

Social Studies / History Assessment: The Kingdom of Benin

Learning objective: To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Kingdom of Benin, its societal structure, trade, and artistic achievements.

Read each question carefully. Use your historical knowledge of the Benin Kingdom to provide detailed answers. Ensure you use the provided word bank to help with your explanations.

The Kingdom of Benin was a powerful West African empire that thrived between the 13th and 19th centuries. Led by a ruler known as the Oba, the kingdom was famous for its complex city planning, skilled metalwork, and control over trade routes in the region. The city of Benin was protected by a massive earthwork rampart and was a centre for artistic excellence.

Word bank: Oba · Bronze · Trade · Guilds · Wall · Forest · Craftsmen · Edo

1. Identify the title given to the ruler of the Kingdom of Benin and explain one of their main responsibilities. (2 marks)

2. Why was the location of the Kingdom of Benin within the rainforest considered an advantage for its economy? (3 marks)

3. Describe the role of the 'guilds' in Benin society. What did they create and why were they important? (4 marks)

4. The Benin city walls are considered an incredible engineering feat. Explain why these walls were built. (3 marks)

5. Name two items that the people of Benin traded with European merchants. (2 marks)

6. Compare life in the Kingdom of Benin to life in a medieval European castle. Identify one similarity and one difference. (4 marks)

7. Ellie the elephant has been studying the history of Benin. Write a short report (5 sentences) explaining how the bronze plaques found in the kingdom act as a 'history book' for modern historians. Consider what they show us about the Oba and daily life. (7 marks)

Draw: Draw an example of a Benin bronze plaque. Think about the patterns and symbols you might include to show the importance of the Oba or the warriors of the kingdom.



Extension challenge: Total: /25. Research task: Find out about the 'Great Wall of Benin' and compare its length to another historical wall you have learned about. Write a comparison paragraph.