



This week brings to an end a very busy half-term. Exams for all year groups have been a key feature with Year 10 and 12 mocks, Year 11 and 13 external exams and EBACC assessments for Years 7-9; these assessments provide all students with a clear indication of exactly where they are at this point in time. As we know, the exam results for our Year 11 and 13 students, which will be received in August, play a key role in future success; a good set of exam results opens the door to so many opportunities. External exams and EBACC assessments continue after half-term and we ask parents and carers to ensure that students involved are using the half-term break wisely to prepare. Please do remember that exams can exacerbate feelings of stress; please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coping-with-exam-pressure-a-guide-for-students/coping-with-exam-pressure-a-guide-for-students> and <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/coping-with-life/exam-stress/> for support and guidance, and do not hesitate to contact us at school if needed.

Last Friday saw a huge number of activities taking place around the school for 'Fabulous Friday'; there were 'human hungry hippos', team building activities, mindfulness activities, orienteering and rounders' matches amongst a multitude of different things. It has been lovely to see the pizza parties, and food voucher winners on the last two Fridays too; further details about this week's winners are later in this eZine. Please remember that the only levels of attendance which are considered 'excellent' are 99% and 100%; anything below this starts to have a real impact on academic success. 'Fabulous Fridays' are all about recognising our many students who are attending all the time, ensuring that they have the best possible opportunities to succeed; please do ensure that your daughter or son attends school every day.

Please remember that Free School Meals' supermarket vouchers for the half-term break are being emailed out on Friday 24th May; any questions regarding these should be sent to info@gospeloakschool.co.uk. And students in Year 10 who wish to participate in our 'Prefectship Campaign' as we seek students to become Head Boy, Head Girl, Deputy Head Girl, Deputy Head Boy, Senior Prefects and Prefects need to ensure that they have handed in their application form to the Year 10 Office by Friday 7th June. This is a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate and develop wider leadership skills for our Year 10s.

If uniform needs replacing, please ensure that this is dealt with over half-term. We wish you a restful half-term if you are able to take a break, and we look forward to seeing your daughter or son back in school on Monday 3rd June at 8.25am.

Upcoming Dates

Thursday 6th June – Yr 9 Southpaw Boxing Club Visit

Tuesday 11th June – Attendance Coffee Morning, Year 7 and 8 Parents

Thursday 13th June – Yr 9 Southpaw Boxing Club Visit

Friday 14th June - Attendance Coffee Morning, Year 7 and 8 Parents

May Holiday Revision Sessions

Year 11 and 13 have been given letters regarding revision sessions in the half term holiday.

Year 11 Maths and Year 13 DT sessions will be held following requests from students.

Assembly Themes

Assembly focus this week was World Day for Cultural Diversity

w/c 03/06 – Pride Month

w/c 10/06 – Race Unity Day

Please take the time to talk to your child about what they have learnt in Assembly.



To: Yr 10 Parents/Carers

Gospel Oak School

Bilston Road
Gospel Oak
Tipton
West Midlands
DY4 0BZ

T 0121 556 1351

F 0121 506 7833

W www.gospeloakschool.co.uk

20th May 2024

Our Ref: CL.KH.2980

Your Ref:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Work Experience – 17th to 21st June 2024

We are extremely pleased with the large number of students who have found placements for work experience for June 2024. We are very proud of the students who have found work placements themselves as well as those who have worked with the school to find them.

Unfortunately, there are some students who have not been able to gain a placement. However, we are delighted to let you know that we have been working hard on a bespoke programme that will take place in school. This includes a variety of sessions with several external companies coming to deliver workshops on developing students' knowledge of the working world. If your son/daughter is not on work experience it is vital they attend school during this week, as the activities will be invaluable.

The week of work experience is fast approaching and the final arrangements are being made by an external company called SIPS who are an education support service for Sandwell, the Black Country and the West Midlands. They will ensure that the risk assessments, DBS checks and health and safety checks for all the work experience placements have been carried out. It is important these risk assessments and checks have been made to ensure your son/daughter are safe when out on placement. We would like to take this opportunity to inform you that if the risk assessments and checks are not completed in time, then unfortunately students will not be able to go out on work experience. Of course, we will do our utmost to ensure that this is not the case and will keep you informed if we encounter any issues. However, I am sure you would agree that it is important we don't let students go on work experience if the risk assessments and checks are not complete.

