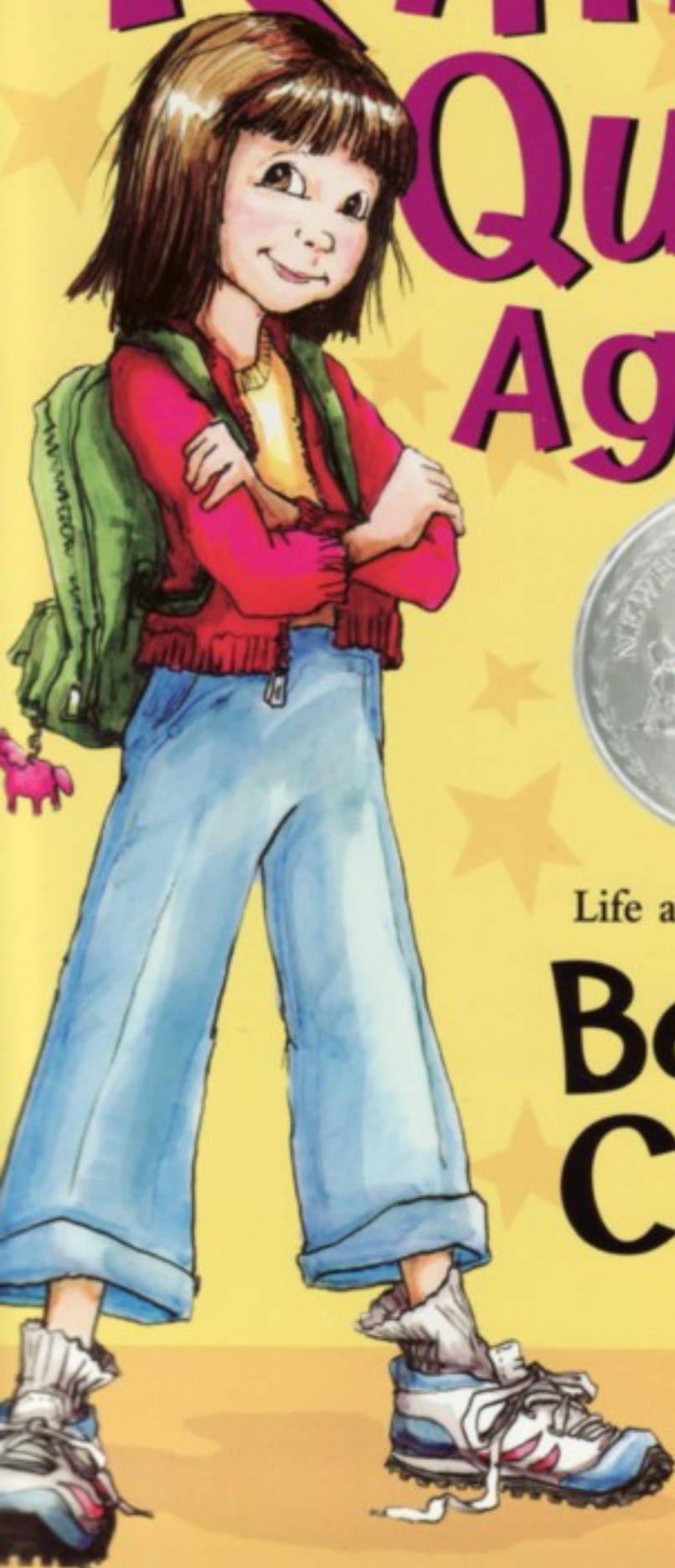


# Ramona Quimby, Age 8



Life as a third grader is tough!

**Beverly  
Cleary**



# 1

## The First Day of School

**R**amona Quimby hoped her parents would forget to give her a little talking-to. She did not want anything to spoil this exciting day.

“Ha-ha, I get to ride the bus to school all by myself,” Ramona bragged to her big sister, Beatrice, at breakfast. Her stomach felt quivery with excitement at the day ahead, a day that would begin with a bus ride just the

right length to make her feel a long way from home but not long enough—she hoped—to make her feel carsick. Ramona was going to ride the bus, because changes had been made in the schools in the Quimbys' part of the city during the summer. Glenwood, the girls' old school, had become an intermediate school, which meant Ramona had to go to Cedarhurst Primary School.

“Ha-ha yourself.” Beezus was too excited to be annoyed with her little sister. “Today I start high school.”

“*Junior* high school,” corrected Ramona, who was not going to let her sister get away with acting older than she really was. “Rosemont Junior High School is not the same as high school, and besides you have to walk.”

Ramona had reached the age of demanding accuracy from everyone, even herself. All summer, whenever a grown-up asked

what grade she was in, she felt as if she were fibbing when she answered, “third,” because she had not actually started the third grade. Still, she could not say she was in the second grade since she had finished that grade last June. Grown-ups did not understand that summers were free from grades.

“Ha-ha to both of you,” said Mr. Quimby, as he carried his breakfast dishes into the kitchen. “You’re not the only ones going to school today.” Yesterday had been his last day working at the checkout counter of the ShopRite Market. Today he was returning to college to become what he called “a real, live school teacher.” He was also going to work one day a week in the frozen-food warehouse of the chain of ShopRite Markets to help the family “squeak by,” as the grown-ups put it, until he finished his schooling.

“Ha-ha to all of you if you don’t hurry up,” said Mrs. Quimby, as she swished suds in

# Everything depends on Ramona.



**R**amona's job is to be nice to fussy Mrs. Kemp, who watches her while her mother works. If Mrs. Quimby didn't work, Mr. Quimby couldn't return to college. On top of all that, third grade isn't turning out as Ramona expected, even though she enjoys her class's new reading program, D.E.A.R. Danny the Yard Ape teases her, and, on one horrible day, she throws up—at school. Being eight isn't easy, but it's never dull!

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