

Year 4 – Benin: A Lost Kingdom

Enquiry question: **Why is the Kingdom of Benin so significant?**

National Curriculum Objectives		Core Knowledge & Key Questions			Local links					
A non-European society that provides contrasts with British History – Benin (West Africa) Ad 900-1300. <i>We have deliberately extended the time frame of our Benin study to incorporate the arrival of the first European traders in the heyday of the kingdom – the Golden Age of Edo - (particularly the 15th/16th century) in order to place it within our curriculum timeline.</i>		Why should we learn about Benin in school? <ul style="list-style-type: none">Civilization of cities and towns, powerful kings and a large empire which traded over long distancesCraftsmen were skilful in bronze and ivoryReligious belief systems including animismWest Africa invented the smelting of copper and zinc ores as early as 10th centuryBenin still exists as a civilization with its Oba, palaces, court, artists etc What can we tell about society of Benin from what has survived? <ul style="list-style-type: none">Physical evidence is mainly from 15th & 16th Century: we are reliant on stories and archaeology rather than written recordsSymbolic use of leopards, crocodiles & mudfish on plaquesImportance of the Oba and the IdiaGuilds of workers within Benin City, including brass workers How was Benin City similar to & different from the City of London in the 17th Century? <ul style="list-style-type: none">Direct comparison of Oba’s procession with Queen Elizabeth’s procession & usefulness of Dapper’s picture as a sourceComparison of written sources and pictures of Benin City and London at the time of the Great Fire to establish similarities and differences What changes took place when the European settlers started trading? <ul style="list-style-type: none">The rise of Benin began before Europeans arrivedBenin supplied the Portuguese with pepper, ivory, leopard skins manillas (brass bracelets which were made in Holland, used as currency as melted down by brass workers in Benin)) and slaves (this will need to be introduced very carefully) Should the bronzes be returned to Benin? <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Victorians destroyed Benin City in 1897, subsuming the kingdom into Nigeria as part of the British EmpireThe bronzes were looted and sent all over the worldHistorians have argued about whether the bronzes should be returned to Benin ever since. French & German museums have agreed to return their bronzes, but many are still in the British MuseumClass debate considering both sides of the argumentWrite letters to the British Museum to argue their point of view			<table><tr><th>Key Figures</th><th>Linked Texts</th></tr><tr><td>Eweka – first Oba Ewuare the Great – Benin expands its territory Idia – Esigie’s mother, the first Iyoba (queen mother), she wielded considerable power Esigie – set up trading links with the Portuguese Olfert Dapper – written description of Benin City</td><td><i>Children of the Benin Kingdom – Dinah Orji</i> <i>Idia of the Benin Kingdom – Ekiuwa Aire</i> <i>Metropolis: An African City – Anne MacDonald</i></td></tr></table>		Key Figures	Linked Texts	Eweka – first Oba Ewuare the Great – Benin expands its territory Idia – Esigie’s mother, the first Iyoba (queen mother), she wielded considerable power Esigie – set up trading links with the Portuguese Olfert Dapper – written description of Benin City	<i>Children of the Benin Kingdom – Dinah Orji</i> <i>Idia of the Benin Kingdom – Ekiuwa Aire</i> <i>Metropolis: An African City – Anne MacDonald</i>
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Prior Learning										
<ul style="list-style-type: none">In Year 2, the children are introduced to the concept of invaders & traders as they study the Romans in Britain, the Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings.In Year 3, the children study the Tudor period, which is contemporaneous with the Golden Age of Edo. We felt it vital to include an African civilisation to combat the misconception that Africans were ‘uncivilized’ when they were forcibly enslaved.										
Chronology	Similarities & differences	Continuity & change	Cause & consequence	Significance	BIG Question: Outcome & Assessment Opportunity					
When was the kingdom of Benin established? What was happening in the world at that time? When was the kingdom of Benin lost? Concurrence	How was Benin similar/different to England in the 1600s? How was Benin City similar/different to London in the 1600s?		What was the consequence of traders arriving from Europe?	Why is the kingdom of Benin important? Why do we study it in school?	Should the bronzes be returned to Benin? Letters to the British Museum					

Timeline of events (to be displayed in classroom)	Key vocabulary	Key Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AD 900 The kingdom begins to develop and boundaries are established around the region called Igodomigodo in what is now Nigeria. • AD 1100 The last Ogiso of Igodomigodo, Owodo, dies and there is nobody to rule. • AD 1180 Eweka becomes the new ruler. He calls himself the Oba. • AD 1300- 1700 The ‘golden age’ of Edo. It has a large, powerful army and skilled craftspeople. • AD 1470 Oba Ewuare renames the kingdom as Edo, with its main city known as Ubinu (Benin in Portuguese). • AD 1489 The Edo people begin trading with the Portuguese, who call the place ‘Benin’. • AD 1514 Oba Esigie sets up trading links with the Portuguese, and other European visitors. • AD 1553 The first British ships arrive in Benin. Britain becomes a major power in the slave trade and is keen to gain more control. • AD 1700 A series of civil wars within Benin lead to the kingdom declining in power. • AD 1897 The British enter Benin City without permission. Fighting breaks out (the ‘Benin Massacre’) and only two British officers survive. As punishment, the British launch the ‘Benin Punitive Expedition’ and destroy Benin City, stealing many treasures. The Oba is exiled and the British colonise Benin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ogiso - The title used by the early rulers of Igodomigodo. It means ‘kings of the sky’. It is thought that there were around 31 Ogiso rulers. • Oba - The title used by Eweka and subsequent rulers. Eweka was from the Yoruba people and Oba is the Yoruba word for ‘king’. • Edo - The name given to the kingdom of Igodomigodo by Oba Eweka. The people also became known as the Edo people. • Yoruba - The name of the people from the holy city of Ife. The histories of the Edo and Yoruba people are closely linked. • ohen - A priest who performed religious ceremonies. • animists - People who believe that humans, animals and objects all have souls or spirits. • brass - A yellowy metal made of a mixture of copper and zinc. • guild - A group of people who all do the same job, usually a craft • cowrie shells - A sea shell which Europeans used as a kind of money to trade with African leaders • empire - Lots of countries or states, all ruled by one monarch or single state. • Colonisation - When invaders take over control of a country by force, and live among the people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can use a timeline to place different time periods, events or significant individuals from the past. • I can use dates and chronological terms accurately. • I can understand the terms AD and BC and explain what they mean. • I can suggest which sources would help me answer questions. • I can use evidence I have gathered to build up a picture of a past event. • I can choose relevant material to present and communicate a picture of an aspect of life in the time period I am studying. • I can look for links, connections and effects in the time period studied • I can compare the lives of people with different social standing or beliefs in the time period I am studying • I can give reasons why changes may have occurred and back this up with evidence I have researched. • I can describe similarities and differences between some people or events in the time periods studied. • I can look at and begin to evaluate the evidence available. • I can begin to evaluate the usefulness of different sources. • I can look at and compare a variety of representations of a period in history, e.g. cartoons, paintings, museum displays.