Please contact me at school if you have any questions about the week of work experience.

Kind regards,

Mrs C Law
Assistant Principal



To: Yr 12 Parents/Carers

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Gospel Oak
Tipton
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DY4 0BZ

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Please contact me at school if you have any questions about the week of work experience.

Kind regards,

Mrs C Law
Assistant Principal



To: Yr 7 & 8 Parents/Carers

22nd May 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Sparx Reader

We're excited to let you know that we've partnered with Sparx to start using their new reading platform, Sparx Reader. From 3rd June your son/daughter will be using Sparx Reader to complete weekly homework as part of their English lessons.

Sparx Reader helps every student to achieve regular independent reading, which is incredibly important for building vital literacy skills.

Students can choose from a range of ebooks at their appropriate level and as they read, they'll answer questions to check they're reading carefully. Careful readers earn points meaning they can track their progress and climb the league table!

Motivated readers who demonstrate consistent, careful reading can unlock Gold Reader. This means they can read any paper book from the library or from home by scanning in its barcode.

How do they log in?

- *Students log in at sparxreader.com. They will need to find their school and log in using their Sparx Maths details. All students will log in during one of their English lessons before any homework is set.*

What devices are supported?

- *Your son/daughter can access Sparx Reader on any device that connects to the internet with a web browser.*

How can I support my son/daughter with their reading?

- *Sparx Reader adapts to each student's reading level, so it's important that you **don't** help by answering questions for them. If you help them, Sparx Reader might think they're a very strong reader and show them books that are too difficult.*
- *You can however help to provide a quiet space for your son/daughter to focus on their reading homework each week.*
- *The best way to support your son/daughter is to ask them about the book they're reading; what aspects they're enjoying, or what characters and events they've recently read about.*

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Gospel Oak
Tipton
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F 0121 506 7833

W

www.gospeloakschool.co.uk

Our Ref: SP.KH.2985

Your Ref:

How can I monitor the reading my son/daughter is doing?

- You are able to keep track of the reading your son/daughter is doing by clicking through the link to the Parent Portal in your Sparx Maths weekly homework email.
- On the Parent Portal, you can choose to view homework progress for any Sparx learning system your son/daughter is using. For Sparx Reader, you can see progress with the current and previous homework and browse books that your son/daughter has been reading as part of their current homework.

What support is available at Gospel Oak School:

- Students may access the library at lunchtime or afterschool for support.
- Students are able to speak directly to their English teacher if they have any questions.

If you have any further questions, please contact Mrs Pabla via the contact form on the website.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs S Pabla
Assistant Principal



Mrs J Edwards
DLS English



To:

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Tipton
West Midlands
DY4 0BZ

T 0121 556 1351
F 0121 506 7833
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21st May 2024

Our Ref: HN.KH.2984

Your Ref:

Dear Parent / Carer,

Re: Attendance Coffee Morning

As a school we place great importance on communicating with parents and carers to ensure that students are having a positive experience at school and to offer support and guidance in overcoming any barriers that they experience. With this in mind, we are introducing a series of coffee mornings to give parents and carers the opportunity to come in and meet some key staff and discuss matters that might affect student engagement in school.

This letter contains information regarding the first two coffee mornings which will be held on Tuesday 11th June and Friday 14th June at 9am.

The focus of this event is to meet parents of students in years 7 and 8 and to offer support in improving the attendance of your son/daughter. This is a great opportunity for the school to support parents with any barriers that students may be facing. Having an attendance of 95% or more means that your son/daughter will have the opportunity to:

- Make friends and feel included
- Learn new things and develop skills
- Increase confidence and self- esteem
- Improve social skills
- Have better career prospects
- Achieve their full potential and fulfil their aspirations

Please join us on either of these days, meeting at main reception at 9am.

If you would like to attend, please let us know [here](#) by Wednesday 5th June.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Hayley Nutting
Vice Principal

IGNITING LEADERS CHANGING LIVES

PiXL Reading

**SECONDARY
NEWSLETTER**



We hope you and your family had a wonderful Easter break.

As the final term of the academic year begins, we hope this newsletter will provide you and your child with a selection of books to choose from. Research shows there is a decline in young people reading for pleasure in their free time and we know, from our work in schools, that some students don't know that there are really exciting books out there, exploring topics they're interested in! The selection within this newsletter aims to cover a wide range of interests, topics and reading accessibility to help with this. However, you could of course explore books online or in your local library/book shop too!

