

**Year 6 Knowledge Mat**  
How do we know about the history of Benin?  
**Evidential thinking**

**Medium term plan**

1. Why do YOU think we should study Benin?
2. What sort of place was Benin 500 to 1,000 years ago?
3. What can we tell about Benin society from the images and artefacts that have survived?
4. What changes took place when the European settlers started trading?
5. Why did the Victorians get involved in Benin and what were the effects on the Benin people?
6. Should the Benin Bronzes be returned?

**Synoptic task**

Should the bronzes be returned to Benin? A class debate followed by letter to British Museum arguing for the return of the bronzes,

**National curriculum link**

A non- European society that provides contrasts with British history - one study chosen from: early Islamic civilization, including a study of Baghdad c. AD 900; Malayan civilization, c AD 900; Benin (West Africa) c.AD 900-1300.

**Substantive Concepts**

Civilization, power, rule, trade, religion, government, archaeology, slavery, empire,

**Academic Vocabulary (Tier 2)**

Administrate, Ambiguous, Append, Approximate, Bias, Clarify, Community, Confer, Controversy, Core, Decline, Duration, Establish, Exploit, Ideology, Infrastructure, Media, Migrate, Motive, Nuclear, Parallel, Perspective, Phase, Predominant, Previous, Subsequent, Successor, Uniform, Welfare, Widespread

**Subject Specific Vocabulary (Tier 3)**

Barter, bronzes, Edo people, dynasty, empire, fortifications, loot, Oba, palace,

**What I should already know -**

Children will be able to make links with other civilizations that they have studied.

Children understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

Children have developed chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history.

**Sticky knowledge**

Benin, in modern day Nigeria was an advanced society as long ago as a thousand years, in many ways more advanced than Saxon and Viking society at the time

It's really important that people living in Britain today recognise how African societies such as Benin developed in their own right and not as a result of contact with Europeans. This helps combat some prejudices people have today thinking that all the important developments in world history took place in in the West.

Benin society was organised around the all-important Oba who lived in his own palace within a well-defended city.

The society is best remembered for its magnificent bronzes

At the end of the Victorian period soldiers of the British empire clashed with the inhabitants of Benin and looted a vast number of these superb bronzes many of which are still held in British museums

The debate about whether the Benin bronzes should be returned still rumbles on. There are arguments on both side



