

BEVERLY CLEARY

“I’m surprised sometimes that I’ve written anything. And the school librarian took a special interest in me.

She encouraged me by saying that someday I should write for children.

It seemed like a good idea.”



Beverly Cleary was born in McMinnville, Oregon, and, until she was old enough to attend school, lived on a farm in Yamhill, a town so small it had no library! After graduation from the University of California at Berkeley, Mrs. Cleary entered the School of Librarianship at the University of Washington, Seattle. She was Children's Librarian in Yakima, Washington, until she married Clarence Cleary and moved to California. The Clearys are the parents of twins, now grown. Mrs. Cleary's books have earned her many prestigious awards, including the 1984 John Newbery Medal for *Dear Mr. Henshaw*, for the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children in 1983. Her *Ramona and Her Father* and *Ramona Quimby, Age 8* were named 1978 and 1982 Newbery Honor Books.

Born April 12, 1916, in McMinnville, OR;

Education: Chaffey Junior College (Ontario, CA), A.A., 1936; University of California--Berkeley, B.A., 1938; University of Washington--Seattle, B.A. (librarianship), 1939.

Addresses: Home: Carmel, CA. Agent: c/o Author Mail, HarperCollins Children's Books, 1350 6th Ave., New York, NY 10019.

Ramona Quimby, Age 8

By Beverly Cleary

About This Book

From the first day of third grade, when Ramona Quimby meets her eventual nemesis Yard Ape, life moves on at its usual wild pace--usual for the boisterous Ramona, that is. Soon she is accidentally squashing a raw egg into her hair at the school cafeteria, being forced to play Uncle Rat with her annoying young neighbor, and, worst of all, throwing up in her classroom. The responsibilities of an 8-year-old are sometimes daunting, especially in a family that is trying to squeak by while the father goes back to school. But Ramona is full of too much vim and vigor to ever be down for long.

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you like the first day of school? How do you prepare? Have you ever ridden a school bus? What other ways can children get to school? Do you have a favorite teacher?
2. Mr. Quimby decides to go back to school to become a teacher. Have you and your parents ever been in school at the same time? If not, how would you feel about that? How can children help their parents if they are in school?
3. Ramona uses some very descriptive names to describe some of her pesky schoolmates. What are some of them?
4. "Yard Ape" gives Ramona a hard time since the first day they meet. How does their relationship change? Have you ever met someone and formed a negative opinion of them, only to realize you were wrong?
5. DEAR is one of Ramona's favorite school subjects. Why is reading so important to her? What is your favorite school subject? Why?
6. Ramona spends a few hours each day after school at the Kemp house. Why is it so hard for Ramona to get along with Willa Jean? What sort of activities do you like to do after school?
7. The Quimby family goes through quite a few emotional ups and downs throughout the book; did you find any of them funny? Sad? Does your family go through similar changes?

Resources referenced:

kidsreads.com, teenreads.com, bookrags.com, teachingbooks.com, multcolib.org, barnesandnoble.com,
And MPL Staff.