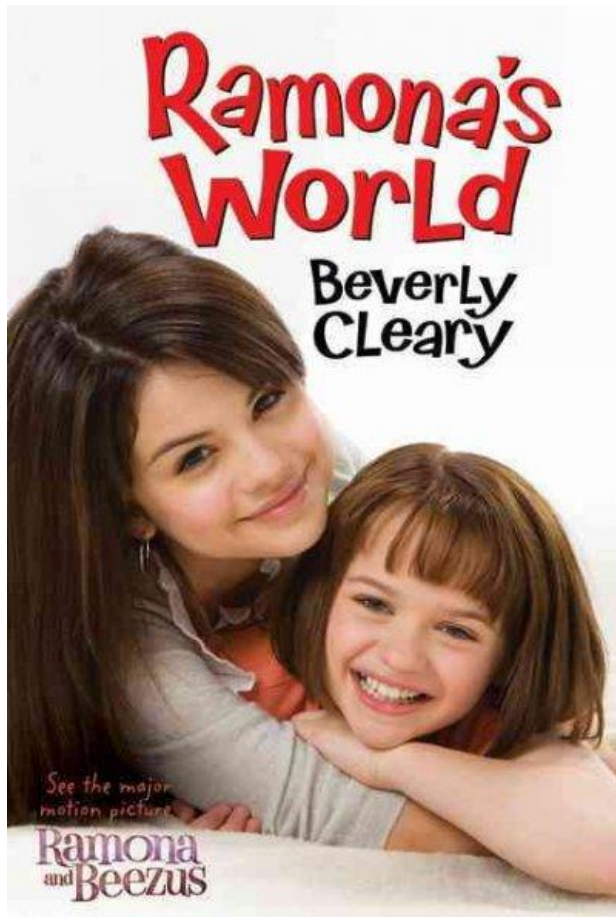


About the book...



Ramona Quimby, age 9, loves her life. She has an exciting baby sister, she's about to start the 4th grade, there's a boy she likes in her class (his name is Danny but she calls him "Yard Ape"), and she has a new best friend, Daisy. Daisy and Ramona love to watch the soap opera Big Hospital and to dress up like princesses. But Ramona soon learns that this year isn't going to be as easy as she thought. Her new teacher is very strict about spelling, and Ramona thinks her friendship with Daisy is over when she makes a huge hole in Daisy's ceiling.

-Books & Authors

About the Author...



Beverly Cleary was born Beverly Atlee Bunn in McMinnville, Oregon. When she was 6, her family moved to Portland, Oregon, where she went to grammar and high school. She was slow in learning to read, due partly to her dissatisfaction with the books she was required to read and partly to an unpleasant first grade teacher. It wasn't until she was in third grade that she found enjoyment from books, when she started reading *The Dutch Twins* by Lucy Fitch Perkins. Thereafter, she was a frequent visitor to the library, though she rarely found the books she most wanted to read — those about children like herself.

She moved to California to attend the University of California, Berkeley, and after graduation with a B.A in English in 1938, studied at the School of Librarianship at the University of Washington in Seattle, where she earned a degree in librarianship in 1939.

Her first job was as a librarian in Yakima, Washington, where she met many children who were searching for the same books that she had always hoped to find as a child herself. In response, she wrote her first book, [Henry Huggins](#), which was published in 1950. [Beezus and Ramona](#), Cleary's first novel to feature the Quimby sisters as the central focus of the story, was published in 1955, although Beezus and Ramona made frequent appearances in the Henry Huggins series as supporting characters.

In 1940 she married Clarence T. Cleary and they moved to Oakland, California. The Clearys became parents to a set of twins, Marianne Elisabeth and Malcolm James, in 1955. Clarence Cleary died in 2004. Beverly Cleary currently lives in Carmel, California.

For more about the author visit <http://www.beverlycleary.com/>

Selected Writings

- [Dear Mr. Henshaw](#), Morrow, (NY), 1983.
- [Emily's Runaway Imagination](#), Dell, (NY), 1961.
- *The Henry Huggins* series (seven books)
- *The Ramona Quimby* series (eight books)
- *Ralph S. Mouse* series
 - [The Mouse and the Motorcycle](#)
 - [Runaway Ralph](#)
 - [Ralph S. Mouse](#)

Awards

The Newbery Medal for *Dear Mr. Henshaw* (1984); Newbery Honor Awards for [Ramona and Her Father](#) (1978) and [Ramona Quimby, Age 8](#) (1982); The Laura Ingalls Wilder Award (1975).

Reviews

Booklist

It's been a long wait, but Miss Quimby is back, and she's as feisty as ever. Now in the fourth grade, Ramona is adjusting to life as a big sister to baby Roberta, finding out what it means to have a best friend, and experiencing the very first twinges of romance with her old buddy, Yard Ape. Plot threads run through the whole book, but as in the earlier novels, each chapter is also a small story unto itself. The vignettes are at their best when they get right to the heart of a child's concerns, as when Ramona accidentally makes a face while having her class picture taken, a scenario immediately accessible to readers. Considering that Ramona made her first title appearance in 1955, Cleary (along with illustrator Alan Tiegreen) has done a remarkable job of keeping her au courant. There are a few slips here – girls who are almost 10 are more likely to be watching MTV than dressing up as princesses and witches – but for the most part, this is just what readers have been waiting for: vintage Ramona. Gr. 3-6.

