasons for your position?
3. What evidence do you have to support your argument?
4. Does any specific scholarship help you articulate your point? Why or why not?
5. What theoretical ideas inform your argument. Explain why.
6. What are the objections to your argument?
Example question

*Death in Venice* includes a lot of imagery and reference to Greek mythology. What were the Greek understandings of the concept of love and how are these alluded to in the novella?
The first draft: descriptive

**Question**  
*Death in Venice* includes a lot of imagery and reference to Greek mythology. What were the Greek understandings of the concept of love and how are these alluded to in the novella?

**Introduction**  
Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice* begins with motifs of the classical world: as Gustav von Aschenbach, the protagonist, wanders through the streets of Munich, he chances upon a graveyard containing Byzantine architecture with snippets of Greek writing. As he ponders the text pertaining to the afterlife, a lone red-headed traveller stares at him, sparking an interest in travel in the lonely writer. Thus begins Aschenbach’s journey to Venice, the place of his ultimate demise, and the city in which he will struggle with his “conscious will and uncontrolled passion, [battling] between rational morality and passionate art”. (SparksNotes Editors, chapter 1) Using Plato, Nietzsche and Freud, Mann presents the Greek understanding of the concept of love through the figures and places of *Death in Venice*. This essay examines these mythological references and argues that they represent a deeper social and philosophical understanding of love within the Weimar Republic.

**Point 1**  
Greek understandings of love

**Point 2**  
Greek references to love in *Death in Venice*

**Point 3**  
Love in the Weimar Republic

**Conclusion**  
In describing homo-erotic lust in terms of Greek mythology, Thomas Mann utilises classical references in the context of a modern short story. Mann’s descriptions of Tadzio, an attractive, but pre-pubescent young boy, as a classical Greek god casts the relationship between the boy and his admirer, Aschenbach, in epic, mythicical terms. This literary device is Aschenbach’s “means of extenuating, of ennobling, even, an obsession that would otherwise seem sordid and perverse. Myth becomes rationalisation.” (Beauchamp, 387) In this essay, I examined a sample of *Death in Venice’s* references to love in Greek mythological terms, and consider their use as a modern way of exploring romantic lust in an otherwise illicit context. In line with other progressive German movements at the turn of the century, homosexuality was addressed by Mann through the façade of a mythical tale couched in classical ideals.
The process of writing an essay

5

• Draft versions, revisiting steps 1 and 4
Turning a description into an argument

Debate!

Why debate?

- A debate is the raw argument that considers all different arguments for your contention and provides evidence.
- The winner is the one you write into your essay.
- Having done a debate, you have all the material you need for a good outline.
Argumentation and debate

Instructions:

- Choose a **contention** from your group’s assessment (the more drafted it is, the easier!).
- Assign those arguing for it and those arguing against.
- Take 10 minutes to quickly give the reasons why, and what evidence. Then 10 minutes to debate it.
Debate debrief

- What side was more convincing?
- Write down the answer and why.
Defining focus of my conclusion was male love and homosexuality.

Thus, Greek mythology allows for the description of homo-erotic lust in order to hide the perverse nature of Aschenbach’s pederasty and, perhaps, paedophilia.

Therefore: I am examining how myth can be used to explore romantic lust in an illicit context.

Missing: How this is in line with progressive German movements at the turn of the century.
Research

German Studies: ATS3097 - Thomas Mann

Guide to German Studies information resources in the Monash University Library.

Thomas Mann

Tonio Kröger (1902), Tod in Venedig (1913) und Mario und der Zauberer (1930)

http://guides.lib.monash.edu/german-studies/thomasmann

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- They are written by experts in the field and are intended for an audience with knowledge of the subject.
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New image for guide needed

http://guides.lib.monash.edu/german-studies/thomasmann

New Question

Original Question

_Death in Venice_ includes a lot of imagery and reference to Greek mythology. What were the Greek understandings of the concept of love and how are these alluded to in the novella?

New and Improved

In _Death in Venice_, love and desire are often portrayed in reference to Greek mythology and classical approaches to beauty and truth. How does Thomas Mann use classical Greek ideals to describe Aschenbach’s obsession with Tadzio in the short story, and was this approach radical for early twentieth century German literature?

Note: This new question also forms part of my introduction. Two birds, one stone!
Narrowing the topic

**Topic:** Der Tod in Venedig

**Question:**
In *Death in Venice*, love and desire are often portrayed in reference to Greek mythology and classical approaches to beauty and truth. How does Thomas Mann use classical Greek ideals to describe Aschenbach’s obsession with Tadzio in the short story, and was this approach radical for early twentieth century German literature?
Question: In *Death in Venice*, love and desire are often portrayed in reference to Greek mythology and classical approaches to beauty and truth. How does Thomas Mann use classical Greek ideals to describe Aschenbach’s obsession with Tadzio in the short story, and was this approach radical for early twentieth century German literature?