If your child is preparing for exams, whether internal or GCSE examinations, they will no doubt be spending time revising and preparing for these. Part of this revision will involve reading – but immersing ourselves in the world of a book is also a way to reduce stress and improve mental wellbeing.

If your child is struggling to read, please do speak to your school about this, and explore ways you could support them at home. For example, by reading with them, to them, and encouraging them to find a book which suits their interests as well as their reading level. We hope that this selection may spark some ideas for this. However, it's also worth bearing in mind that some students prefer to 'read' through audio books and that this is still a valid form of them hearing the written word in a fluent and expressive way.

Please note that unless otherwise stated, the texts are suitable from Year 7 and up, but please do research the books before selecting them to ensure that they are appropriate for your child, as these are just a publisher's guide.

We hope that amongst all these recommendations, you find something which interests your child and we wish you the very best of luck for this half term.

OUT NOW:

The Carnegie shortlist for 2024 is out now and you can access it via www.yotocarnegies.co.uk. This spans books aimed at children from early years through to young adult and could offer another collection of books to choose from!

One of the benefits of reading is that it builds our empathy. The team at EmpathyLab share a collection of fantastic empathy-building books each year. The 2024 collections for primary and secondary are out now and available at <https://www.empathylab.uk/RFE-2024>

SHORTER-LENGTH READS

The books on the next two pages are shorter-length, which could be engaging for anyone, but they are published in a dyslexia-friendly font to help make them accessible to all. If your child doesn't have dyslexia, they can still read these wonderful books!

Jodie

HILARY MCKAY

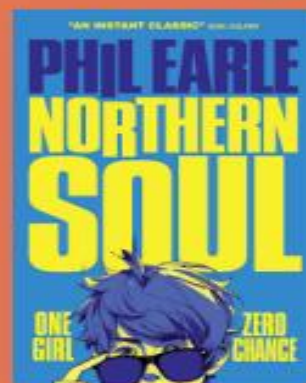
Jodie never wanted to come on the residential trip to the field centre. A loner at school, she's forced into a dormitory with other girls from her class who don't understand her and talk about her behind her back. Even though they're not trying to be mean, Jodie feels excluded and miserable, and eventually escapes out onto the salt marshes in search of a little dog she can hear barking in the distance. But the salt marshes are dangerous and Jodie gets trapped by the incoming tide. Stuck in the mud, will anyone even notice that she's gone? And where is the little dog that keeps barking so mournfully...?

**Northern Soul**

PHIL EARLE

12+

Marv's fourteen and his life is simple. There's football. And his best mate, Jimmy. Perfect. Nothing else matters, until a new girl at school called Carly crashes into his life. For Marv, it's love at first sight, his emotions flipped upside down, as he knows a girl like Carly will never notice him. He needs help – lots of it – but when it miraculously arrives in the shape of a musical idol from the past, the path to Carly's heart proves anything but easy...



Drowning in My Bedroom

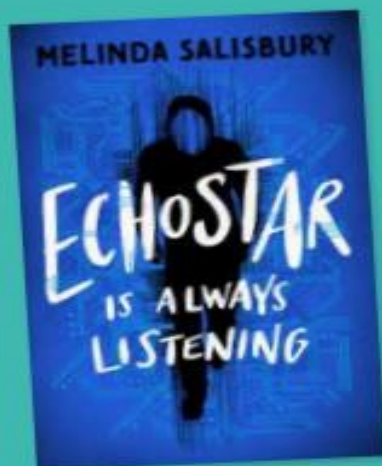
STEVE COLE

Gayla is trapped all alone when floodwater pours into her bedroom in a residential centre for kids with disabilities. Junjun's makeshift shack has been washed away in the flood and he needs to find medicine for his sister, who's sick after drinking contaminated water. At first, these two young people seem to have little in common and pity each other, but as the waters continue to rise, they must work together to find a way to survive.

**The Mystery of Me**

KAREN McCOMBIE

Ketty doesn't remember anything about the accident, or much from before. The doctors say her memories will come back, but in the meantime, school is a frightening and confusing place. Otis seems to be her only friend - he's kind and caring, funny too. And he may hold the key to remembering the old Ketty... But will Ketty recognise or even like the girl she used to be?

