



St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School – Willow Class

The Benin Kingdom

Gospel Value
Respect

What I should know- I know that life revolved around the Nile, which supported farming, craft and was used for trade. I know that when pharaohs died, priests would prepare their bodies with a process called mummification. I know that the ancient Egyptians wrote in hieroglyphics. I know that the ancient Egyptians worshipped gods who were responsible for different aspects of life.

Timeline

AD 400 The Yoruba people start using iron tools.

AD 600 The area becomes the Ife Kingdom, one of the earliest kingdoms in the West African Rainforest.

AD 900 The Kingdom of Benin begins to develop, and boundaries are established around the region called Igodomigodo in what is now Nigeria.

AD 1091 The Edo people were ruled by the Ogiso, which means 'kings of the sky.'

AD 1100 The last Ogiso of Igodomigodo, Owodo, dies and there is nobody to rule.

AD 1180 Eweka becomes the new ruler and changes the name Igodomigodo to Edo. He calls himself the Oba.

AD 1300- 1700 The 'golden age' of Edo. It has a large, powerful army and skilled craftspeople.

AD 1489 It was only when Portuguese contacted the Kingdom of Benin that the name 'Benin' began to be used. This name is now widely used to describe the entire civilisation from AD900.

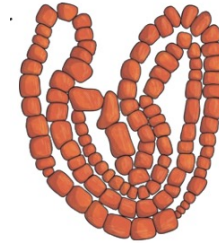
Key Knowledge

- Benin was an advanced society as long ago as a thousand years - more advanced than Saxon and Viking society at the time.
- Benin society was organised around the all-important Oba who lived in his own palace within a well-defended city.
- The society is best remembered for its magnificent bronzes.
- At the end of the Victorian period, the British looted a vast collection of bronzes from Benin.



Masks were made for use in ritual ceremonies and represented a link to the spiritual world. It is made of ivory and features intricate carvings showing skilled craftsmanship.

AD 2000



Coral beads are made from coral stones from the seas, which are polished and shaped. Edo chiefs would wear necklaces of coral beads and the Oba would wear necklaces, collars and crowns made from them.

Key Vocabulary

Ogiso The title used by the early rulers of Igodomigodo. It means 'kings of the sky'

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. 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.