

History – Year 6 Autumn 1: Benin Kingdom

Key Vocabulary

Yoruba	the name of the group of people who lived within the area of the holy city of Ife
Oba	the Yoruba word meaning 'King'
Eweka	the first Oba of the Kingdom of Benin. He came to power in AD 1180 Benin City – the modern
Ife	the holy city nearby the Kingdom of Benin, ruled by the Yoruba people
Edo	The name of the group of people who lived within the ancient Kingdom of Benin
Ogisos	the Edo word meaning 'Kings of the Sky'
Benin City	the modern city located in Nigeria. It used to be called Edo and Igodomigodo before that
Trade	exchanging of goods
Kingdom	a country, state, or territory ruled by a king or queen.

Core Knowledge

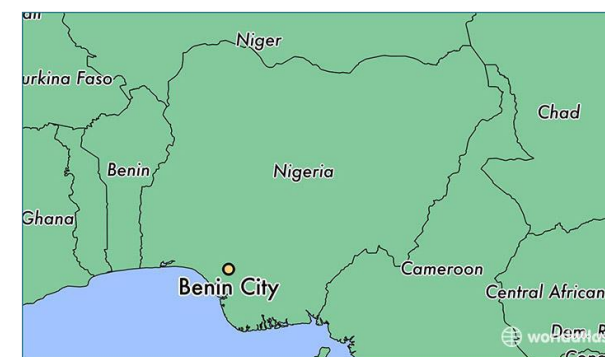
- ✓ Benin was in West Africa
- ✓ AD 900 to 1900 (3 periods; Early, The Golden Age and The Period of Decline)
- ✓ Benin City in the west of Nigeria is the location of the ancient Kingdom of Benin.
- ✓ The belief system of Benin
- ✓ Benin rose to power in the 16th Century and was ruled by two dynasties: Ogiso and Oba.
- ✓ The Benin Kingdom was destroyed by the British Forces.
- ✓ Majority of people worked as farmers and craftsmen creating world famous Benin Bronzes.
- ✓ In 1960, Benin became part of independent Nigeria.
- ✓ Children did not go to school but learned each day from storytellers
- ✓ Most sources tell us about the rich and powerful people in Benin. Little is known about the ordinary men, women and children.

Key Individuals

Ogiso Igodo	First king of Benin
Ogiso Owodo	The last of the Ogiso kings, banished from the kingdom with his family for bad conduct around AD 1130
Oba Eweke	The first of a new dynasty of kings called the Obas, AD 1180
Oba Oguole	Had the Benin city wall build around AD 1283
Oba Ewuare	Expanded the kingdom greatly and set up trading links with Portugal in AD 1514
Oba Onramwen	The last king of Benin, exiled by British troops after their invasion in AD 1897

Timeline of key events

900	Benin Kingdom is first established when small villages join together in a conglomerate.
900 - 1400	An enormous earthen moat is built around the Kingdom boundaries.
1180	The first dynasty of Ogiso kings ends and the Obas begin their rule.
1440	Benin begins to expand and thrive under the rule of Oba Ewuare the Great.
1514	Oba Esigie sets up trading links with Portuguese and other European visitors.
1700	Benin Kingdom enters a period of decline due to a series of civil wars and the abolition of the slave trade with Europe.
1897	Benin City is destroyed by British troops and Benin comes under Britain's control.



Benin city is the location of the ancient Kingdom of Benin. It is located in Nigeria, which is in the west of Africa. The Ancient Kingdom of Benin is NOT located in the modern country of Benin, this is a different country.