Sample Research Paper Outline

Purpose: To show how programs written for microcomputers relate to the process of writing.

Thesis: Microcomputer programs can have a positive effect on students' writing if both the potentials and limitations of the programs are understood.

Audience: Current college and university students.

Microcomputer Programs and the Process of Writing

I. Major Steps in the Writing Process
    A. Organizing
    B. Writing the first draft
    C. Evaluating
    D. Revising
II. Writing Programs for the Microcomputer
    A. Types of Programs and Their Relationship to the Writing Process
        1. Thought
            a. Use in organizing
            b. Use in revising
        2. Word Processors
            a. Use in writing the first draft
            b. Use in revising
        3. Analytical programs: grammar, style, spelling
            a. Use in evaluating
            b. Use in revising
    B. Positive and Negative Aspects of Computer Writing Programs
        1. Positive features
            a. Less time spent on repetitive or mechanical writing tasks
            b. Greater flexibility and versatility in writing process
            c. Increased revision strategies
            d. Specific learning possibilities
        2. Negative features
            a. The increased time spent on learning software programs and computers
            b. The availability of hardware and software
            c. The unrealistic expectations of users
            1) A cure-all for writing problems
            2) A way to avoid learning correct grammar/syntax/spelling
            3) A method to reduce time spent on writing proficiently
            4) A simple process to learn and execute
    C. Future Possibilities of Computer Programs for Writing
        1. Rapid change
        2. Improved programs
        3. Increased use and availability
        4. More realistic assessment of value - critical work