Publishers Weekly

Cleary's first Ramona novel in 15 years opens as this strong-willed heroine enters fourth grade, determined to find herself a best friend. A new girl at school named Daisy fits the bill perfectly and costars in two of the novel's liveliest scenes: she and Ramona vacuum Daisy's cat, and while the two play a game of make-believe in the attic, Ramona's legs break through the floor and dangle over the dining room table. Though the precocious nine-year-old is on relatively firm ground at school ("By the fourth grade she had learned to put up with teachers"), Ramona resents the emphasis that this year's teacher places on correct spelling, tries to tolerate the seemingly perfect Susan and – very realistically – alternately feuds and flirts with classmate Danny (whom she calls Yard Ape because he "acted like an ape on the playground"). On the home front, Ramona stewes over her mother's preoccupation with a new baby and rolls her eyes at how sister Beezus (now a high-schooler) tends to integrate her newly acquired French vocabulary into conversation. A couple minor subplots seem dated (e.g., Beezus takes dancing lessons from her father in preparation for her first boy-girl party, to which she wears a blouse with ruffles), but most of Ramona's triumphs and traumas are timeless and convincingly portrayed. "I am a potential grown-up," declares this spunky protagonist on her 10th birthday, proudly trotting out one of her challenge words in spelling. Fans will hope that Cleary has many more growing pains and pleasures in store for Ramona before this potential is realized. Ages 8-up.

Horn Book

Although it's been fifteen years since *Ramona Forever*, only two months have passed for the heroine herself, now armed for fourth grade with news of her new baby sister, Roberta. On the one hand, Mrs. Meacham loves Ramona's composition about Roberta; on the other, the teacher corrects Ramona's spelling in front of the whole class. And thus goes Ramona's year, a collection of ups and downs leading to her tenth birthday: "'That's a teenager, sort of,' said Ramona. 'Zeroteen. That's a double-digit number.'" This latest book about Ramona lacks the immediacy and tart style of its predecessors; Cleary here seems intent upon making Ramona (and Beezus) more typical than individualized. Too, passing references to nose-piercing and Velcro seem anachronistic: the sisters are otherwise untouched by life as we know it in the nineties (is Beezus really attending her first boy-girl party in the ninth grade?). While fans may welcome this Ramona redux, it's disappointing to see how innocuous she's become.

Discussion Questions (<https://multcolib.org/ramonas-world>)

1. Have you ever read a book featuring Ramona before? If yes, how does this one compare? If no, did reading this book make you want to explore her other ones?

2. What kind of girl is Ramona? Do you know anyone like her?
3. What about fourth grade is Ramona looking forward to? Does it turn out the way she thinks it will?
4. Describe Ramona's teacher, Mrs. Meacham. What is she like? Would you like to have a teacher like her?
5. How do Ramona and Daisy get to be best friends? Do you think their friendship will last?
6. Ramona tries to be a good role model for her baby sister Roberta. Do you think big brothers and sisters need to be role models to their younger siblings or is this unfair? Why?
7. What was your fourth grade year like as compared to Ramona's?
8. Have you ever made a funny face during your school pictures? How would it feel to have yourself captured that way for everyone to see?

Activities

Watch the movie, [Beezus and Ramona](#).

Their teacher is proud of Ramona and Daisy when they discover the misspelled words “gonna” and “shoulda” in an advertisement. See how many examples of misspelled or nonexistent words you can find in newspapers, magazines and books.

Read-Alikes

Lois Lowry, [Anastasia Krupnik](#) (1979)

Anastasia discovers writing in her tenth year of life. She deals with birth, death, rejection, ridicule, and especially jealousy. Anastasia loves writing poetry, Wordsworth, and a sixth grade boy. She has a wild temper that brings a lot of problems. Then, she realizes that her mom is about to have a baby.

Annie Barrows, [Ivy + Bean](#) (2006)

Seven-year-old Bean has plenty of friends who are as rambunctious as she is. And when her mother tries to get her to befriend the seemingly prissy Ivy, who has just moved into the neighborhood, Bean resists all efforts pretty strongly. She's got enough to do just aggravating her older sister, Nancy, and keeping out of the way of the persnickety Mrs. Trantz, who protects her backyard as if there were hidden treasure inside it. But one day Ivy lets Bean know that she's wise to her tricks, and then reveals the most astonishing fact of all: she wants to be a witch.

Jeanne Birdsall, [*The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits and a Very Interesting Boy*](#) (2005)

The four Penderwick sisters, their absent-minded father, and their faithful dog Hound spend three memorable weeks one summer on the estate of Arundel in Massachusetts. The oldest daughter, Rosalind, acts as mother for her sisters and quickly falls for the estate's teenaged gardener. Skye, a year younger, is realistic, tough, and quick-tempered. Jane, a writer of mysteries, often describes out loud the events happening around her. Finally, Batty, only four years old, is the baby, always wearing colorful butterfly wings and constantly watched over by Hound. Batty finds that two of the estate's tame rabbits make good companions, but Skye at first does not get along with Jeffrey, the estate owner's son. Eventually, all of the children become friends and share in several adventures.

Judy Blume, [*Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*](#) (1972)

Life with his little brother, two-year-old Fudge, makes Peter Hatcher feel like a fourth grade nothing. Whether Fudge is throwing a temper tantrum in a shoe store, smearing mashed potatoes on the walls at Hamburger Heaven, or trying to fly, he's never far from trouble. He's an almost three-year-old terror who gets away with everything, and Peter's had it up to here! When Fudge walks off with Dribble, Peter's pet turtle, it's the last straw. Peter has put up with Fudge for too long. Way too long! How can he get his parents to pay attention to him for a change?



Ann Arbor District Library