

Alder Coppice Primary School — Knowledge Organiser

Subject: History


Year: 5


Unit 2: The Benin Kingdom

**Links to: Stone Age, Romans Y3 & Ancient Egyptians—Y4
Ancient Greeks —Y5**

TIMELINE:

AD 900	AD 900 – 1400	AD 1180	AD 1440	AD 1514	AD 1700	AD 1897
Benin Kingdom is first established	An enormous earthen moat is built around the Kingdom boundaries.	The first dynasty of Ogiso kings ends and the Obas begin their rule.	Benin begins to expand and thrive under the rule of Oba Ewuare the Great	Oba Esigie sets up trading links with Portuguese and other European visitors.	Benin Kingdom enters a period of decline due to a series of civil wars and the abolition of the slave trade with Europe.	Benin City is destroyed by British troops and made part of the British Empire.





The three main periods (all AD)
900 - 1300 Early Period
1300 – 1700 The Golden Age
1700 – 1897 The Period of Decline

Key Vocabulary:

Civilisation	A human society with its own social organisation and culture
Ogisos	The first kings of Benin. Ogisos means “Rulers of the Sky”
Oba	A king, or chief
Edo	People of Benin Kingdom
Benin City	The Ancient Benin City which was founded in West Africa (Now we call this part of the world Nigeria)
Empire	Lots of countries or states, all ruled by one monarch or single state
animism	A religion widely followed in Benin
guild	A group of people who all do the same job, usually a craft
Civil war	A war between people who live in the same country
Artefact	An object made by a human being, typically one of cultural or historical interest.

What I should know by the end of the Unit:

- Know where Ancient Benin was located and that it is not the same as the modern day Benin City in Nigeria.
- Know about the leaders of The Kingdom of Benin.
- Know about the lives of the people of Benin Kingdom.
- Know why trade was important to the Benin Empire.
- Know about the decline of the Benin Empire, who destroyed it and why.



General Knowledge:

Traditions: Although no written histories exist, the people of Benin had a rich oral tradition of histories, myths and legends. Children would not go to school but would learn through storytellers at night by the fire. Contact with Europeans means that encounters with the Edo, descriptions of Benin City and of the Obas are recorded in European and colonial history. In addition, treasures of wood, ivory and metal made their way into Europe through trade or plunder and astounded observers with their high degree of artistry and craftsmanship.

Life in Benin: Little is known about ordinary men, women and children. Historians believe that most people were farmers, growing crops like yams and plantains and working hard to clear land. Many people had two or three different jobs and might also have been part of one of the guilds of craftsmen, producing high quality goods for the royal court or for trading with foreign visitors. Alternatively, people became warriors, entertainers or builders, who were required to make their mud homes and the defensive walls around the kingdom.



BENIN BRONZE