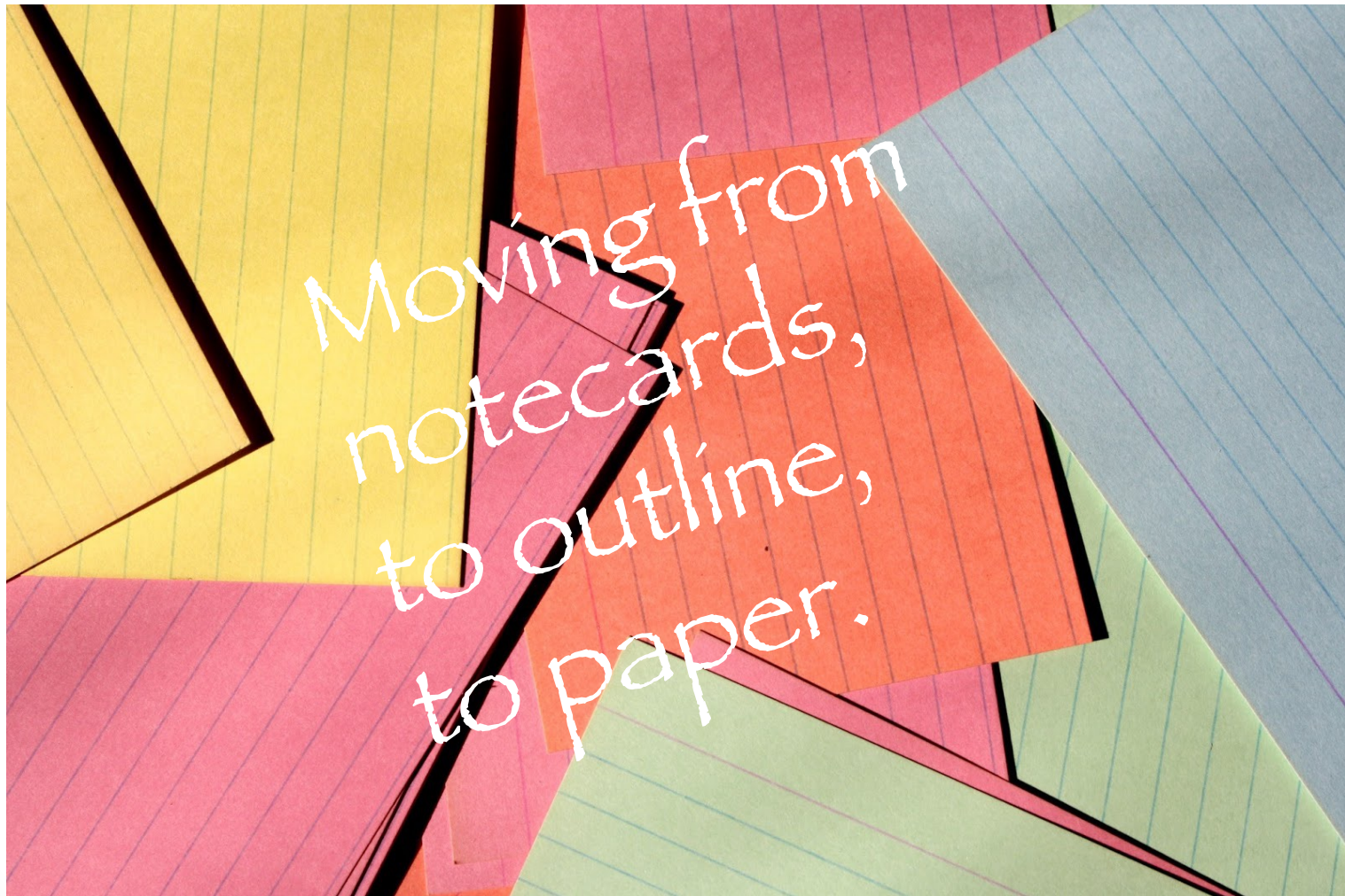


Research Paper

Notecard to Outline

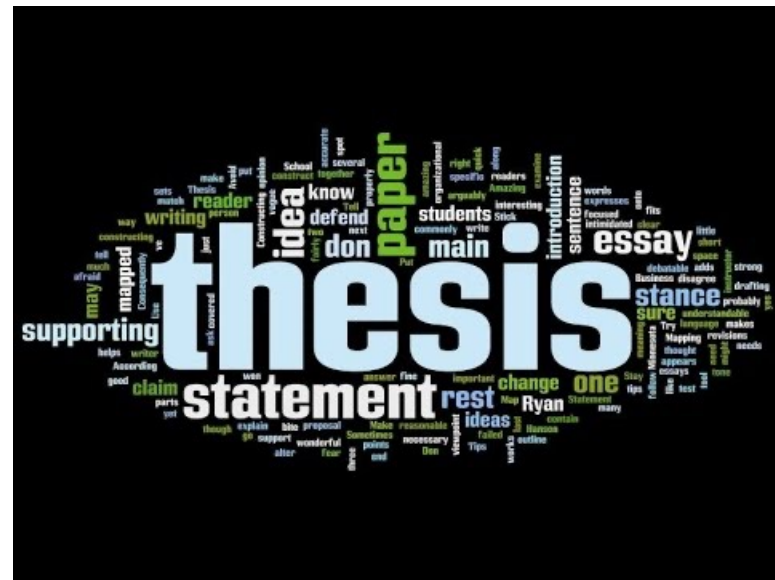


45 Notecards—check. Now what???



First: Consider your Thesis

- What is your thesis claiming?
- What points will you use to prove your thesis?
- What categories can you break your thesis into to organize your argument?



Analyzing a Thesis

Example Thesis:

Gladiators played an important role in Roman society by uniting citizens in their quest for a hero and ensuring their devotion to the government.

How might we break this thesis into topics/categories?

Analyzing a Thesis

Gladiators played an important role in Roman society

by uniting citizens in their quest for a hero

and ensuring their devotion to the government.

1

Gladiators' role
in Roman
society

2

How the quest
for a hero unites
citizens

3

Ties to citizens'
devotion to
government of
Rome

4

Counter/
Refutation

Organizing Notecards

- With your thesis categories in mind, where do your notecards fit in?
- If you have included a topic on your notecards, how do those topics relate to your thesis categories?
- If you have not included topics on your notecards, you will need to re-read each card and assign it to a category—where does each fit in relation to your thesis?
- Sort your cards accordingly—assign a number to each category

Sample Notecard 1

History of Games

Source #2

