

Knowledge Organiser - Ancient Benin

Ancient Benin

Ancient Benin was a powerful kingdom in West Africa that began over a thousand years ago. We learn about it through artefacts, oral stories, art, and European records.



The Kingdom of Benin was ruled by a king called the Oba, who had great power and was helped by chiefs and advisors.

Most people in Ancient Benin lived in villages, worked as farmers, craftworkers or traders, and played important roles in their communities.



People in Ancient Benin believed in many gods and spirits. Religion was part of everyday life and involved rituals, festivals and respect for ancestors.

The Kingdom of Benin ended in 1897 when British forces invaded and destroyed much of the city. This marked the end of its independence.



Kingdom - A place ruled by a king or queen, with people living together under their rules.

Oba - The name for a king in Ancient Benin.

Rule - To be in charge of a place and make decisions for the people who live there.

Palace - A big, special house where a king or queen lives.

Power - Having the ability to make decisions and tell others what to do.

Craft - Making things by hand, like pots, jewellery or carvings.

Trade - Swapping or selling things to get what you need.

Invade - To enter a place by force and try to take control of it.

Independence - When a place rules itself and is not controlled by another country.