

Vocabulary

1 oba	a king	7 manillas	ankle bracelets
2 ogisos	“Rulers of the Sky” – the first kings of Benin	8 cowrie shells	a seashell used by Europeans to trade with African leaders
3 empire	lots of countries or states all ruled by one person	9 civil war	a war between people who live in the same country
4 guild	a group of people who all do the same job	10 colonisation	invaders take a country by force and live among the people
5 animism	a belief that non-human objects and animals have spirits	11 the Edo	the people of the Benin kingdom
6 moat	a trench (often seen around castles) dug to keep invaders out	12 slave	a person who is owned by another person and forced to work for them with no pay or rights

Key knowledge

Key misconception

The Kingdom of Benin is not the same as the modern day country called Benin. It was an area in modern day Nigeria.

Background

For nearly one thousand years, from around 900 until 1897, the kingdom of Benin was one of the most powerful states in West Africa.

Transatlantic slave trade

Enslaved African people were taken, against their will, from Africa primarily to the Americas (North, South and Central America). Britain was heavily involved in the slave trade until it was made illegal in 1807. The slave trade and the Civil Rights movement is studied at length in Year 6.