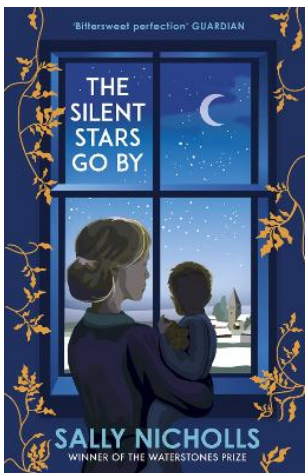


When The World Was Ours

Author: Liz Kessler **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 11/11/2021
Year Groups: Key Stage 4

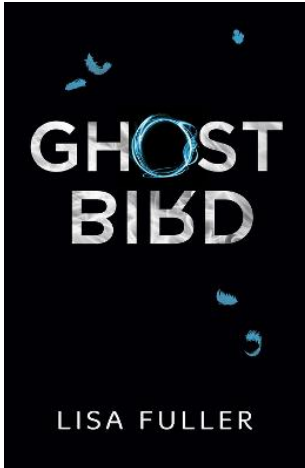
Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 11-14 An extraordinary, powerful, and important book, based on the true story of how Liz Kessler's father escaped from Nazi-occupied Europe thanks to a British couple his family had met once. But what elevates this book about three friends and their different fates in World War Two is the story of Max, the nice, ordinary boy who gradually becomes seduced into hatred and prejudice. The ringing question, 'What would I do under these circumstances?' echoes on every page. ~ Francesca Simon



The Silent Stars Go By

Author: Sally Nicholls **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/11/2021
Year Groups: Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

November 2021 Book of the Month | Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 11-14 The Silent Stars Go By is a riveting read-in-one-sitting experience driven by compelling characters who leap off the page, not least the young woman at its heart, an unmarried secretarial student who's forced to give up her baby during WWI. The novel is also underpinned by a superb sense of social history, with evocative details of post-war village life nestling within the bigger story, and - as might be expected of the author of Things a Bright Girl Can Do - it's threaded with feminist themes. It's 1919, Christmas is on the horizon and two years have passed since nineteen-year-old Margot was forced to give up her baby for her parents to raise as their own. She was only fifteen when she and Harry fell madly in love ahead of him being called up. The magic of their time together is evoked in all its tingling passion, contrasting with Margot's present-day torments. It hurts when little James calls her mother "Mummy", and she doesn't know how she can continue to keep James a secret from Harry, who's returned to the village after recuperating on the Isle of Wight. The flashbacks to Margot's time on the maternity ward are particularly poignant and, of course, the reason she has to endure this unbearable situation is due to the fact that she lives in a world in which "the girl is the one whose honour is defiled or whatever rot they spout" whereas "the boy is just being a boy". Coupled with that wider context, Margot's vicar father is a man who "forgave drunks and tramps and fallen women and the men who tried to steal the lead from the church roof. But he couldn't forgive her." Realising that "things couldn't go on like this," Margot decides to confront her fears amidst the rare glamour of a ball on New Year's Eve.



Ghost Bird

Author: Lisa Fuller **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 21/10/2021
Year Groups: Key Stage 4

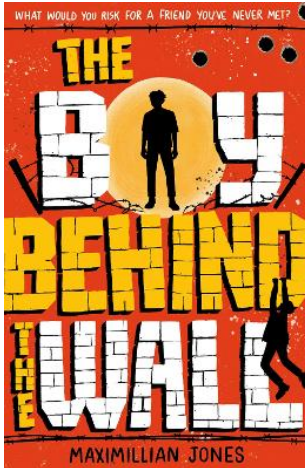
A thrilling, multi award-winning, teen ghost story, from a First Nations Australian author, drawing on the culture and beliefs of her close-knit community. Stacey and Laney are twins and mirror images of each other but as different as the sun and the moon. Stacey wants to go places, do things and be someone different while Laney just wants to skip school and sneak out of the house to meet her boyfriend Troy. When Laney doesn't come home one night, the town assumes she's just doing her normal run-off but Stacey's gut tells her different. Stacey knows her twin isn't dead - she just doesn't know where she is; she can see her in her dreams but doesn't know if she is real or imagined. Holding onto the words her Nan taught her is one thing but listening to those around you is another - who will Stacey trust? As the town starts to believe that Laney is missing for good, can she find her twin in time?



