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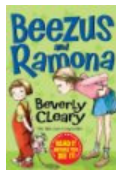
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## Beezus and Ramona

by Beverly Cleary



Beezus and Ramona

Beverly Cleary, Tr...

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### Beverly Cleary's **Beezus and Ramona**

Book review by [Ramona Heikel](#)(Visit Ramona - the reviewer - at [Happily Writing.](#))

Ages 8-12

### An independent little sister sometimes becomes impossible to love

Ramona Quimby will grow up to be a Nobel Prize-winning scientist. I know this because of her exasperating level of curiosity, creativity and independence, and her refusal to conform to the world around her. "If I can put butter on my mashed potatoes, why can't I put jelly?" she asks her parents. "I put butter and jelly on toast." I wonder if scientist Marie Curie was exasperating to her siblings!

"If Ramona drank lemonade through a straw, she blew into the straw as hard as she could to see what would happen. If she played with her finger paints in the front yard, she wiped her hands on the neighbor's cat." When Ramona drops all the eggs into the batter for Beezus' birthday cake—shells and all—Beezus demands to know why. Naturally, it's because she wants to see what will happen. And when the second birthday cake is baking in the oven, Ramona puts her plastic doll on top of it. "You told me to pretend I was Gretel, and Gretel pushed the witch into the oven."

### **Beezus and Ramona - book review**

Ramona, whom I first met in the 1960's in [Ramona the Pest](#), is especially dear to me because I can relate to the way she takes words literally, and the way she prefers reading about steam shovels (and making steam shovel noises!) instead of quiet, sweet girlie activities. How many girls show off their crusted-over scabs to visitors? And I love the zest for life that drives her, in spite of peoples' reactions.

Beezus has to live with Ramona, and often has to take responsibility for her actions. Poor thing, she's only a girl of ten, and all she knows is that her unpredictable little sister frustrates her and always gets her way. But what patience Beezus shows! And how helpful she is, ever willing to read to her and constantly change her plans to accommodate Ramona's. Yet just at the right time, her namesake and favorite relative Aunt Beatrice will call or visit, and shower the older sister with undivided attention, support and understanding.

One day, when Ramona pushes her too far, Beezus gets angry. She hates

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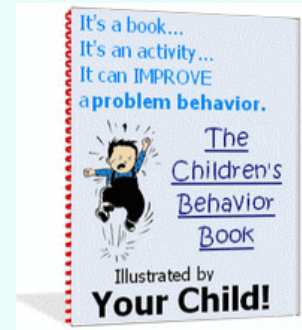
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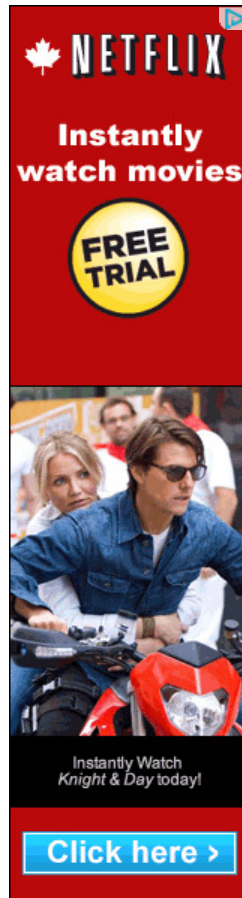
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Ramona! And then she feels utterly distraught at what kind of person she has become. What kind of girl doesn't love her sister? But Mrs. Quimby and Aunt Beatrice—sisters just like Beezus and Ramona—comfort and reassure her by sharing some stories of battles they had during their own childhood.



#### **Beezus and Ramona - book review**

I found the story full of positive role models. For a ten-year-old, Beezus is quite mature, demonstrating her sense of duty and helpfulness as she often assumes responsibility for taking care of Ramona without being asked or bribed. And the girls rarely watch television. Watching shows after school would probably occupy Ramona and make her less of a trial for the family! But then again, it wouldn't make up for missed discoveries and experiments (and laughs!), and the growing relationship between the sisters.

Without television or computer screens there is more time for other activities, such as embroidering a pot holder—something that takes hours of devotion and skill—and Beezus makes this as a gift for someone else.

Humorous characters and scenes bring a smile throughout. In addition to the antics of the children, I have to laugh at their parents who refuse to read the steam shovel book to Ramona one more time—and that's that!

Even though I've adored Beverly Cleary's books all my life and read them to my sons, as well as to the students in my classes, I wasn't aware of all the awards she's received. According to her website, her books have earned her the 2003 National Medal of Art from the National Endowment of the Arts, [the John Newbery Medal](#), the American Library Association's 1975 Laura Ingalls Wilder Award, the Catholic Library Association's 1980 Regina Medal, and the University of Southern Mississippi's 1982 Silver

Medallion. Readers of her books have voted her 35 awards, and in 2000, Beverly Cleary was named a "Living Legend" by the Library of Congress. This wonderful and insightful author is an international favorite: her books appear in over twenty countries in fourteen languages.

In fact, reading and reviewing [Beezus and Ramona](#) inspired me so much that this week I wrote Beverly Cleary a letter of gratitude!

*Webmaster's note:* Get more Beezus and Ramona with the [The Complete Ramona Collection](#) at Amazon.

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