**EchoStar is Always Listening**

MELINDA SALISBURY

Ruby Brookes and her best friend Deva have won free places at the Ash Tree Foundation Performing Arts Camp over the summer, but only if their school grades seriously improve. So when Deva suddenly starts getting high marks in all their subjects, leaving Ruby behind, she is confused and jealous - until she finds out Deva's success is down to EchoStar, a new app that's helping her get ahead. Ruby is desperate to start using it too, but there is much more to EchoStar than she has imagined. Because EchoStar is always watching and listening...

LONGER-LENGTH READS

Steady for This

NATHANAEL LESSORE

Shaun (aka MC Growls) is ready to drop his best bars and smash the competition at Raptology. That way, he's convinced Tanisha, his crush, will finally give him a chance. But when a livestream practice goes epically wrong, Growls's dirty laundry is literally exposed. He's finally achieved his dreams of going viral - not in the good way. Now Tanisha won't look at him, he's the joke of the school and there's no way he can show his face at the competition. Will he ever catch a break?

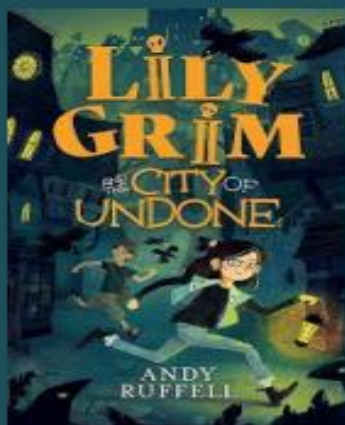


Quiet Storm

KIMBERLY WHITTAM

Storm has never liked to stand out from the crowd, but ever since she started Year 7, her life has been full of people telling her she needs to speak up, make friends and be more like her popular big brother. Then Storm breaks a school record, and finds herself the new star of the athletics team. But as she's thrust into the spotlight, her home life and friendships start spiralling out of control, and it's time for Quiet Storm to show that she has something to say.





Lily Grim and the City of Undone

ANDY RUFFELL

Lily Grim's life is a mystery. She has lived with her guardian Gabriel, in their rundown second-hand shop in the City of Undone, for as long as she can remember. For years, the city-dwellers have lived in uneasy discord with The Others – a community of wanderers forced to shelter within the city walls, after they were driven from their nomadic camps in the wilderness. But Undone is a dark and dangerous place to live, especially if you're an Other: feared for their special gifts, they are persecuted by the cruel Master of the City and taken to the Ring – a prison from which few ever return.

When the Master captures Gabriel and throws him into the Ring, Lily is saved by a young Other boy called Dekka. He introduces her to a whole Otherworld that exists beneath the City of Undone. To her astonishment Lily discovers she is an Other, too – with powerful gifts – and is now in grave danger: because the Master wants her dead. But why?

Black Hole Cinema Club

CHRISTOPHER EDGE

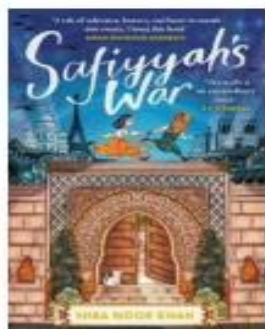
When Lucas meets his friends at the local cinema - nicknamed 'The Black Hole' - they're excited about the movie marathon ahead. Non-stop action, blockbuster special effects and all the snacks they can eat. But as the lights go down, they watch in disbelief as a jet-black tidal wave comes crashing out of the cinema screen. The five friends find themselves swept into an epic adventure. Secret hideouts. Prehistoric monsters. Lost cities. Impossible missions. Being the hero of your own film should feel like fun. But as the cliff-hanger scenes they're pitched into become ever more perilous, Lucas and his friends start to wonder if these movies are really make believe...



Safiyyah's War

HIBA NOOR KHAN

War comes to the streets of Paris and Safiyyah's life changes forever. Her best friend's family have fled and the bombing makes her afraid to leave the mosque where she lives. But when her father is arrested by the Nazis for his secret Resistance work, it falls to Safiyyah to run the dangerous errands around the city.



It's not long before hundreds of persecuted Jews seek sanctuary at the mosque. Can Safiyyah find the courage to enter the treacherous catacombs under Paris and lead the Jews to safety?

