



History

Year 6

Term 3

Key Question: How and why did the Benin Kingdom rise and then fall?

National Curriculum Objectives:

- Children should be taught about a non-European society that provides contrasts with British history - one study chosen from: early Islamic civilization, including a study of Baghdad c. AD 900
- Develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of world history, establishing clear narratives within and across the periods they study.
- They should note connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terms.
- They should regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance.
- They should construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information.
- They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

Vocabulary

Kingdom of Benin, Edo Kingdom, Benin Empire, West Africa, Edo people, Oba, European trade Oba, Empire, Empire of Benin, Benin City, chiefs, reign, Kingdom of Ife, River Niger
 Oral tradition, myths, legends, European/colonial History, craftsmanship, wood, brass, ivory, British Museum
 Oba, Kingdom, chief, royal court, culture (art, religion, music, leisure, languages..)
 Trade, trade route, product, region, sub-Saharan, slaves, pepper, gum, cloth, ivory, brass, lead, iron, coral, cowrie shells (used for currency), firearms, spirits and luxury goods, British Empire

Prior Learning:

- Year 5 term 1 children studied The Anglo Saxons which is when Benin Kingdom started with it being at its strongest in the Middle Ages in Britain (Normans/Tudors studied in Year 6 Term 1)
- Year 5 term 3 children studied Baghdad and its decline was during the height of Benin Kingdom
- Year 5 term 5 children studied The Industrial Revolution which relied on the slave trade

End Point:

Write an essay answering the key question.

Knowledge:

- The Kingdom of Benin was a kingdom in West Africa in what is now southern Nigeria
- The Benin Kingdom was one of the oldest and most highly developed states in the coastal hinterland of West Africa
- Edo people cut down the rain forests and started to live in more organised groups, gradually developing into Kingdoms ruled by various kings
- Struggles for power ensued with Ogisos(rulers of the sky) eventually losing control
- They asked King Ife for help and the first Oba was established. Other West African kingdoms were developing (Songhai, Nok, Asante, Ife, Mali and Ancient Ghana)
- These 5 warrior kings began to trade but also had large armies thus there were also civil wars and invasions
- Portugese were the first Europeans (1472) to trade with Benin but all of Europe traded brass, cowrie shells, peppercorns, ivory, textiles and guns
- Benin raided neighbouring kingdoms to take these items and sell to The Europeans
- Plus people and hence the European slave trade was born
- British were heavily involved and this trade helped fund the industrial revolution
- Within Benin Oba were seen as Gods with huge courts (incl acrobats and leopard hunters)They had chiefs within regions who controlled the armies.
- Ordinary people were warriors, farmers and crafts people (specialist craft workers organised themselves into guilds)
- By 1860s empire was declining - partly to do with European involvement and fighting between tribes/kingdoms.
- Britain wanted the palm oil and rubber so Oba attempted to stop all contact
- In 1897 British soldiers arrived and some were killed in a skirmish
- Britain retaliated by sending 1000 soldiers over and burning Benin City to the ground

Skills:

- Use relevant dates and terms
- Know key characters, dates and events of the time studied
- Recognise primary and secondary sources of evidence
- Use a range of sources to find out about an aspect of a time past
- Find out about beliefs, characteristics, and behaviour while recognising that not everyone shares the same view and opinion
- Write about a past event in terms of cause and effect using evidence to support and illustrate their explanation
- Select and organise information to produce structured work making appropriate use of dates and times
- Confidentially use the internet and library for research

Cross Curricular Links:

West African Art - sculptures, jewellery and masks made from brass and terracotta
RE - Non-dominant religion

Oracy:

(Lesson 2) Discussion
 Which of the Oba's had the largest role to play in Benin becoming an empire?
 (Lesson 3) Diamond ranking and discussion
 Should the Benin bronzes be returned to Nigeria?

