

Year 5 Spring Unit: Kingdom of Benin

Retrieval Vocabulary
 archaeology, architecture, agriculture, ancestors, artefact, BC/AD, BCE/CE, civilisation, colonialism, emperor/empress, fertile, floodplain, government, hunter-gatherers, invade, monarch, oral tradition, past, polytheism, settlement, social hierarchy, source, trade

A map to show the location and spread of the Benin Empire



Enquiry Question: What can the Benin bronzes tell us about the Kingdom of Benin?

Historical Concept: evidence

Key Unit Facts

- The Edo people first lived in villages and were governed by elders.
- The Kingdom of Benin began in 900 AD and grew into an Empire by the 16th Century.
- From the 16th century Benin bronzes started to be made from brass or bronze, which could be seen throughout the kingdom and can now be seen in museums in the UK (including the British Museum in London).
- The rulers of early Benin were called Obas and they formed a dynasty which has lasted until the present day.
- Britain wanted to take over Benin so they could get the palm oil and rubber found in the region.
- In 1897, Benin warriors killed several British men on the Benin border. The British used this as an excuse to send thousands of soldiers to invade. They burnt Benin City to the ground and the kingdom became part of the British Empire.



Key Unit Vocabulary

- Coral** - a hard stony substance
- Dynasty** - a succession of rulers from the same family
- Guild** - the group of people who created the bronzes for the King
- Ivory** - a hard creamy-white substance composing the main part of animal tusks
- Loot** - stolen money or valuables
- Plaque** - an ornamental tablet
- Primogeniture** - the right of succession based on being the firstborn
- Natural Resources** - materials or substances occurring in nature

