## Quillbot, Formal:

Gladiatorial games provided its sponsors with extravagantly costly but successful opportunities for self-promotion, and provided their clients and prospective voters with exhilarating entertainment at little or no expense to themselves.

Gladiators became major money for trainers and owners, aspiring politicians, and those at the top who wanted to remain there.

A politically ambitious privatus (private citizen) might postpone his deceased father's munus until election season, when a lavish show could garner votes; those in power and those seeking it needed the support of the plebeians and their tribunes, whose votes could be won with merely the promise of a spectacular show.

During his tenure as praetor, Sulla displayed his customary cunning by violating his own sumptuary regulations in order to present the most sumptuous munus Rome had ever seen for the burial of his wife, Metella.

In the last years of the politically and socially unstable Late Republic, any aristocratic gladiator owner had access to political power.

In 65 B.C., freshly elected curule aedile Julius Caesar conducted festivities in honour of his father, who had been deceased for 20 years.

Despite an already massive personal debt, he utilised 320 pairs of silvered gladiator armour.

The senate, aware of the Spartacus insurrection and wary of Caesar's expanding private army and gaining popularity, placed a restriction of 320 pairs as the maximum number of gladiators every Roman citizen may maintain in Rome.

Caesar's showmanship was unmatched in scope and expenditure; he staged a munus as a memory rather than a burial ritual, erasing any practical or significant distinction between munus and ludi.

Gladiatorial sports, which were typically associated with animal displays, extended across the republic and beyond.

The anti-corruption legislation of 65 and 63 B.C. sought to limit the political use of the games for their sponsors, but failed.

After Caesar's assassination and the Roman Civil War, Augustus formalised the supply of sports, including munera, as a civic and religious obligation.

His modification of sumptuary legislation curbed individual and governmental expenditures on munera, ostensibly to prevent Roman aristocrats from going bankrupt, and limited gladiator munera to the festivals of Saturnalia and Quinquatria.

A praetor's official munus was now limited to 120 gladiators at a maximum cost of 25,000 denarii, whereas an imperial ludi may cost no less than 180,000 denarii.

The finest and most renowned games across the empire were now associated with the state-sponsored imperial worship, which increased popular awareness, respect, and approbation for the emperor's divine numen, his laws, and his agents.

Trajan reportedly celebrated his Dacian victory with 10,000 gladiators and 11,000 beasts for 123 days between the years 108 and 109 A.D.

The expense of gladiators and munera continued to escalate uncontrollably.

Marcus Aurelius's legislation of 177 AD had little effect and was utterly disregarded by his son Commodus.