Witch

Author: Finbar Hawkins **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 14/10/2021
Year Groups: Key Stage 4

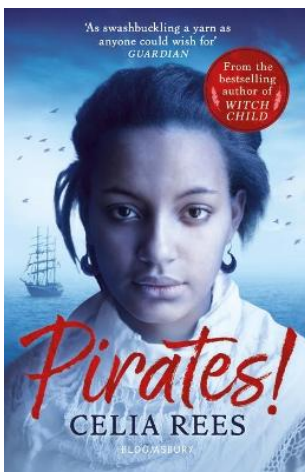
October 2021 Debut of the Month | Shortlisted for the 2021 Branford Boase Award A gobble-it-up fiery and intense yet thoughtful debut novel about family, betrayal, and witchcraft. Opening the pathway to a fabulous historical fantasy series this calls out as a must-read for young adults. Set during the civil war in 17th century England, 15 year old Evey has to flee with her little sister Dill when her mother is murdered. As with all good young adult novels, it is perfectly easy to slide into and really enjoy as an adult too, particularly with the wonderful cover drawing you in. Touching history, it flies into fantasy, as author Finbar Hawkins examines the meaning of witch. Evey is a complex character and as she tells her own story she has the ability of self-reflection, even if she doesn't always like what she sees. Witch is a read that fair on crackles with energy, it also encourages thoughts to both consider and soar and deservedly sits as one of our LoveReading debuts of the month.



The Boy Behind The Wall

Author: Maximilian Jones **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 14/10/2021 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

This page-turning story of two teenage boys living either side of the Berlin Wall in the 1960s evokes a period that's yet to be widely explored in UK children's literature. As such, it offers welcome (and outlandish) coverage of a key time in modern history, while also delivering a thriller that reels with tension and personal conflict. Harry is a comic-obsessed US citizen who's recently moved from Washington to West Berlin - his dad has a high-powered job with the US government. In the opening pages, he witnesses the brutal, traumatic sight of a boy being shot while trying to flee the East for the West. As this haunts Harry, his parents become increasingly fraught by the strains of his father's job, and he sends a message over the wall. It's found by Jakob, a boy living in the East. Jakob has been adopted by a prominent Stasi officer and his wife, who hope to mould him into a model citizen of the GDR while he clings onto hope that his mother and sister might still be alive. The boys strike up a friendship through exchanging letters over the wall, using secret codes to communicate what they really think, what's really happening in their lives. While an atmosphere of suspicion and fear radiates from the paranoid political context, their bond is based on trust and they share dangerous secrets, including an audacious plan - Jakob and his musician friends are working to escape to the West via a tunnel. The escalating urgency is palpable as the escape draws closer and Harry discovers shocking revelations. No one is who they seem; the danger is very real and powerfully evoked. One for fans of thrilling action adventures with real-life "imagine being there" intrigue.

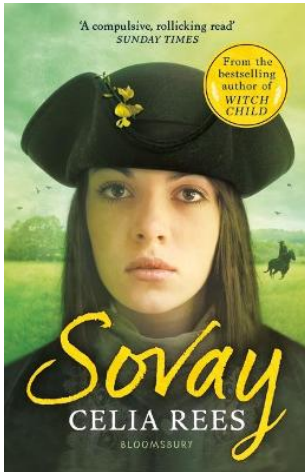


Pirates!

Author: Celia Rees **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 14/10/2021 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

November 2021 Book of the Month Absolutely dazzling. With exemplary research that beautifully integrates details of time and place, outstanding characterisation that rings with empathy and authenticity, and powerfully resonant themes, Celia Rees' *Pirates!* is a true triumph of historic fiction. I could say what a swashbuckling adventure this is. How brilliantly the book conjures the thrills and dangers of life on the piratical high seas; what an incredible page-turner it is. And, while *Pirates!* certainly is all these things, it's also much, much more. Centred around two extraordinary young women readers will truly care about, it conveys the brutality of slavery in the West Indies, and how women were but pawns in a man's world - forced into slavery on white-owned plantations, and enslaved by marriage, too. Nancy is the free-spirited daughter of a merchant. Minerva is a strong young woman enslaved in Jamaica. Following his death, Nancy travels to Jamaica, where she meets Minerva on her father's plantation, and they immediately strike up a bond. As grotty circumstances escalate and close in, the young women

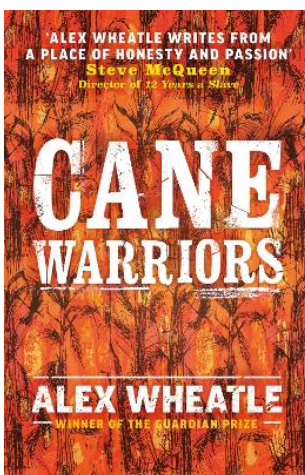
flee the lives the world has set out for them by becoming pirates. There's tremendous tension, epic action, and a gorgeous sense of sisterhood (and romance, too) as the women sail the world determined to live the lives they deserve. May this reissue make its way to legions of new readers - teenagers, young adults and adults alike. I can't recommend it highly enough.