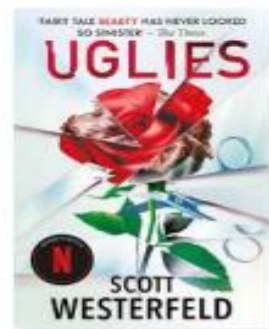
Uglies

SCOTT WESTERFELD

14+

In Tally Youngblood's world, looks matter.

At sixteen, everyone undergoes a transformation from "Ugly" to "Pretty" and is catapulted into a high-tech paradise where the only thing that matters is having a great time and you never have to worry or think for yourself. Tally can't wait. But then, with just weeks to go to Tally's birthday, her friend Shay runs away and the ugly truth about the world of the Pretties starts to reveal itself. What if the beauty of the Pretties' utopia really is just skin deep?



The Girl Who Couldn't Lie

RADHIKA SANGHANI **PREORDER FOR 9TH MAY!**

Priya Shah lies. A lot. She pretends everything in her life is perfect, so she doesn't disappoint anyone. But when she puts on a bangle left to her by her Ba – the one person she was always honest with – she finds herself unable to tell a lie. Priya is mortified. She tells her dad she hates his cooking, she tells Dan Zhang about her huge crush on him, she shares her best friends' secrets at school. She can't get the bangle off and she can't stop the truths pouring out of her. As more things go wrong, and Priya's truth-telling spirals out of control, can Priya learn to be honest without hurting the people she loves?



The Fights That Make Us

SARAH HAGGER-HOLT

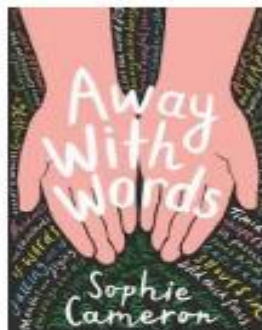
Jesse has recently come out as non-binary, and is struggling to find their place at school, and ideas for their project on lost stories from history. Thirty-five years earlier, Jesse's cousin Lisa is falling for her best friend, but with new laws being introduced to restrict LGBT people's rights, they'll have to fight for the world to accept who they are. When Jesse stumbles across Lisa's teenage diary, they are fascinated and horrified by her stories of living a secret life and protesting in the streets. Now it's Jesse's turn to find a way to shine a spotlight on a history that mustn't be forgotten.



Away With Words

SOPHIE CAMERON

Gala and her dad, Jordi, have just moved from Catalonia to a town in Scotland, to live with Jordi's boyfriend Ryan. Gala doesn't speak much English, and feels lost, lonely and unable to be her usual funny self. Until she befriends Natalie, a girl with selective mutism. The two girls find their own ways to communicate, which includes collecting other people's discarded words. They use the words to write anonymous supportive poems for their classmates, but then someone begins leaving nasty messages using the same method - and the girls are blamed. Gala has finally started adapting to her new life in Scotland and is determined to find the culprit. Can she and Natalie show the school who they really are?



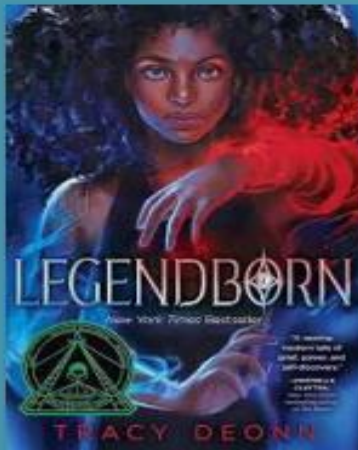
Black Flamingo

DEAN ATTA

12+

Michael waits in the stage wings, wearing a pink wig, pink fluffy coat and black heels. One more step will see him illuminated by spotlight. He has been on a journey of bravery to get here, and he is almost ready to show himself to the world in bold colours... Can he emerge as The Black Flamingo?





Legendborn

TRACY DEONN

14+

After her mother dies in an accident, sixteen-year-old Bree Matthews wants to escape. A residential programme for bright high-schoolers seems like the perfect opportunity – until she witnesses a magical attack her very first night on campus... The mage's failure unlocks Bree's own unique magic and a buried memory about her mother. Now Bree will do whatever it takes to discover the truth, even infiltrate the Legendborn. But when the Legendborn reveal themselves as the descendants of King Arthur's knights and foretell a magical war, Bree must decide how far she'll go for the truth. Should she use her magic to take the society down – or join the fight?