Wider Reading

The Kingdom of Benin
 Diary of an Edo Princess
 The History Detectives Investigates: Benin 900-1897
 Benin Empire (Great Civilisations)

Enrichment

British Museum African Galleries
 Reproduction artefacts
 Museum collections online

Sequence of Learning

Lesson	Key Question	Key learning/notes
1	How and why did The Kingdom of Benin begin?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate Nigeria and note modern Geography (bordering countries, rivers, etc.). The Kingdom of Benin, (also known as the Edo Kingdom, or the Benin Empire) was a kingdom in West Africa in what is now southern Nigeria. It is not to be confused with Benin, the modern-day nation-state. The Kingdom of Benin's capital was Edo, now known as Benin City in Edo state. The Benin Kingdom was "one of the oldest and most highly developed states in the coastal hinterland of West Africa". It was formed around the 11th century AD" and lasted until it was annexed by the British Empire in 1897. Give the children an overview of the period that we are going to study. Order the key events in Benin's History using the key dates. <p>The kingdom of Benin began in the 900s when the Edo people settled in the rainforests of West Africa. By the 1400s they had created a wealthy kingdom with a powerful ruler, known as the Oba. The Obas lived in beautiful palaces decorated with shining brass. Gradually, the Obas won more land and built up an empire. They also started trading with merchants from Europe. For 200 years Benin was very successful, but in the 1600s the Obas started to lose control of their people. By the 1800s Benin was no longer strong or united. The kingdom came to a sudden end in 1897, when a British army invaded and made it part of the British Empire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present the information that answers the key question found at https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zpvckqt/articles/z3n7mp3 Children either answer the lesson question using the provided resources or draw a cartoon strip depicting the reasons that gave birth to the kingdom of Benin. <p>** Reading comprehension which tells the story of the creation of the first Oba on PDF as a possible prelearning activity.</p>
2	What is an empire? How did Benin become an Empire?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look at a <i>Street Through Time</i> book and revise the key dates in Benin's History from the last lesson. Compare what was going on in the UK (seen in book) in 900, 1400, 1600 with what we know was going on in Benin (show images and artefacts from the time in Benin) Britain was growing an empire at the same time that Benin was. Teach that An empire is the collective name for a group of countries ruled by a single person, government or country. The word comes from a Latin word, imperium, meaning government or rule. History has seen many empires around the world, with the Roman Empire being perhaps the best known. Show the class clip which looks at the examples of the British and Roman Empire. Freeze the video where it shows the trading routes of the British Empire. Focus on the port in Benin. Show a map of the Empire of Benin. https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/history-ks3-empire/zbxthbk#:~:text=An%20empire%20is%20the%20collective,being%20perhaps%20the%20best%20known. Which of the Oba's had the largest role to play in Benin becoming an empire? Oracy activity using key information below to justify choice. <p>Around 1440, Ewuare became the new Oba of Benin. He built up an army and started winning land. He also rebuilt Benin City and the royal palace.</p> <p>Oba Ewuare was the first of five great warrior kings. His son Oba Ozolua was believed to have won 200 battles. He was followed by Oba Esigie who expanded his kingdom eastwards to form an empire and won land from the Kingdom of Ife. Ozolua and Esigie both encouraged trade with the Portuguese. They used their wealth from trade to build up a vast army.</p> <p>The fourth warrior king was Oba Orhogbua. During his reign, the empire reached its largest size. It stretched beyond the River Niger in the east and extended west as far as present-day Ghana.</p> <p>Oba Ehengbuda was the last of the warrior kings. But he spent most of his reign stopping rebellions led by local chiefs. After his death in 1601, Benin's empire gradually shrank in size.</p>
3	How do we know about Benin?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise the terms primary and secondary sources of evidence. Although no written histories exist, the people of Benin had a rich oral tradition of histories, myths and legends. Contact with Europeans means that encounters with the Edo, descriptions of 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. In the year 1668 a Dutch writer called Olfert Dapper put together some merchants' descriptions of their travels. This is what the merchants saw in Benin.

