Middle Section Planner

Complete this before drafting the body of a piece. The middle is where most writing fails — planning it as a sequence of moves reduces that risk.

1 — THE ANCHORS

The middle runs between these two fixed points. Establish both before planning what goes between them.

What does the opening promise?

The claim or question the opening has established — what the middle must deliver on.

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_____

Where does the ending arrive?

The most precise formulation of what the piece establishes. The middle builds towards this.

_____

_____

2 — THE MOVES

Plan the middle as a sequence of steps. Each section should advance the argument by one specific move. If a section cannot be described as advancing the argument, it is a candidate for cutting.

Section 1:

What this section does:

_____

How it connects to what comes before and after:

_____

Section 2:

What this section does:

_____

How it connects to what comes before and after:

_____

Section 3:

What this section does:

How it connects to what comes before and after:

Section 4:

What this section does:

How it connects to what comes before and after:

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3 — THE CHECK

Before drafting, confirm:

■ Every section advances the argument by a specific step.

If a section only restates the opening claim, cut or consolidate it.

■ No tangents are present — or if present, they are explicitly subordinated to the main argument.

■ The sequence builds towards the ending, not just towards more material.

■ Transitions between sections are planned — the reader will know where they are in the argument.
