**Lesson #12**

**Guided Reading**

**African Art**

**The Yoruba People of Nigeria-**

* Settled @ 500 BCE
* Cities grew @ 800-1000 ACE
* **Beliefs:** Focused on their brain or “inner head”
  + “My inner head not spoil my outer head”
  + Means to keep a calm mellow attitude
  + We see this tranquility (peacefulness) in their artworks
* **Artworks-** usually depicted royalty or leaders in metal castings
  + **Metal castings**- women would sculpt the clay into a form, men would create a mold and cast them in metal
    - Collaboration between men and women is till used today in the Yoruba Culture

**The Empire of Mali-** Led by King Sundiata @ 1230-1255

* “The Crown Jewel of West Africa”
* Center of Education and Trade
  + The oldest schools and universities were established in this area
* **Sudiata-** described as a hunter and warrior king
  + Gathered iron tools from blacksmiths in the area and brought them back to his people
  + **Griots-** musicians who passed the history and story of Sudiata from generation to generation

**The Kingdom of Benin-** known for its oral traditions (passing down myths stories of legends down through word of mouth)

* Known for metal work made out of copper alloy (similar to bronze)

**Kente Cloths-** invented in the 1600’s ACE

* Made of brightly colored strips of cloth sewn together into decorative patterns
* Used to identify different families and tribes in Africa
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**Carved Figures-** typically made of wood

* Made out of one piece of wood and typically reflects the size and shape of the wood it was carved from
* **Adze**- an ax like tool that has an arched blade used for African Carvings
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* **Figurative Sculptures-** Figurative means the sculpture looks like human figures or bodies
  + Little or no movement, the figure looks stiff or frozen in place
  + Large heads to represent the people’s importance they put on wisdom and inner peace
  + Symmetrical and frontal poses
  + Proportions of the body (size of each limb or part of the human body) reflects cultural beliefs rather than what people actually look like
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* Notice how the figure is a mirror image, the left side is the same as the right side
* Look at what features are exaggerated
* This is an example of a frontal pose because the sculpture is suppose to be viewed from the front
* **Primordial Couples-** represents the first man and woman
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* All religions have their own version of the first man and woman or the creation theory
* Christians have Adam and Eve, Africans have numerous figures that depict their version of the first man and woman
* **Olowe of Ise-** Yoruba artist who did mainly wood carvings
  + @ 1875-1938
  + One of the only known artists of the time from Africa
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