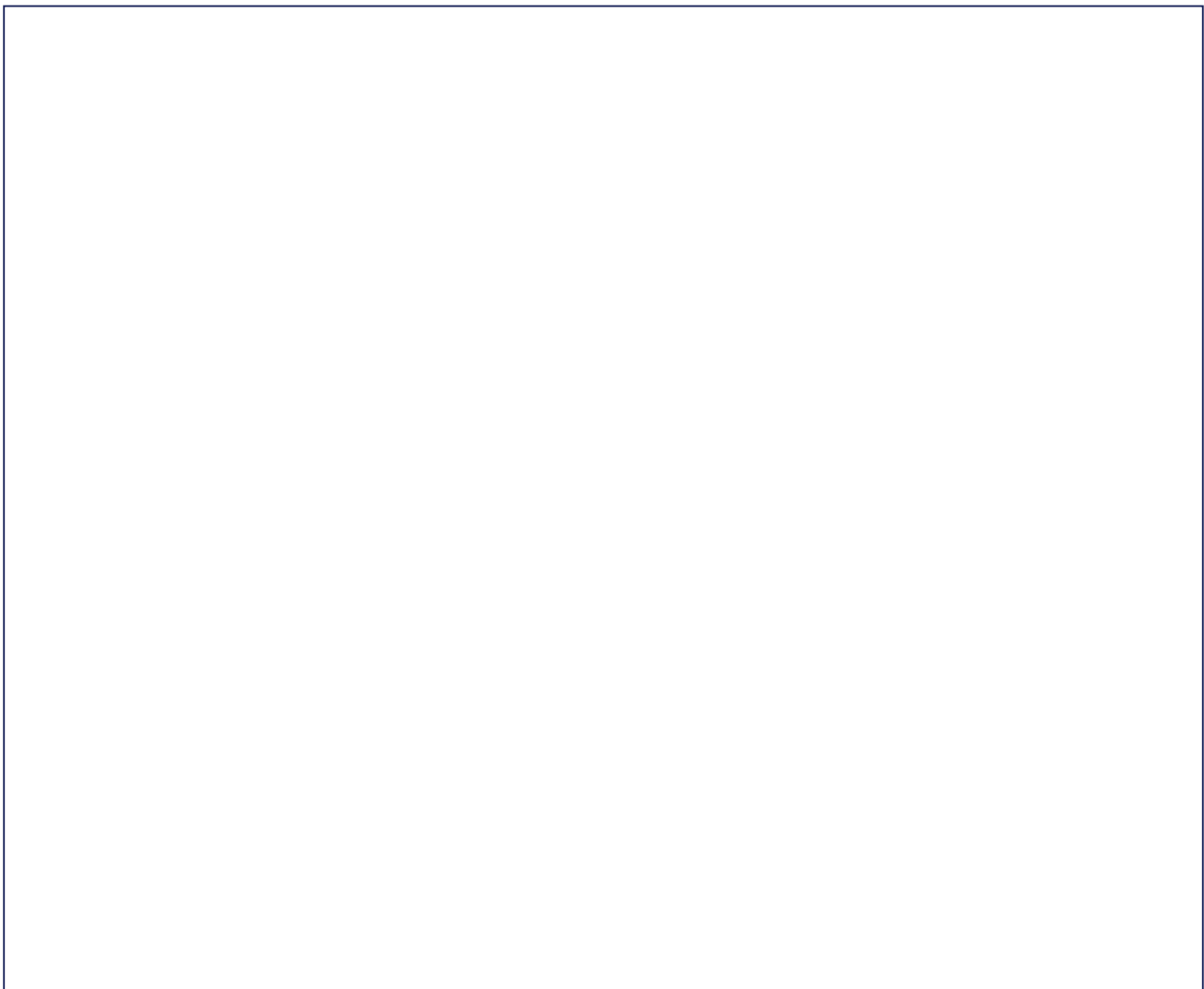


Exploring the Benin Kingdom: A Visual Journey

Learning objective: To understand the artistic, social, and architectural features of the Benin Kingdom by creating an annotated illustration.

Use your knowledge of the Kingdom of Benin to complete the drawing below. Ensure you include key features such as the protective city walls, the Oba's palace, and the intricate bronze plaques that the kingdom is famous for.

Draw: Draw a panoramic view of the 16th-century Benin City. Include the massive, earth-banked walls and deep moats in the foreground. In the centre, draw the Oba's palace with its iconic peaked roofs and pillars decorated with intricate bronze plaques. Use a detailed, architectural style. Include figures in traditional attire, focusing on the textures of coral beads and patterned fabrics.



Label words: Oba · Bronze plaque · City wall · Moat · Courtyard · Turret · Craft guild · Coral regalia

Steps:

1. Explain why the Oba of Benin commissioned bronze plaques to be displayed in the palace. How did these plaques serve as a historical record?
2. Compare and contrast the defensive structures of the Benin Kingdom with a typical medieval castle. What was the purpose of the city walls and moats?

3. Justify your choice of materials: If you were a royal artisan, why would you choose bronze instead of wood to create an image of the Oba?
4. What might happen if the craft guilds of Benin stopped producing their art? How would this affect our understanding of Benin history today?
5. Label your drawing to identify the location of the Oba's palace and the defensive outer walls.
6. Add a caption to your drawing that describes the role of the coral regalia worn by the Oba.