Where Sleeping Girls Lie

FARIDAH ÀBÍKÉ-ÍYÍMÍDÉ

14+

Sade Hussein is the new girl at Alfred Noble Academy, a prestigious mixed boarding school. She's always been home-schooled and has no idea what to expect when she steps through the doors of her imposing new home. But she certainly didn't imagine her roommate, Elizabeth, going missing on her first night. Or for people to think Sade had something to do with it. Instead of blending in, suddenly everyone is talking about Sade, including the Unholy Trinity – a group of the most popular girls at the school. Swept up in their circle, Sade still can't shake the sense that there's more to Elizabeth's disappearance – especially as no one seems to care what's happened to her. And then, a student is found dead...

NON-FICTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Most Haunted Theatres

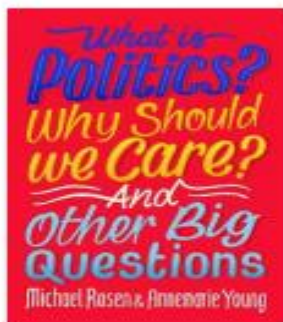
YVETTE FIELDING

Yvette Fielding and her *Most Haunted* team are on a quest to uncover the ghostly histories of Britain's theatres. Brought to life by Yvette and the *Most Haunted* team's investigations, prepare to be spooked by 'the father of clowns', the ghost of the killer thespian Charles Macklin, and the lingering spirit of a ballerina who tragically took her own life...

**What is Politics? Why Should We Care?**

MICHAEL ROSEN & ANNEMARIE YOUNG

Politics, in its widest sense, affects us all every day. What if there were no politics? What would that look like? What does it mean to be political or non-political and what effect do each of these positions have? This book looks at how politics affects everyone in society. It looks at the whole political spectrum, in countries around the world and examines what politics means in different contexts and situations. What forms can political action take, and what difference does it make? Readers are encouraged to think for themselves about the issues discussed and decide how or whether they would like to take part in politics at some level.

**100 Things To Know About Science**

Engaging and accessible information on exactly 100 science topics that will fascinate and inspire children - and adults too! Packed with facts and colourful infographics on both familiar and less familiar topics from the Earth's magnetic poles to spider venom and black holes. The book includes internet links to specially selected websites where readers can discover even more surprising science facts.

**Together We Can**

NED HARTLEY

From inventing vaccines in record time to dealing with climate change, the biggest challenges we face can only be overcome when teams of people work together towards a common goal. *Together We Can* is a celebration of what we can achieve when human beings work collaboratively.

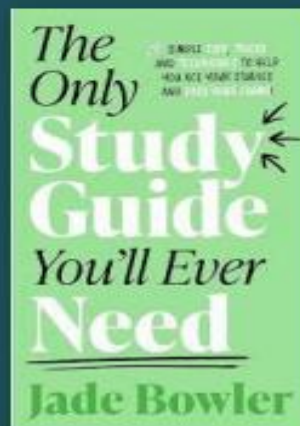


NON-FICTION FOR OLDER READERS

The Only Study Guide You'll Ever Need

JADE BOWLER

We've all been there: a new school year starts and there's 8 months till your exams - that's plenty of time, right? Then there's 6 months, 3 months, 1 month and oh, now there's 2 weeks left and you haven't started studying... What happens next is a panic-induced mayhem of highlighting everything in the textbook (without even questioning if it's actually helpful). But I'm here to change this! In *The Only Study Guide You'll Ever Need*, I'll cover a range of different topics, including: how to get started and pick up that pen, learning techniques that actually work, the dos and don'ts of timetabling and combatting fear of failure, perfectionism, exam stress and so much more!



Humankind: A Hopeful History

RUTGER BREGMAN

Human beings, we're taught, are by nature selfish and governed by self-interest. *Humankind* makes a new argument! that it is realistic, as well as revolutionary, to assume that people are good. This book takes some of the world's most famous studies and events and reframes them, providing a new perspective on the last 200,000 years of human history. From the real-life Lord of the Flies to the Blitz, a Siberian fox farm to an infamous New York murder, Stanley Milgram's Yale shock machine to the Stanford prison experiment, Bregman shows how believing in human kindness and altruism can be a new way to think and act, as well as how this could be the foundation for achieving true change in our society. It is time for a new view of human nature.