“The gladiatorial combats first appeared in Rome . . . as a funerary rite reserved to the aristocracy. That year, indeed, the sons of Junius Brutus, descendants of the great Brutus, decided to honour the memory of their father by matching three pairs of slaves against one another, according to a custom which was not of Roman origin”

p. 99

Sample Notecard 2

Devotion to Government

Source #3

"Roman punishments were supposed to vindicate and reinforce Roman order and conceptions of the self," p. 72

(games served to punish those who did not appreciate Roman society for what it was)

Analyzing a Thesis

Gladiators played an important role in Roman society

by uniting citizens in their quest for a hero

and ensuring their devotion to the government.



Gladiators' role
in Roman
society



How the quest
for a hero unites
citizens



Ties to citizens'
devotion to
government of
Rome



Refutation

Building Topic Sentences

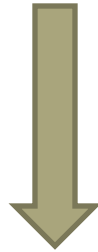
- Once you've sorted through your topics, you can begin to build ideas from them.
- First sort by main topic, then by subtopic. This will help you decide how much support you have for each.

Building Topic Sentences

- Using ideas from notecards, begin to form opinions based on evidence
- For example
 - Quote #1 establishes that there is a historical basis for the influence of gladiators in Roman society
 - Quote #2 reinforces that gladiator games were meant to establish the authority of government, as a public view of the punishment of those who did not comply

Building Topic Sentences

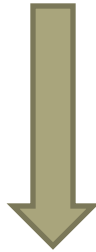
- Potential argument: How did the gladiator games become so important in Rome?



