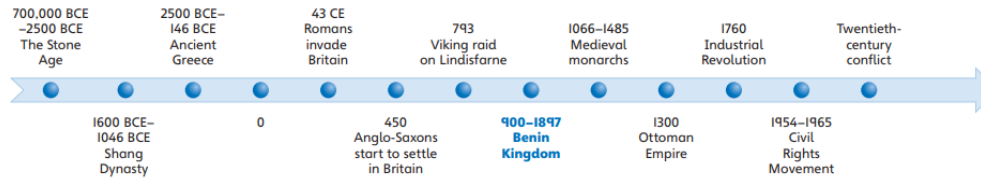


VOCABULARY!

<p><b>Americas</b> North, South and Central America.</p>
<p><b>Cowrie shells</b> Rare kind of seashell, which Europeans used as money to trade with African rulers.</p>
<p><b>Empires</b> Groups of countries or areas that are ruled by another country.</p>
<p><b>Enslaved people</b> People who are the legal property of someone else, and are forced to obey them.</p>
<p><b>Guild</b> Group of people who all do the same job, usually a craft, in which beginners learn the skills to become masters.</p>
<p><b>Looted</b> Took property by force.</p>
<p><b>Moat</b> Long trench dug around an area and filled with water to keep invaders out.</p>
<p><b>Oba</b> King or chief.</p>
<p><b>Officials</b> People with authority and public duties.</p>
<p><b>Plantations</b> Large area of land where crops are grown.</p>

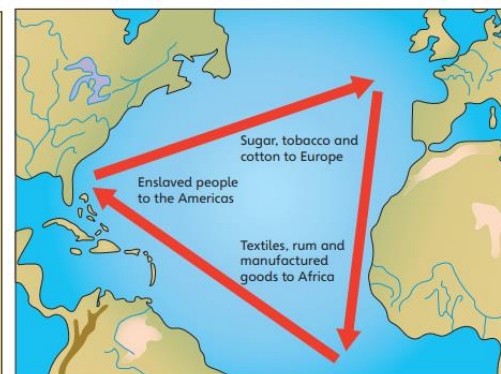
Key facts, places and dates



The Benin Kingdom in West Africa was created over 1,000 years ago, when the people who lived there, called the Edo, made large clearings in the rainforest and joined many villages together. The kingdom was originally called Igodomigodo, and was ruled by a series of kings known as the 'Ogisos' or 'Rulers of the Sky'. It later became known as Benin, with the capital Benin City.



Timeline of events	
900 CE	Lots of villages join together and make a kingdom known as Igodomigodo, ruled by the Ogiso.
Approximately 900-1460 CE	A 15 km moat and 16,000 km of walls are constructed around the kingdom.
1180 CE	The Oba royal family takes over from the Ogisos and begins to rule the kingdom; they are treated like gods.
1440 CE	Led by Oba Ewuare the Great, Benin wins more land.
1485 CE	The Portuguese visit the Benin Kingdom.
1514 CE	Oba Esigie sets up trading links with the Portuguese and other European visitors.
1700 CE	A series of civil wars in Benin leads to the kingdom declining in power.
1807 CE	Britain passes a law to end the slave trade, which further weakens the kingdom.
1897 CE	Benin City (in modern-day Nigeria) is destroyed by British troops, and comes under Britain's control.



**Key misconception**  
The Benin Kingdom is not the same as the modern-day country called Benin.