Sovay

Author: Celia Rees **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 14/10/2021
Year Groups: Key Stage 3

Set in Britain against the backdrop of the French Revolution, *Sovay* once again confirms Celia Rees' tremendous talent for unpacking and enlivening major historical events through new perspectives, most notably through the eyes and experiences of strong female leads who refuse to do as they're told. Born into a wealthy English family, *Sovay* has lived a pretty privileged life, though through her forward-thinking father, she has an acute awareness of the principles of justice and liberty. We meet *Sovay* in splendidly dramatic style when, dressed as a highwayman, she entraps her lover and proves his intentions and commitment are not what she'd hoped - not what she deserves. Amidst this personal anger and turmoil, her father vanishes, and it seems her brother has vanished from his Oxford college. Cue *Sovay*'s intrepid investigation of what's happened, cue many more highwaywoman incarnations, and cue the unravelling of a web of political corruption, secret societies and monstrous science as the impact of the French Revolution hits very close to home. Packed with passion, political intrigue and rip-roaring, death-defying action, this is the kind of page-turner that could well spark a desire to dig deeper into history.

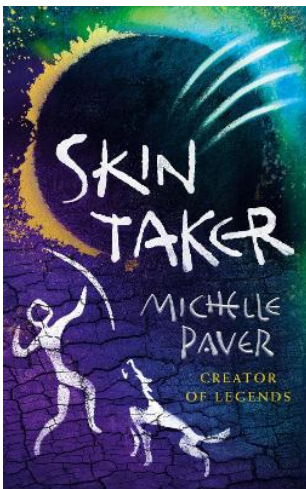


Cane Warriors

Author: Alex Wheatle **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/10/2021
Year Groups: Key Stage 3

Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 11-14 | Shortlisted for the YA Book Prize 2021 | Shortlisted for the Iris Award | Longlisted for the YA Jhalak Prize | Longlisted for the YA Diverse Book Award Written with luminous, crackling style, *Cane Warriors* is an unforgettable account of Jamaican and British history that must be known, with an unforgettable narrator at its heart. In the words of fourteen-year-old Moa, "the hope of our dreamland churned in my belly," a powerful statement that pulses through this extraordinary story of Tacky's War. Based on a revolutionary real-life 1760 Jamaican slave rebellion, a visceral sense of the atrocities Moa and his fellow field slaves are subjected to is evoked from the start. Their bodies are lashed and "roasted by a brutal sun", Moa hasn't seen his house-slave mama for three years, his papa lost an arm in mill machinery, and his friend Hamaya fears the day predatory white men will "come for me."

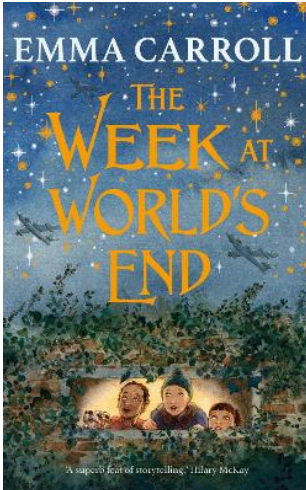
Spurred by the death of Miss Pam who “drop inna da field and lose her life”, and led by Miss Pam’s brother Tacky, who “trod like a king” and whose brain “work quick like Anancy”, the uprising hinges on the freedom fighters killing the plantation master. While Moe is glad to be given a pivotal role in the rebellion, he fears that success and escape will mean he’ll never see his parents or Hamaya again - his conflict is palpable, but he’s set on being a cane warrior. Outside the plantation, Moe’s world is immediately transformed, with his life as a freedom fighter evoked in fine detail (I loved the depiction of him tasting creamy, fleshy sweetsop for the first time). There are bloody battles ahead, executed in the presence of Akan gods, and driven by brotherhood and hope for that dreamland. Lucidly lyrical and raw, I cannot praise Cane Warriors enough.



Skin Taker

Author: Michelle Paver **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/09/2021 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

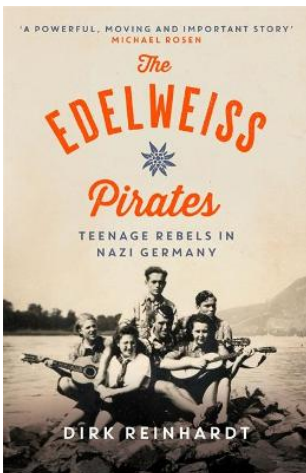
Michelle Paver has done it again in the eighth book in her epic, emotional Chronicles of Ancient Darkness Stone Age series that began with Wolf Brother. Skin Taker reels with a rollercoaster sense of adventure, shadowy atmosphere and an infectious spirit of survival as Torak, Renn and Wolf must find new ways to exist during the midwinter Dark Time, when new dangers are awoken and devastation looms. Torak remains the brave, brash protagonist readers have long known and admired, yet his character has been deftly developed too, and he’s here presented with fierce challenges - and responses - that befit his experiences. Though its setting is aeons ago, and though Torak’s world is suffused in otherworldly spirit magic, Paver has a remarkable skill for making her stories richly relatable. The emotional dilemmas and relationships have resonance; the detail and atmosphere of the natural world are truly tangible, and what an exhilarating immersion in the wild this offers adventure-seeking readers. Read a Q&A with Michelle Paver about Viper’s Daughter, as she returned to the Wolf Brother series after over a decade.