Topic Sentence: Historically, the games, like all things, had a beginning and a purpose which evolved over time.

Building Topic Sentences

- Potential argument: How did the gladiator games ensure devotion to Rome?



Topic Sentence: With Christianity's influence spreading, the games served as a punishment for those who chose faith over their country by becoming religious martyrs in the gladiator arena.

Formatting Your Outline

- After each Topic Sentence, your format should follow as such:

I. Topic Sentence for Point #1

A. Assertion (Restrict Sentence 1)

1. Introduction of evidence
2. Evidence (Illustrate Sentence assertion 1)
3. Explanation of evidence (Analysis sentences assertion 1)
4. Transition

B. Second Assertion (Restrict Sentence 2)

1. Introduction of evidence
2. Evidence (Illustrate Sentence assertion 2)
3. Explanation of Evidence (Analysis sentences assertion 2)

C. Conclusion

II. Topic Sentence for Point #2

A. Assertion (Restrict Sentence 1)

1. Introduction of evidence
2. Evidence (Illustrate sentence assertion 1)

Now return to your thesis:

Consider a counter argument/refutation

Gladiators played an important role in Roman society

by uniting citizens in their quest for a hero

and ensuring their devotion to the government.



Gladiators' role
in Roman
society



How the quest
for a hero unites
citizens

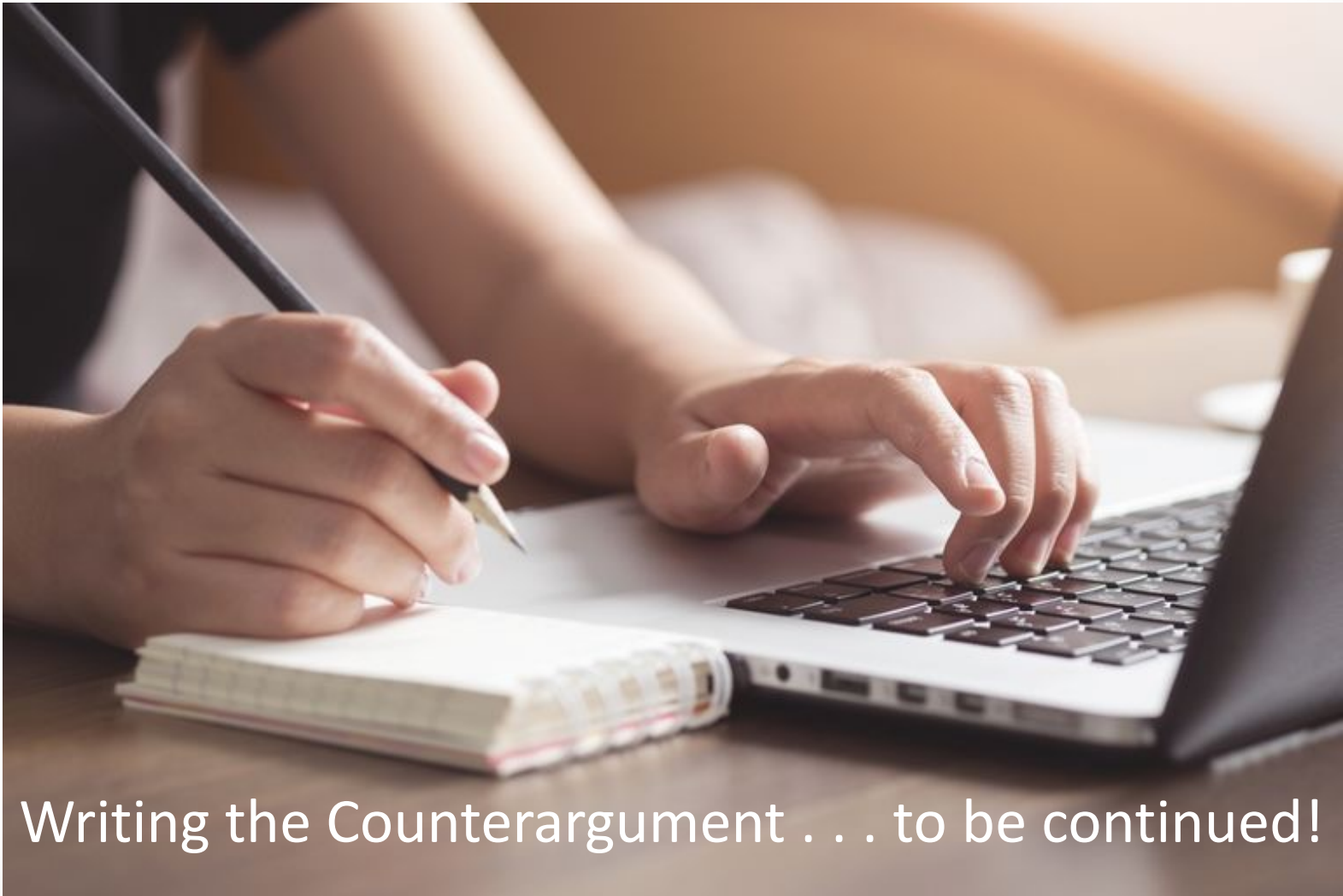


Ties to citizens'
devotion to
government of
Rome



Counter-
argument/
Refutation

What comes next???



Writing the Counterargument . . . to be continued!

Counter-Argument: what is it?

- When you write an academic essay, you make an argument:
 - Your thesis statement and support
- When you counter-argue, you consider a possible argument against your thesis or some aspect of your reasoning:
 - Your counter argument and refutation

How to Include a counter argument?

- Counter-argument in an essay has two stages:
 1. You turn against your argument to challenge it
 2. Then you turn back to your argument to re-affirm it.

This is called refuting the counter-argument

Turn Against



Turn Back

Refuting a Counter Argument:

Example Thesis:

Gladiators played an important role in Roman society by uniting citizens in their quest for a hero and ensuring their devotion to the government.

