Wendell Berry

While Berry provides some solid arguments within his essay he is hypercritical and prejudiced against computer companies who are simply using standard advertising methods. Berry states that computer companies take advantage of already struggling farmers by “tricking” them into thinking that computers will help solve their problems. This is simply not the case because computers not only aid agriculture by saving labor but they also allow for rapid exchange of knowledge amongst farmers resulting in improved production and greater profits. In addition to Berry complaining about computer companies in agriculture, he also brought up the point of computer companies tricking schools. Berry claims that these schools are being tricked into spending all of their funding on expensive computers as opposed to books. While it may be true that as time progresses schools are beginning to spend increasing parts of their budgets on computers, it is done so not because schools are getting scammed by computer companies but because the schools recognize that computers are a powerful tool for both learning and teaching alike. While books are a great tool for educational success and progress, the internet provides students instant access to far more information than is contained within any book.

Based on Berry’s previous statements and arguments it is anticipated that he would wish to rebuttal our arguments, but we have set up a reply that goes against Berry’s views. One thing Berry might wish to point out is that all of the tasks that computers are currently being used for in agriculture were once completed using simpler technology, and thus there is really no need to replace this older technology with computers. While at first glimpse this argument might appear to have something behind it you have to consider that in the time since farmers began utilizing computers, yields have consistently increased. Even if Berry were to argue that the improvement was nonunique because some of these gains are the result of other technologies such as hybrids and advanced fertilizers, it has to be considered that all of these other technological advancements were aided in some way by computers. Another thing that Berry would likely wish to point out would be that the schools of the past did just fine without computers. Our response to that is that functionality definitely does not equate to perfection and there is always an opportunity for improvement. Which especially in the case of something as our educational system is something that we should definitely capitalize on.