The Week at World's End

Author: Emma Carroll **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 02/09/2021
Year Groups: Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3

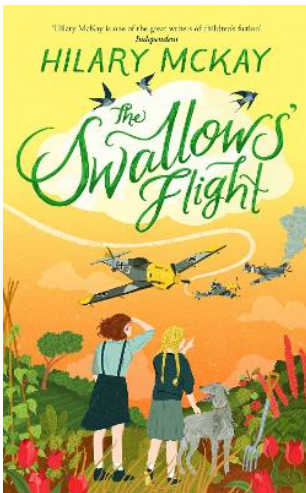
Set in Britain in 1962, at the height of the Cuban missile crisis this makes for an edgy thriller as everyone wonders if they will survive the week, never mind solve the mystery of the girl found in the coal shed! Stevie and her best friend Ray, the former British, the latter American, realise they are living through uncertain times with their parents on edge in case there is to be a nuclear war – but Stevie and Ray have their own problems to solve. Stevie has discovered a mysterious girl – Anna – in her coal shed. She agrees to help shelter Anna from the people who are threatening Anna’s future – Anna says people are trying to poison her. There are family secrets unearthed, families stressed, and a thriller unfolding over a period of seven days. What a masterpiece of thrilling historical writing. Carroll has taken family themes, mixed in with the politics of the day and woven them into a compelling thriller based on strong historical research. The characters are endearing as they struggle to piece together many complex issues in an accessible way and make a hopeful story emerge from what could have been a very dark period in history. Another triumph, highly recommended.



The Edelweiss Pirates

Author: Dirk Reinhardt **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 26/08/2021
Year Groups: Key Stage 4

Translated by Rachel Ward With an illuminating contextualising foreword by Michael Rosen, Dirk Reinhardt’s *The Edelweiss Pirates* is a tremendously-told story of astonishing courage as a group of young people living under the brutal Nazi regime launch risky rebellions. The graceful, pacey story begins when sixteen-year-old Daniel encounters an old man, Josef, at a cemetery. Josef is there visiting the grave of his brother, who was murdered during the war. “It’s a long story,” he explains. “But it might interest you. You especially!” Intrigued, Daniel discovers where Josef lives and visits him, whereupon he shares his diary, which reveals how Josef and a band of fellow brave teenagers rebelled against Nazi atrocities. As a teenager, Josef left the Hitler Youth for *The Edelweiss Pirates* - a group of compellingly cool youngsters. In his words, “they’ve got style: checked shirts and bright neck scarves, leather jackets and belts with huge buckles. Some have straps on their wrists and kind of fancy hats on their heads”. Driven by a motto of freedom, the Pirates initially hang out together to enjoy themselves and let loose but, as Nazi atrocities escalate, they plot and implement perilous missions to undermine the regime. Reeling with details of real-life struggles and feats, and a riveting sense of drama, this is an extraordinary novel about an extraordinary group of youngsters whose lesser-known story reveals the capacity of the human spirit to stand up and risk all to confront barbarism and injustices. It’s a poignant page-turner to the nth degree.



The Swallows' Flight

Author: Hilary McKay **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 27/05/2021
Year Groups: Key Stage 3

Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 11-14 Described as a companion piece, rather than a sequel, to the acclaimed Skylark's War, it is nevertheless a real joy to meet some of the original characters again, but new readers fear not, this book absolutely stands alone. I think that this author is unsurpassed in character development, with every wonderfully economic, but beautifully crafted phrase or fragment of dialogue we are drawn deeper into these young lives. At first overshadowed by the threat of war and then trying to survive within it are cousins Ruby Amaryllis and Kate and across the channel and on the other side of the conflict, best friends Hans and Erik, who bond initially over saving orphaned fledgling swallows. Indeed swallows become a motif for hope throughout the book. Another real strength of the writing is in depicting recognisably real family dynamics and relationships. As the war tears families apart, we see how the strength of family can also bring people together. The multiple perspectives (including eventually Dog, the mistreated scapyard dog abandoned in the Blitz) build a really rich and unbiased picture of lives gradually and increasingly impacted by war. Allowing readers to empathise with the different plights on each side of the conflict is a real asset for those studying the history of the period and whilst not skirting over or underplaying any of the true horrors of war, the underlying message is one of hope in the capacity of humanity to show compassion across all borders and barriers. Sensitive, perceptive and immensely powerful, this superb novel is a beautifully polished gem that will leave an indelible impression on the reader.
