



YEAR 3 HISTORY: BENIN BRONZES - LONG-TERM PLAN

PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTION

If you take something without permission, is it truly yours?

HISTORICAL QUESTION:

Should the Benin Bronzes be returned to Nigeria?

LONG-TERM PLAN

Week	Threshold Concept	Content	Knowledge	Interactive Activities
1	Investigate and interpret the past	Discuss the Philosophical Question. What are the children's views? What is the children's opinion of the historical question? What questions do they have? What would they like to find out?	Permission - the action of allowing someone to do a particular act	Children to record their answers via writing, drawing, audio, video and then stored somewhere to re-discuss at the end of the block. Extension: Use drama or role-play to act out scenarios where someone influences change.
2	Build an overview of world history	Introduction to Benin	Benin was a sophisticated civilisation in West Africa (modern-day Nigeria). Founded c. 900 CE, capital: Benin City.	Locate Benin on a map. Timeline puzzle of key events. Watch a short video or story about the Oba.
3	Understand chronology	Who were the Obas?	Obas were kings of Benin. Leadership passed through families. Oba Ewuare the Great expanded the kingdom.	Role-play a council meeting with the Oba and chiefs. Design a crown or royal symbol.
4	Build an overview of world history	Daily Life in Benin	Society was hierarchical. Clothing, housing, and trade	Dress-up day with traditional clothing styles.



Scotholme Primary - Discover (History LTP)

			reflected status. Trade included ivory, pepper, and textiles.	Create clay models of Benin houses. Barter-style classroom trading game.
5	Investigate and interpret the past	Art and the Benin Bronzes	Bronzes depicted leaders, warriors, and events. Used to celebrate and record history. Made from bronze, ivory, brass.	Handle replica artefacts or images. Annotate and label bronze plaques. Create their own "bronze" plaque using foil or clay.
6	Build an overview of world history	Religion and Beliefs	Ancestor worship and multiple deities (e.g., Olokun). Ceremonies were central to leadership and community.	Create deity masks or symbols. Storytelling circle about ancestor spirits.
7	Understand chronology	The Fall of Benin	Civil wars weakened the kingdom. British invasion in 1897 led to looting of bronzes. Abolition of slavery further weakened Benin.	Recreate a timeline of Benin's decline. Debate: "Was the British invasion justified?" Freeze-frame drama of key events.
8	Investigate and interpret the past	The Benin Bronzes Today	Many bronzes are still in British museums. Repatriation is a current issue. Raises ethical questions about ownership.	Museum role-play: curator vs. activist. Write a persuasive letter about repatriation. Class vote: Should the bronzes be returned?
9	Communicate historically	Final Project	Use historical vocabulary and knowledge. Present understanding of Benin and the bronzes. Reflect on the big questions.	Group presentations or digital slideshows. Create a class museum exhibit.
10	Communicate historically	Reflection	Reflect on the big questions.	Reflective writing: "What have we learnt from a bad situation?"



APPENDIX:

THRESHOLD CONCEPTS

<p>Investigate and interpret the past This concept involves understanding that our understanding of the past comes from an interpretation of the available evidence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use evidence to ask questions.• Suggest sources of evidence for historical enquiries.• Use one source of evidence for historical enquiry in order to gain a more accurate understanding of history.• Describe different accounts of a historical event.
<p>Build an overview of world history This concept involves an appreciation of the characteristic features of the past and an understanding that life is different for different sections of society.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the social or religious diversity of past society.• Describe the characteristic features of the past, including ideas and beliefs.
<p>Understand chronology This concept involves an understanding of how to chart the passing of time and how some aspects of history studied were happening at similar times in different places</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Place events, artefacts and historical figures on a time line using dates.• Use dates and terms to describe events.
<p>Communicate historically This concept involves using historical vocabulary and techniques to convey information about the past.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use appropriate historical vocabulary to communicate, including: dates, time period• Use literacy, numeracy and computing skills in order to communicate information about the past.



KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

British soldiers raided Benin City in 1897 and stole thousands of pieces of art. They claimed they had been attacked.

The Kingdom of Benin

Most of them were sold to cover the cost of the army; some were donated to Queen Victoria. Hundreds of them are still in British museums.

900 CE The Kingdom known as Igodomigodo is created and ruled by Ogiso.	900 - 1460 CE A huge moat is built around the Kingdom	1180 CE The Oba royal family take over from the Ogiso	1440 CE Benin expands its territory under the rule of Oba Ewuare the Great	1470 CE Oba Ewuare renames the Kingdom as Edo.	1614 CE Oba Esigie sets up trading links with Europeans.	1700 CE A series of civil wars within Benin lead to the kingdom declining in power.	1807 CE Britain passes a law abolishing the slave trade, which further weakens the kingdom.
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Key Vocabulary	
Civilisation	A complex society with a well-organised government, culture, and way of life.
Oba	The king or ruler of the Benin Kingdom.
Ancestor	A family member from past generations, honoured in Benin's spiritual traditions.
Bronze	A metal alloy used in creating sculptures and plaques, especially the famous Benin Bronzes.
Trade	The exchange of goods; Benin traded items like ivory, pepper, and metals
Deity	A god or goddess worshipped for their powers and influence.
Artefact	An object made by humans, often of cultural or historical interest.
Repatriation	Returning cultural artefact's, like the Benin Bronzes, to their original country.
Colony	A territory controlled by another country, often following invasion or conflict.
Civilisation	A complex society with a well-organised government, culture, and way of life.

Geography and Origins

Location: West Africa, present-day Nigeria
Founded: c. 900 CE
Capital: Benin City
Significance: A sophisticated and organized kingdom with strong leadership, trade networks, and artistic heritage.
Government and Leadership
Oba: The king of Benin, considered a powerful and respected leader.
Council of Chiefs: Advised the Oba on important matters.
Traditions: Leadership was passed down through the family line, and the people held deep respect for the Oba.

Daily Life and Community

Society: Family and community were essential, and people had defined roles in society.
Clothing and Housing: Houses made from clay, and clothing reflected status within the kingdom.
Trade: Key products traded included ivory, pepper, and textiles.
Art and Craftsmanship
Materials: Known for working with bronze, ivory, and brass.
Benin Bronzes: Detailed bronze plaques and sculptures depicting leaders, warriors, and significant events.
Purpose of Art: Celebrated important figures, told stories, and recorded history.
Religion and Spiritual Beliefs
Ancestors: Honouring ancestors was central to Benin's spiritual life.
Deities: Many gods were worshipped, each with different roles (e.g., Olokun, god of the sea).
Ceremonies and Rituals: Played an important role in community life and leadership.





ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Analysis of different bronzes
- Timeline creation
- Vocabulary Quiz: Use key terms from the KO (e.g., Oba, artefact, repatriation).
- Exit Tickets: Quick reflections at the end of each session (e.g., "One thing I learned today...").
- Hot-seating
- Final presentation (oracy, historical communication)
- Participation in debates and discussions

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO DEBATE

Historical Enquiry Questions

Linked to the Philosophical Question

- What is valuable to you?
- How would you feel if something valuable was taken away from you?
- Does something always belong to the person who made it?

Linked to the Historical Question

- Who do the Benin Bronzes belong to? Why?
- Why do you think the British took the Benin Bronzes in 1897?
- Why do you think some people think they should be returned to Nigeria?

Empathy and Perspective

- What can the Benin Bronzes tell us about the people who made them?
- How do you think they felt when the British arrived?
- How did the British feel when they found the Bronzes?

Values-Based (Change, Success, Fairness)

- Why is it important to learn from historical artefacts?
- Where should these artefacts be kept? Why?
- What do you think would have happened if the British had talked to the Oba rather than acting?