

What was the Kingdom of Benin and how were European countries involved with its growth and fall?

Type of History



Cultural



Military

Golden Thread Concepts

Economy
Trade

Conflict
Power
Invasion
Military

Leadership
Kingdom

Society
Settlement
Culture

Secondary Concepts



Historical significance

Similarity and difference

Links to British Values



When?



9500-4000 BCE
Human occupation of Britain began (Stone Age)



2300-800 BCE
Bronze Age Britain



1200-323 BCE
Ancient Greece



800 BCE - 50 CE
Iron Age Britain



753 BCE - 476 CE
Roman Empire



410 CE
Anglo Saxon invasion



793 CE
Viking invasion



1485-1603 CE
The Tudor dynasty



c. 1500-1900
Transatlantic Slave Trade



1819-1901 CE
Victorian England



1888 CE
Port Soap Works opened



1914-1918 CE
WW1



1939-1945 CE
WW2



1940s-1960s
Civil Rights Movements

Key Vocabulary

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Artefact | A man-made object that is of historical or archaeological interest |
| Colony | A place where a group of people come to settle which is under the control of their home country |
| Conglomerate | A large group made up of smaller groups |
| Dynasty | A succession of rulers who come from the same family |
| Empire | A group of territories ruled by one single ruler or state |
| Kingdom | A country whose ruler is a king or queen |
| Oba | A king of Benin |
| Polytheism | The belief in many gods |

Where?



What?



The Kingdom of Benin was located in what is now Nigeria, Africa.

Britain eventually added Benin to its empire.

The Kingdom of Benin prospered between the 13th and 19th centuries.



Our knowledge from the past is constructed from a range of sources.

Historians believe that the Kingdom of Benin started as a group of rainforest villages which came together as a conglomerate to be ruled by one king.



A dynasty is a line of rulers of a country who are part of the same family. One of the Benin dynasties was called the Oba. The Oba was highly respected within society and was treated like a god. They were in charge of the army and head of all trading. People believed the Obas were directly descended from the great god Osanobua.



The people of Benin were polytheistic, meaning that they worshipped many gods. Storytelling was an important part of Benin culture. One of the most important stories to them was the creation story. They believed the god Osanobua sent his sons to rule over different parts of the world and gave them a gift to take with them for Earth.



There are some similarities and differences between the Kingdom of Benin and Tudor England. Both societies were ruled by a dynasty. They were both involved in trade. They both had cultures which celebrated the Arts. Many people in Benin lived in rainforest villages but many in England lived in the countryside. Benin had a polytheistic society whereas England had a monotheistic society.



Explorers from Europe were shocked to find a city as advanced and impressive as Benin City. They had wrongly assumed that no such things existed in the continent of Africa. Artwork and sculptures were made from materials such as bronze, ivory, leather, coral and wood. Benin Bronzes are elaborately decorated plaques.



Benin was a key trading centre in West Africa. Portuguese explorers were keen to trade with the Kingdom of Benin. They began trading brass and copper for other goods like ivory and also for enslaved people. These people were often captured from neighboring territories. Slavery existed across the ancient world and was reintroduced in England during the reign of Edward VI.



During Benin's 'Golden Age', it controlled a large area of land in West Africa. It was well placed for trading with other African countries and they had a strong army. They had a dispute with Britain (who wanted to control their people). Britain invaded and burned down most of the city's buildings. Benin became part of the British Empire. Britain took thousands of pieces of art from the city.