



Benin

What can we find out about the Benin civilisation?

The Kingdom had many skilled craftsmen who were commissioned by the Oba to produce highly sophisticated bronze and brass sculptures that have become known as "Benin"

Benin warrior and attendants.



The **Benin Bronzes** are a group of more than a thousand metal plaques and sculptures that decorated the royal palace of the Kingdom of Benin in



- ◆ The Kingdom of Benin was in a place that is now a part of modern day Nigeria in West Africa. It is not in the same place as the modern African nation of Benin.
- ◆ The Kingdom of Benin was home to the Edo people who, in around 900 CE, began clearing parts of the rainforests of West Africa to build their homes.
- ◆ The Edo people worked together to build a community of farmers and craftspeople who traded successfully.
- ◆ Small settlements soon grew into the larger kingdom of Igodomigodo, which was ruled by kings called Ogisos (kings of the sky).
- ◆ After being governed by over 30 different Ogisos, the kingdom was then controlled

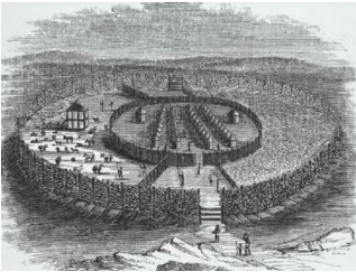
Ogisor Igodo: The first king (or 'Ogisor') of Benin, under whom the smaller villages joined together to form a Kingdom.

Ogisor Owodo: The last of the Ogisor kings, banished from the Kingdom with his family for bad conduct around 1130.

Oba Eweke: The first of a new dynasty of kings called the Obas, crowned around 1180.

Oba Oguole: The king who had the Benin City Wall built around 1283.

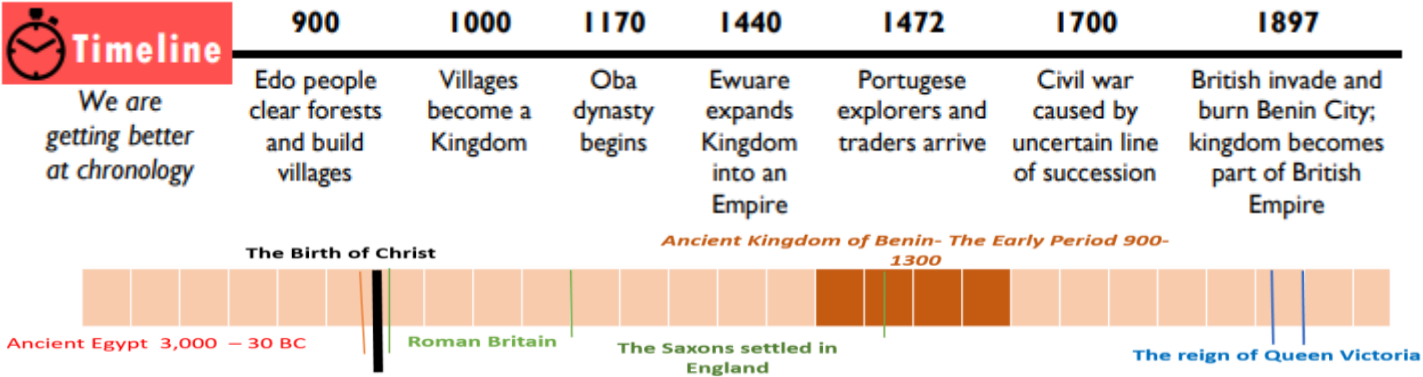
Oba Ewuare: He expanded the kingdom greatly and set up trading links with Portugal in 1514.



The Great Benin Wall:
A huge earthen moat was constructed around the kingdom, stretching 16.000



Benin belonged to the British Empire until 1960. Then it became part of the independent country of Nigeria. Today, the Oba of Benin leads religious ceremonies, but he no longer rules his people.



Vocabulary	
archaeologists	People who study the past by examining remains and objects
civilisation	The name for a society that had made a certain level of advancements.
colonial	Relating to a country controlled by a more powerful country.
dynasty	A line of hereditary rulers of a country.
empire	A number of nations controlled by one country.
fortifications	Buildings, walls and ditches built to protect a place.
oral tradition	A community's culture and history passed down by word of mouth.
trade:	To buy and sell goods.
worshipped	Paid respect to.