

The Kingdom of Benin: A Historical Investigation

Learning objective: To analyse the achievements and societal structure of the Kingdom of Benin and present findings in a structured historical report.

Use this scaffold to organise your research into the Benin Kingdom. Use the word bank to help connect your ideas and ensure your report is formal and informative. Refer to Ellie's history notes to ensure you are including key dates and roles.

Deep within the tropical forests of West Africa, the Kingdom of Benin emerged as a powerful and highly organised civilisation that flourished for centuries.

Word bank: Furthermore · Consequently · In addition to · Historically significant · Prosperity · Craftsmanship · Sophisticated · Centralised authority · Intricate · Conversely

1. The Oba's Rule: Describe the role of the Oba within Benin society and explain why his leadership was central to the kingdom's stability... (3 marks)

2. Artistic Mastery: Discuss the significance of the Benin Bronzes; what do these intricate items tell us about the skills of the craftspeople at that time?... (3 marks)

3. Trade and Wealth: Explain how the location of Benin and its trade relationships with European visitors contributed to the kingdom's economic prosperity... (3 marks)

4. Compare and Contrast: Compare the daily life of a citizen in the Benin Kingdom to life in a medieval European city. What are the main similarities and differences?... (4 marks)

5. Justify your answer: Why do historians consider the Kingdom of Benin to be one of the most advanced civilisations in African history?... (4 marks)

6. What might happen if: Imagine the trade routes between Benin and the coast were closed. How would this have impacted the Oba's influence and the kingdom's growth?... (4 marks)

Extension challenge: Write a diary entry from the perspective of a merchant visiting Benin City for the first time. Describe the layout of the city, the craftsmanship you witnessed, and your interaction with the royal court. Use at least three words from the word bank.