(Letter sent to State Board of Education; child initiated, researched, wrote, revised and edited this letter with no teacher support other than providing the address. The identification information has been changed and the State and zip code have been omitted.)

1117 8th Avenue

Smithville, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

February 16, 2003

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ State Board of Education

c/o \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Department of Education

State Office Building

201 East College Street

Capital City, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Board Members:

I am responding to rumors of elimination or limitation of social studies and science programs in primary and elementary grades. Smithville has already announced to principals and others that we will be focusing on language arts and math. ***(Introduction that clearly states the problem)*** Since kindergarten I have had teachers that believe that science and social studies are important to maturity and expansion of the mind. ***(Reason supported with authority of previous teachers)***

I think the purpose of public education is to teach and prepare children for citizenship in our democracy. ***(Claim or argument)*** Schools shouldn’t focus on just reading, writing, and math all day ***(Elaboration of argument)*** because social studies and science are a great part of understanding reading and writing. ***(Reason)*** I know that reading and writing skills are essential, but it is also important to measure up the value of science and social studies with reading and writing. ***(Counter-argument/rebuttal)*** My belief is that skills plus content equals a total curriculum (*skills+content=total curriculum*). ***(Warrant that connects the claim and reasons)***

If you don’t agree with me on this then maybe you should refer to Dr. E. D. Hirsch:

“The current emphasis on skills in the primary grades,…has caused American education to decline in absolute terms, as measured by standardized test scores, and also in relative terms, as measured by comparisons with the achievements of children from other countries.”***(Reason with cited evidence from expert)***

In conclusion, as a student who has benefited from a solid combination of science, social studies, and language arts, I encourage you to reconsider the importance of social studies and science programs in the elementary grades. ***(Conclusion)***

Your concerned \_\_\_\_ grader,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Quincy Armstrong

cc: Mr. Tommy Paris, Smithville Schools, Superintendent

Mr. Garrett Riso, Smithville Schools, Associate Superintendent

Smithville Schools School Board Members