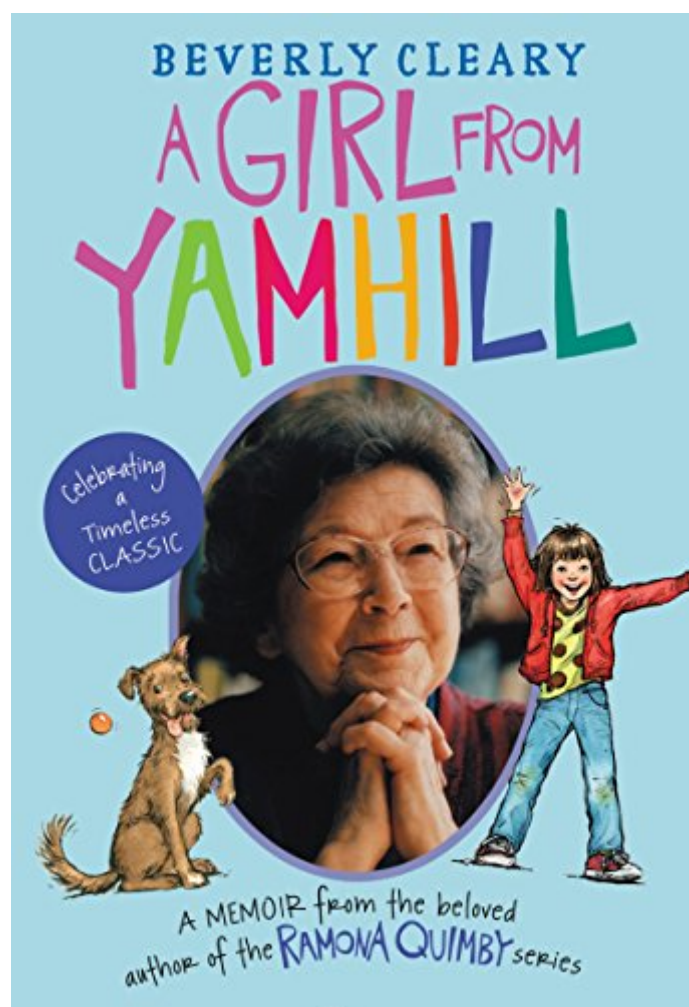


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# A Girl From Yamhill: A Memoir



## Synopsis

Told in her own words, *A Girl from Yamhill* is Newbery Medal-winning author Beverly Cleary's heartfelt and relatable memoir now with a beautifully redesigned cover! Generations of children have read Beverly Cleary's books. From Ramona Quimby to Henry Huggins, Ralph S. Mouse to Ellen Tebbits, she has created an evergreen body of work based on the humorous tales and heartfelt anxieties of middle graders. But in *A Girl from Yamhill*, Beverly Cleary tells a more personal story—her story—of what adolescence was like. In warm but honest detail, Beverly describes life in Oregon during the Great Depression, including her difficulties in learning to read, and offers a slew of anecdotes that were, perhaps, the inspiration for some of her beloved stories. For everyone who has enjoyed the pranks and schemes, embarrassing moments, and all of the other poignant and colorful images of childhood brought to life in Beverly Cleary's books, here is the fascinating true story of the remarkable woman who created them.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Like the other reviewers here, I was addicted to the books of Beverly Cleary when I was child. Mrs.

Cleary's books provided me endless hours of enjoyment, and I still remember laughing out loud at the adventures and misadventures of her characters. Eventually, I grew up and Mrs. Cleary's books became just fond remembrances of my childhood. Remembrances are what they remained until I re-read "Otis Spofford" a couple weeks ago. Despite my age, I still found myself laughing out loud while I read it. It was that experience that led me to read "A Girl from Yamhill." I wanted to find out more about the woman whose mere name on a book ensured to me as a child a wonderful reading experience. What a terrific autobiography! I read it in one day. I loved the simple, but honest writing style that can also be found in her fictional books. I also recognized many of the experiences of her girlhood that eventually ended up among the adventures of her fictional characters: tin cans and twine, misinterpreting the words to national anthem, the boys chewing garlic, and the green paint for Christmas. However, what struck me as the best part of "A Girl from Yamhill" was how ordinary Beverly Bunn was as a girl. She wasn't poor or rich. She got good grades; but occasionally they slipped. She wasn't in the popular cliques; but she wasn't an outcast. She never got into any major trouble; but she wasn't a saint. Yes, her mother was emotionally detached and controlling; but she wasn't abusive or mean-spirited. Teenaged Beverly spends a lot of time worrying about her clothes and boys just like any other teenage girl. I was amazed how much I enjoyed reading about the life of an average, ordinary girl.

\*\*\* Warning: This review contains spoilers!! \*\*\* I picked up this book because I really, really enjoyed reading the Ramona Quimby and Henry Huggins series with my 7-year-old daughter. I thought it would be fun to learn more about the author herself. This book does not have a strong narrative flow besides being told chronologically. The author basically very matter-of-factly recounts a series of choppy remembrances from her childhood. While there is an occasional bit of self-analysis, mostly there isn't a lot of depth. But, there are plenty of interesting anecdotes, and overall, this book is a good read for any Beverly Cleary fan. Some of the stories about the author's childhood on a farm, and the histories of her ancestors who ventured out west in covered wagons, were reminiscent of the "Little House" series. It was fun to draw connections between Beverly Cleary's family's life and Laura Ingalls Wilder's family's life. Every so often, especially in the earlier chapters, the reader is treated to childhood experiences that clearly served as inspiration for Ramona Quimby's behavior or other aspects of Beverly Cleary's books. I enjoyed making those connections, too. It was fascinating to read a first-hand account of how different life was back in the 1920's and 1930's, particularly during the Depression. I like that young readers who might pick up this book are being exposed to a whole different way of life that was part of the American experience. Schools especially have

changed quite a bit. The author really had quite a difficult childhood after her family moved to the city, and in some ways, it was sad to realize that the author of so many happy children's books felt so much unhappiness in her childhood.

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