Exploring the Kingdom of Benin

Learning objective: To understand the cultural significance and architectural features of the Kingdom of Benin during the 16th century.

Use the drawing space provided to recreate a scene from the royal city of Benin. Refer to the word bank to label the key features of your illustration.

Draw: Draw a panoramic view of the royal court of Benin. Use a neat, detailed style similar to an architectural reconstruction. Include the multi-storey palace with its iconic turrets, a wide central courtyard, and the elaborate outer walls. Incorporate decorative elements like geometric patterns on the walls and figures wearing traditional regalia.

Label words: Oba's Palace · Bronze Plaque · Inner City Wall · Turret · Courtier · Ceremonial Courtyard

Steps:

1. Step 1: Draw the Oba’s palace in the centre of your page, including the famous turrets decorated with snakes or birds.
2. Step 2: Draw a Bronze Plaque on a palace wall. Describe one scene you would show on the plaque to represent the history of the Benin Kingdom.
3. Step 3: Label the 'Inner City Wall' and explain why these walls were so important for the protection and organisation of the city.

4. Step 4: Draw a courtier wearing traditional coral beads. Why were coral beads considered a symbol of power in Benin?

5. Step 5: Add a 'Ceremonial Courtyard' to your drawing. What kind of activities might have taken place in this space?