**Introduction**

In *Death in Venice*, Gustav von Aschenbach finds himself surrounded by death: from the link of Venice to the Underworld, to the cholera outbreak. Thomas Mann sets up a tale steeped in metaphor which emphasises the unyielding march of fate and the ultimate payment for one’s sins and transgressions. Coupled with this theme of death, comes the theme of repression: Thomas Mann uses the method of “myth plus psychology” to investigate *Knabenliebe* (pederasty) within early twentieth-century German culture. Drawing on classical Greek ideals to describe Aschenbach’s obsession with Tadzio, Mann adopts an approach that was both radical yet acceptable for early twentieth-century German literature. Using the classical theory of Platonic love and the modern theory regarding “Homophobia and Sexual Difference” of Jonathan Dollimore, this essay examines *Death in Venice* within the framework of mythology around the River Styx and Plato’s *Phaedrus*. It concludes by examining the links between Aphroditian Heavenly Love as perceived by Mann and Weimar Republic views on *Knabenliebe*.

**Point 1**

**Experiencing Eros (Tadzio) and Thanatos (Death) through the Underworld (Venice)**

- **Literary metaphor**: Aschenbach means, loosely “ash stream”, which in Greek mythology, is the River Styx.
- **Geographic metaphor**: Venice known for homosexual tourists – gondoliers and sailors engaged in male prostitution, and was often used as a literary local for cultural transgression.
- **Travelling metaphor**: Voyage to the underworld = first gondola ride in which Aschenbach is told “you will pay”, which is reminiscent of Odysseus: parody is that Greek heroes were strong, Aschenbach is weak
- **Myth metaphor**: Desire (Tadzio) and Death end the narrative: the story comes full circle, with references to death (Byzantine monuments and Greek text, concluding with Medusa-esque death of Aschenbach after meeting Tadzio’s gaze)

**Point 2**

**Platonian male friendship ideals**: Aschenbach/ Tadzio as Socrates/Phaedraus and example of old/young love (move out of myth to philosophy and real world understanding of *Knabenliebe*).

- Aschenbach turns to Plato to repress his Dionysian desires, allowing Mann to emphasise the conflict between the Dionysian and Apollonian concepts. With the bacchanalian dream, however, these two approaches combine to fulfill Aschenbach’s repressed desires.
- Reading Plato while grappling with homoerotic desire = reinforce Dionysian and Apollonian polarity: discuss the Socrates/Phaedrus-Aschenbach/Tadzio dichotomy

**Point 3**

**Heavenly love**: Aphrodite and pederasty in 20th century Germany

- End with a link to the real world and how it relates back to Weimar Republican society. Examine how Dollimore can be used to explain Mann’s views on Homophobia and his own repressed sexuality, which is allowed to come to fruition through the figure of Aschenbach.

**Conclusion**

Mann’s *Death in Venice* is a journey of decay and demise: using the mythological images of the Underworld and the notion of Platonic love, Mann draws on and links the cultural perceptions of sin and desire to the city of Venice. He weaves a tale which demonstrates the long-practiced old/young love of the Greeks with Aschenbach and Tadzio, and warns of the dangers of succumbing to one’s interior Dionysian voice. This essay has explored Mann and Aschenbach’s journey through the use of mythical metaphor, *The Phaedrus*, and Aphroditian love. Pederasty, as viewed through Dollimore’s theoretical framework on homosexuality, ties the use of myth and real-world desire together to form an outlet for Mann and his audience to experience their deepest, and darkest, desires.

*Death in Venice* represents the artistic understanding of *Knabenliebe*, and the freedom authors were permitted to express a forbidden yet known love between man and youth. Using classical and accepted tropes, Mann mixes myth and psychology to create a foreshadowing representation of the intellectual freedom of Weimar Germany and the intellectual preoccupations of German intellectuals. The freedom of expression and the mask of myth allow Mann to both indulge his desires and remain within the accepted heterosexual expectations of the day, a freedom that would be rebuked and expunged during the Third Reich.
Breaking up the essay

For a 1,500 word essay, you should aim for (approximately) the following:

- Introductory paragraph: approx. 150 words (10%)
- Body: approx. 1200 words (80%)
- Concluding paragraph: approx. 150 words (10%)

Note: There is no set number of paragraphs per essay!
Redrafting: The introduction

