**February 2012**

**Authors of the Month:**

Primary: Judy Blume: February 12th, 1938

Intermediate: Sharon Bell Mathis: February 26th, 1937

**Reading Comprehension Strategy:**

Identify the text structure in specific passages in non-fiction reading: Chronological, Compare and Contrast, Order of Importance, Sequence, Spatial, Cause and Effect, Problem and Solution.

**Recommended Reading:**

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

*Recommended by:* Gwen Ventimiglia, M.Ed (Daughter of sixth-grade teacher Meredith Ventimiglia)
     Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows is the seventh book in the bestselling Harry Potter series. While fans are sorry to see the series come to a close, the ubiquitous sense of magic that permeated previous tales and enchanted persons of all ages is unquestionably lacking in this final installment.  Our trio of heroes, Harry, Ron, and Hermione, begin the dark adventure seeking out to destroy Lord Voldemort; a fatiguing journey not so much characterized by adventure, but by reflection, frustration, and mounting tension between the characters.  As our characters energy wanes, so do readers’ patience.  Joined with our heroes in a labyrinthine quest to nowhere, readers’ are forced to realize, not only have the characters have been abandoned on their desperate quest; unfortunately, we as readers are left floundering as well.

Despite a transparent and at times tedious journey, J.K. Rowling concludes her tale with a battle of epic proportions where few characters find reprieve as Rowling sends countless beloved characters to their deaths.  Despite its many disappointments, J.K. Rowling’s genius for fantasy is restored as the sinister character of Severus Snape wages one final assault on readers prejudices, leaving no doubt of his character’s true motivation.  Despite Rowling’s lackluster conclusion to the series, the Harry Potter series in its entirety is a fantastic voyage into a magical world characterized not by good and evil, but by the choices we make as individuals.  Through her seven book series, Rowling successfully and repeatedly transports readers into an enchanting world of witches, wizards, mythical beasts, and most importantly magic.