	<p>(**Should the Benin bronzes be returned to Nigeria?)</p>	<p>https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zpvckqt/articles/z3n7mp3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children look at images of artefacts taken from Benin and note what they can see and what the artefact tells us about Benin. For example - "I can see a bronze statue of a man with a gun. The man does not look African but European so this tells me that there were Europeans in Benin when the statue was made and that they might not have been very nice to the people of Benin." • Collect images from https://www.theschoolrun.com/homework-help/kingdom-benin • http://www.teachinghistory100.org/objects/for_the_classroom/salt_cellar_from_benin • Power Point with grouped information available for less able children. • Summarise findings using the BBC bitesize pages https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zpvckqt/articles/z84fvcw • ** Optional extra - Should the artefacts in the British Museum be returned to Nigeria? • Use 2 documents (in PDF format) give reasons for or against returning the Benin Bronzes to Nigeria. Print and cut out the cards on each side of the argument - carry out a diamond ranking activity for each set of cards to identify the most convincing reasons for keeping in Britain or returning the Bronzes. • https://tonypickford.wixsite.com/primaryhistory/benin
4	<p>How did the life of The Oba compare to the life of an ordinary person?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information about Oba's and court life • https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zpvckqt/articles/z3s2xnb <p>The people of Benin believed that their Oba was a god. He lived apart from the ordinary people inside the royal court in Benin City.</p> <p>Most of the time the Oba was kept very busy with his duties as king. He held meetings with his officials and he led religious ceremonies. But he also had some free time to spend with his family. Obas had many wives, and all their wives and children lived in special apartments inside the palace.</p> <p>The Oba owned all the land in his kingdom. He gave orders to his chiefs on how his kingdom should be run and he decided when his armies should go to war. Sometimes he rode into battle at the head of his troops.</p> <p>Everyone had to show great respect to the Oba. People approached him on their knees and nobody could look at him without his permission. Most people in Benin believed that the Oba didn't need to eat or sleep!</p> <p>Now engage in some independent research about Benin using this Benin Web Links resource and the template saved (Word file). Use the grid to structure your research under headings. You can either choose to find out a few facts under all the headings or focus on just one heading and try to find out as much as you can about that theme. The headings have been chosen to enable children to focus on key aspects of the Benin civilisation from its early stages to its collapse in the 19th Century as a result of British colonialism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://tonypickford.wixsite.com/primaryhistory/benin
5	<p>What did Benin trade?</p> <p>How did trade help end The Kingdom of Benin?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show a map of the Ancient African trading routes. • Well before European seafarers reached the coast of West Africa, goods were being carried overland from the Mediterranean, across the Sahara to great trading centres such as Timbuktu, and onwards into forest regions such as Benin in present-day Nigeria. Going in the opposite direction, gold was the most valuable product of West Africa to reach Europe and Asia during the medieval period. Gold was mined in the regions far to the west of Benin and it was in their efforts to find a way around the overland routes, which the Africans controlled, that the Portuguese arrived in the coastal territories of Benin in the late AD 1400s. • By the 16th century, Benin was trading pepper, gum, cloth, ivory and slaves with the Portuguese in exchange for brass, lead, iron, coral, cowrie shells (used for currency), firearms, spirits and luxury goods. The Oba (king) of Benin himself was in control of the supply of goods which could be traded to the Europeans on the coast so that all the profit went to support his court and government. Other merchants could only trade with his permission. The Europeans themselves were seldom allowed to travel inland or to visit Benin City, in order to avoid them trading without the authority of the Oba. • By the 1800s the Kingdom of Benin began to lose power and the Obas struggled to rule their people. • Benin was also under threat from Britain. The British wanted to gain control of Benin so they could get rich by selling its palm oil and rubber. The Oba tried to stop all contact with Britain, but the British insisted on their right to trade. • In 1897 a group of British officials tried to visit Benin. They were sent away because the Oba was busy with a religious ceremony, but they decided to visit anyway. As they approached the borders of Benin, a group of warriors drove them back and several British men were killed. • This attack made the British furious. They sent over a thousand soldiers to invade Benin. Benin City was burnt to the ground and the kingdom of Benin became part of the British Empire. • Present the above information muddled up and children piece together the events that led to great trade in Benin but then to its decline. • Write a newspaper article recounting the destruction of the city of Benin. HA - extend to write the article

		<p>from a British perspective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finish the unit by looking at a map of the transatlantic slave route and explaining that our next History unit is called <i>Civil Rights</i> where we will learn about the ancestors of some of the people that were taken from Benin as slaves, to America.
6	Answer key question	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Essay