

Adventures in the Benin Kingdom with Ellie

Learning objective: To understand the structure, trade, and culture of the Kingdom of Benin during the 14th to 16th centuries.

Ellie the elephant has been reading ancient scrolls about the powerful Kingdom of Benin. She has found five key facts, but the details have been muddled up! Use the word bank to help Ellie sort these sentences into the correct order and fill in the missing information about life in this West African civilisation.

Word bank: Oba · brass · walls · pepper · craftspeople · Benin City

1. 1. The ruler of the Kingdom of Benin was known as the _____. He lived in a grand palace at the heart of the capital. (1 mark)
2. 2. The kingdom was famous for its incredible _____ plaques, which were created by skilled artists to record important historical events. (1 mark)
3. 3. _____ was a major trade good in the region, along with ivory and cloth, which helped the kingdom become very wealthy. (1 mark)
4. 4. The capital city was protected by massive earthen _____ and ditches, which were some of the largest in the ancient world. (1 mark)
5. 5. Why do you think the king supported talented artists and skilled workers? Give one reason based on what you know about the kingdom's history. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of a Benin plaque. Remember to show a scene of a royal ceremony or a warrior, using patterns and shapes to decorate the border of your plaque.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are a trader visiting the Kingdom of Benin in the year 1500. Write a short diary entry describing three things you might see in the busy marketplace, such as items for sale or the grand architecture.