Typewriter vs. Computer

If you never became aware of computers, would your life be more fulfilling? Would you feel as if your writing could be better or done more easily? I agree with Wendell Berry when he states not owning a computer helps one become a better writer other than owing a computer.

Human beings acting as editors is a very important part of publishing a computer will lack. While Berry’s wife acts as his editor, word processors on computers – even on some cell phones- work as editors to our compositions. Berry wrote that “as [his wife] types, she sees things that are wrong and marks them with small checks in the margins” (31). By his wife marking the errors, he can learn from his mistakes, but with AutoCorrect and Spell-check, computer users rarely take the time to recognize the errors and learn how or why their mistakes are incorrect.

It is addressed in the essay that computers allow you to “write better or more easily…than with a pencil” (32). When this statement comes to mind, it is accompanied by the saying “to each, his own.” It is solely an opinion that writing with a computer oppsed to writing with a pencil is easier. Writing with a computer does not ensure that one writes better, but more correctly without spelling or grammatical errors.

Computers also cause a greater expense to the user. By using a typewriter to compose with, Berry is saving himself perhaps hundreds of thousands of dollars. Through the course of a year, about ten new versions of computers are put on the market which are not made to last, but with typewriters, the buyer is only required to purchase one and only pay for repairs every few years if the typewriter is properly cared for. If a writer chooses to use a pencil, only pencils, graphite lead, and paper are the expenses. Personally, if the choice was given unto me, I would always choose to write with a pencil!

When weighing the pros and cons of buying a computer or using a typewriter to make one a better writer, sticking with a typewriter is more beneficial. The typewriter allows someone to learn from their mistakes and pay more attention to the text. Typewriters also lower yearly expenses, which is important due to economic problems. Leaving a larger carbon footprint is another detrimental factor that accompanies the use of a computer. All around, typewriters make a person a better writer compared to a writer that uses a computer.