- The problem you are addressing (broad question or issue with some context)
- Your main contention (your answer to the problem)
- How you are going to do it (case study)
Rewriting your introduction

Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice* begins with motifs of the classical world: as Gustav von Aschenbach, the protagonist, wanders through the streets of Munich, he chances upon a graveyard containing Byzantine architecture with snippets of Greek writing. As he ponders the text pertaining to the afterlife, a lone red-headed traveller stares at him, sparking an interest in travel in the lonely writer. Thus begins Aschenbach’s journey to Venice, the place of his ultimate demise, and the city in which he will struggle with his “conscious will and uncontrolled passion, [battling] between rational morality and passionate art”. (SparksNotes Editors, chapter 1) Using Plato, Nietzsche and Freud, Mann presents the Greek understanding of the concept of love through the figures and places of *Death in Venice*. This essay examines these mythological references and argues that they represent a deeper social and philosophical understanding of love within the Weimar Republic.
Redrafted introduction: The Breakdown

The problem you are addressing, Your answer, Case study (how you are going to do it)

In *Death in Venice*, Gustav von Aschenbach finds himself surrounded by death: from the link of Venice to the Underworld, to the cholera outbreak. Thomas Mann sets up tale steeped in metaphor which emphasises the unyielding march of fate and the ultimate payment for one’s sins and transgressions. Coupled with this theme of death, comes the theme of repression: Thomas Mann uses the method of “myth plus psychology” to investigate *Knabenliebe* (pederasty) within early twentieth-century German culture. Drawing on classical Greek ideals to describe Aschenbach’s obsession with Tadzio, Mann adopts an approach that was both radical yet acceptable for early twentieth-century German literature. Using the classical theory of Platonic love and the modern theory regarding “Homophobia and Sexual Difference” of Jonathan Dollimore, this essay examines *Death in Venice* within the framework of mythology around the River Styx and Plato’s *Phaedrus*. It concludes by examining the links between Aphroditean Heavenly Love as perceived by Mann and Weimar Republic views on *Knabenliebe*. 
Redrafting: The conclusion

- Restate the problem (that you have identified in the question)
- Outline your argument in the body paragraphs
- What this argument helps you conclude (major themes and issues the unit/topic is dealing with)
- Conclusion
Original conclusion

In describing homo-erotic lust in terms of Greek mythology, Thomas Mann utilises classical references in the context of a modern short story. Mann’s descriptions of Tadzio, an attractive, but pre-pubescent young boy, as a classical Greek god casts the relationship between the boy and his admirer, Aschenbach, in epic, mythical terms. This literary device is Aschenbach’s “means of extenuating, of ennobling, even, an obsession that would otherwise seem sordid and perverse. Myth becomes rationalisation.” (Beauchamp, 387) In this essay, I examined a sample of *Death in Venice*’s references to love in Greek mythological terms, and consider their use as a modern way of exploring romantic lust in an otherwise illicit context. In line with other progressive German movements at the turn of the century, homosexuality was addressed by Mann through the façade of a mythical tale couched in classical ideals.
The three Rs: Restate, Rearticulate, Ruminate

Mann’s Death in Venice is a journey of decay and demise: using the mythological images of the Underworld and the notion of Platonic love, Mann draws on and links the cultural perceptions of sin and desire to the city of Venice. He weaves a tale which demonstrates the long-practiced old/young love of the Greeks with Aschenbach and Tadzio, and warns of the dangers of succumbing to one’s internal Dionysian voice. This essay has explored Mann and Aschenbach’s journey through the use of mythical metaphor, The Phaedrus, and Aphroditean love. Pederasty, as viewed through Dollimore’s theoretical framework on homosexuality, ties the use of myth and real-world desire together to form an outlet for Mann and his audience to experience their deepest, and darkest, desires.

Death in Venice represents the artistic understanding of Knabenliebe, and the freedom authors were permitted to express a forbidden yet known love between man and youth. Using classical and accepted tropes, Mann mixes myth and psychology to create a foreshadowing representation of the intellectual freedom of Weimar Germany and the intellectual preoccupations of German intellectuals. The freedom of expression and the mask of myth allow Mann to both indulge his desires and remain within the accepted heterosexual expectations of the day, a freedom that would be rebuked and expunged during the Third Reich.
Common issues

- Paragraphs that are too long/short.
- ‘Upside down’ paragraphs: the topic sentence is at the end.
- No evidence to support points, no specific examples.
- Avoiding the topic.
- No logical sequence.
The process of writing an essay