How might someone argue against this?

- * The gladiators were pawns of the barbaric Roman government
- * The gladiator games were displays of Roman strength, meant to terrorize citizens into obedience

Now incorporate this idea into your thesis:

In spite of the violent nature of Rome's gladiator contests, meant to display her strength, gladiators played an important role in Roman society by uniting citizens in their quest for a hero and ensuring their devotion to the government.

Note: this will now require a body paragraph (or two) to address the counter argument

Brainstorm for possible opposing positions

- Ask these three questions when you are trying to write counterargument:
 - Who might disagree with my position? Why?
 - What reasons do people have for disagreeing with me? (weaknesses in argument, opposing viewpoints...)
 - What would support an opposing argument?

Creating The Counter Argument (Turn Against)

- Introduce the **counter argument** (turn against) with signal phrases like:
 - *One might object here that...*
 - *It might seem that...*
 - *While it may be true that...*
 - *Admittedly,*
- Then you state the case against yourself as **briefly** but as clearly as you can, pointing to evidence where possible.

Creating The Refutation (Turn Back)

- Your return to your own argument must involve careful reasoning.
- In reasoning about the proposed counter-argument, you may:
 - Show why it is mistaken
 - Acknowledge its validity, but suggest why it is less important
- Signal phrases you could use:
 - *but, yet, however, nevertheless or still*

Example Counter-Argument/Refutation:

Some would argue that gladiators did not play an important role in Roman society, but only showed the violent mentality of the mob. As Kathleen Coleman states, "Both pagan philosophers and Christian fathers scorned the arena. But they objected most vociferously not to the brutality of the displays, but to the loss of self-control that the hype generated among the spectators"(49). Yet examining the details of the gladiators and the games they participated in gives a bigger picture of how they contributed to Roman society.

