

Topic

Year 4 Spring Term Benin Empire Knowledge Organiser

Key words	
repatriation	the returning of something or someone to their own country
civilization	the society, culture, and way of life of a particular area.
colony	a country or area under the full or partial political control of another country and occupied by settlers from that country
plaques	a plate made of wood or metal to be hung on a wall decoratively
sculpture	a piece of art made by carving or casting
casting	the process of making art by using a mould (a shape) that liquid could be poured into that then hardens to form that shape.
composition	an object made from several different parts
bronze, ivory, wood	types of materials
merchant	a person that sells stuff
trading	the exchange of resources between 2 different groups of people
profit	the money that you make
export	objects that are sold to other countries
import	objects from another country that are brought in
kingdom	an area controlled by 1 particular person
looted	steal goods from a place during a war or rioting
collection	a group of artworks
savage	fierce, violent and uncontrolled

priest	a person who performs religious ceremonies and duties in their religion.
depose	to suddenly remove a person like a king from a job
primitive	very basic and unsophisticated

Important places/dates	
Benin	
Portugal	
UK	
Nigeria	
16 th century	Earliest work recorded
1897	looting of Benin and deposing of the Oba

Main people/ideas	
Oba	a leader or chieftain
colonials	A group of people that go in and take over another place
Victorians	People that lived at the time of Queen Victorian from 1837 to 1901
Edo	People belonging to the Edo tribe

Brass manilla bracelets

Brass bracelets, like this, were very highly prized by the people of Benin, because they could melt them down to produce molten brass.

Skilled metalworkers in the royal court used molten brass to make beautiful plaques and statues.

Did you know?

People believed that brass had the power to drive away evil.



Some imports and exports of the Benin Empire

How did the kingdom begin?

Around the year 900, groups of Edo people began to cut down trees and make clearings in the rainforest. At first they lived in small family groups, but gradually these groups developed into a kingdom.

Peppercorns from Benin

Spices like peppercorns were highly valued by people in Europe.

Without any fridges to keep their food fresh, pepper and other spices made their food taste better!



Ivory from Benin

Ivory from elephants' tusks was a very valuable trading item.

Traders from Europe carried the tusks home on their ships. Then the ivory was used to make a range of objects, including jewellery, walking sticks, chess sets and piano keys.

Did you know?

Ivory was seen as a symbol of purity and strength.



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 what is now modern-day Nigeria.