6. Edit and proofread before submitting
# Citing and referencing: MLA 8th

A guide to the styles recommended by Monash schools and departments for students and researchers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home</th>
<th>APA</th>
<th>AIP</th>
<th>Chicago</th>
<th>CSIRO</th>
<th>IEEE</th>
<th>Harvard</th>
<th>Law</th>
<th>MLA 7th</th>
<th>MLA 8th</th>
<th>MiRA</th>
<th>Taraban</th>
<th>Vancouver</th>
<th>Recommended styles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Tips from the MLA Handbook

The examples in this guide are based on more detailed information in:

**MLA Handbook 8th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2016.**

**MLA Handbook by The Modern Language Association of America**

**Call Number:** QA614.9 .M58 2016

**ISBN:** 978-1-60329-262-7

**Publication Date:** 2016

### Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Guide

The MLA system uses in-text citations rather than footnotes or endnotes. The citations in-text are very brief; usually just the author's family name and a relevant page number. These citations correspond to the full references in the list of works cited at the end of the document.

### In-text citations - general points

- If the author's name is mentioned in the sentence, only cite the page number.
- If the author's name is not mentioned in the sentence, cite both the name and the page number.
- Font and capitalisation must match that in the reference list.
- Long quotations (more than four lines) should be indented.
- If you are citing more than one reference at the same point in a document, separate the references with a semicolon e.g. (Smith 169; Jackson 41).
- If the work has no author, use the title.
- If you are citing two works by the same author, put a comma after the author’s name and add title words, e.g. (Smith, "Memories of Motherhood" 77) to distinguish between them in the in-text citation. Do this when citing each of the sources throughout the piece of writing.
- If two authors have the same surname, use their first initial e.g. (O. Brown 26).

### Works Cited list - general points

- The recommended heading for the reference list is Works Cited, which should be centred.
- Each reference should be formatted with double-spacing and a hanging indent.
- Capitalise the first word of the title or subtitle, and all other significant words.
- Author's names should be listed with full forenames if known.
- The name of the first author is inverted to list the family name first. If there are additional authors their names are not inverted (e.g. Smith, Adam, and Laura Childs).
- If you cite more than one work by the same author, give the name in the first entry only. Thereafter, use three hyphens instead of the name, e.g. —.
- If a reference does not have an author, list it by title. Ignore the leading article (A, The etc.) when inserting the reference into the alphabetical works cited list.
- If you cannot locate a reference's authorship, date of publication or its authoritative status, especially if it is an online resource, consider using another similar reference that is more authoritative instead.
- For a journal article in an online database (e.g. via the Library website) include the name of the database (Routledge).
- When the title page lists two or more publishers which seem equally responsible for the work, cite each of them separating the names with a forward slash (e.g. Cambridge UP / Routledge).

### How to create a hanging indent

Watch this video to learn how to create a hanging indent when you are compiling your Works Cited list in MLA format. These instructions are for MS Word 2010.
Editing and proofreading your work

**Editing** involves improving the 'big picture' of your assignment: whether it addresses the task requirements fully, how the paragraphs are structured and flow and so on.

**Proofreading** focuses on specific details like spelling, sentence structure, referencing etc.
Editing and proofreading your work

Need more help? Check out Monash Research and Learning Online:

For Essay and Assignment Writing:
http://www.monash.edu/rlo/research-writing-assignments

For Editing and Proofreading:
https://www.monash.edu/rlo/research-writing-assignments/writing/editing-and-proofreading/editing-and-proofreading
Before we finish

https://goo.gl/UoygTe

Thomas Mann
Tonio Kröger (1902), Tod in Venedig (1913) und Mario und der Zauberer (1930)

ATS3097 - Library Research and Essay Writing Workshop
9 May 2017

I'm a...

- First year student
- Second year student
- Third year student

At the end of the workshop, how would you rate yourself across the following aspects of research and essay writing assuming 1 = I have no clue and 5 = I'm an expert?

Choosing my essay topic
Contact

- **Anna Rubinowski**
  Subject Librarian for International Studies
  anna.rubinowski@monash.edu

- **Anne Holloway**
  Learning Skills Adviser for Arts
  anne.holloway@monash.edu
German Studies
Library Drop-in sessions
Matheson Library T1
(ask at the Information Point if you don't know how to find the room).

Drop by if you have any questions or issues with your assignment for German Studies. We can help with research, finding and expressing your argument, essay structure, writing introduction and conclusion, citing and referencing, and anything else in regards to your assignment - with the exception of proofreading ;)

Week 10 Thursday, 11 May: 2-3pm
Week 11 Tuesday, 16 May: 12-1pm
Week 12 Tuesday, 23 May: 12-1pm