Where to Put a Counter-Argument

- You could put it:
 - as a section or paragraph just **after your introduction**
 - as a section or paragraph just **before the conclusion** of your essay

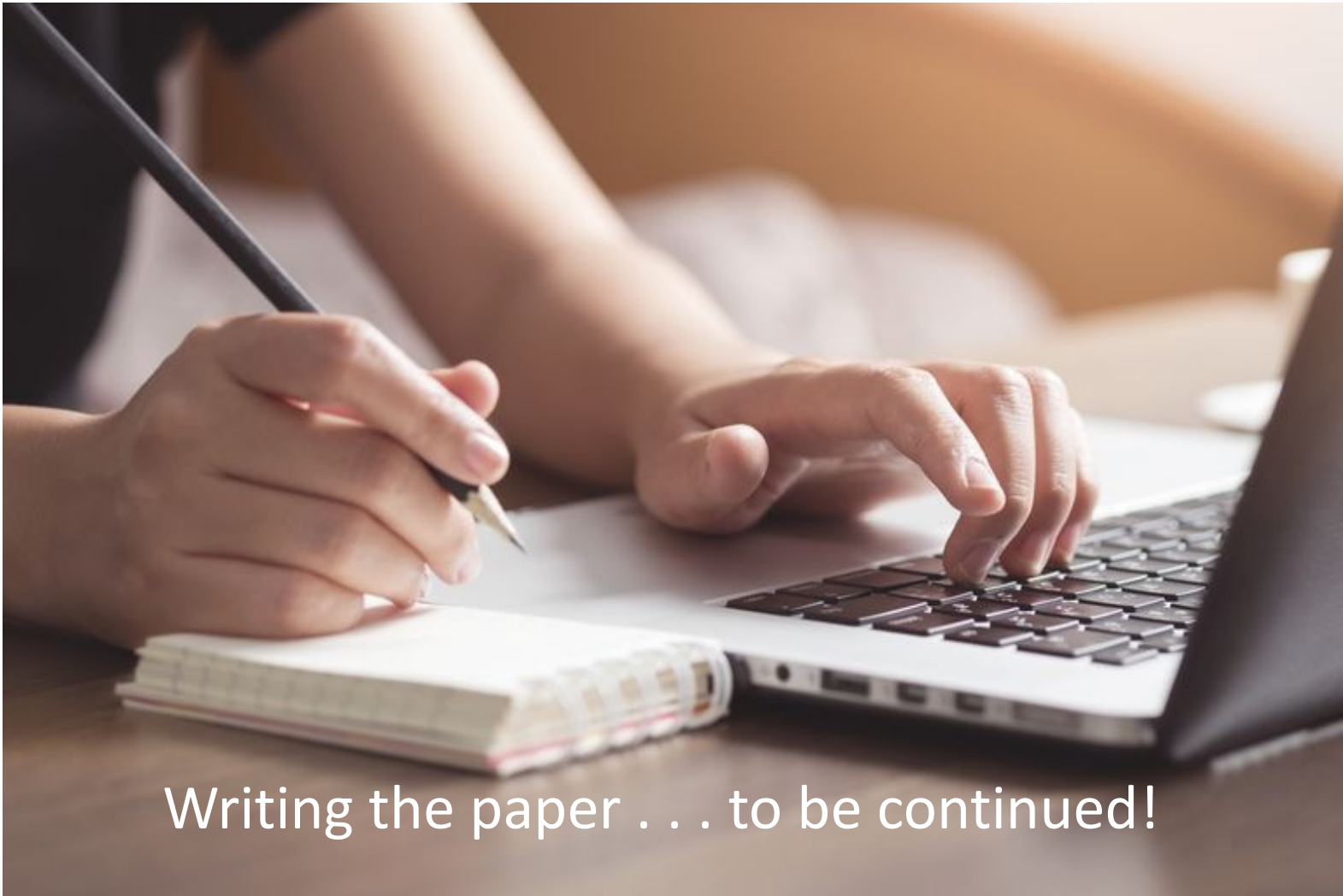
Remember, all topic sentences must directly support the thesis – even the refutation topic sentence

It is true that
counter arguments enrich
argumentative writing;

however,

adding a weak counter argument or
overdoing it weakens your argument.

What comes next???



Writing the paper . . . to be continued!