

Antiques Shop

Part One

I'd like to tell you about something that was found at the back of a shop...

Draw a rectangle (this is a chest that was found). Make it really big.

An antiques dealer, who saw it buried underneath some dusty old curtains at the back of his shop, found it. He was having a tidy up and came across it one afternoon. It was covered in cobwebs, but once he had wiped it down, he saw that it was an old chest. The lid had two metal handles that looked like this.

Draw the two handles on the chest.

He couldn't open it immediately. It had to be done later at the museum.

Mime opening the chest, using the drawing.

Someone obviously went to a lot of trouble to hide what was in this chest!

Don't reveal what is in the chest yet.

What I haven't told you is where the antiques dealer had his shop. He had his shop in a village, not far from a forest in the country of Nigeria, where the ancient Kingdom of Benin once existed.

Task: Now, could you think of yourself as one of the museum historians opening the chest for the very first time in over 1,000 years?

What might you find?

Remember, whatever is in this chest was very important to someone of that kingdom.

Use the [In the Chest Activity Sheet](#).

Visit the children as they draw what they think is in the chest, asking them why they chose their particular object. Ask some children to make notes about what is important about their object on the sheet.

Part Two

Let's go to the chest.

When they cleared off the cobwebs and dust, the historian at the museum found a bronze plaque, with wonderful engravings and carvings on. Look!

Produce a copy of one of the Benin Bronzes from the [Benin Bronzes Photopack](#).

What questions could we ask about this object?

Part Three

Read the notice and discuss the moral issues related to the document.

1. Should the Bronze be returned?
2. Where should it be returned to? Nigeria or New York?
3. Who owns the Bronze?
4. The exhibition wishes to educate people about ancient African art. Is this a good enough cause to sell it to?
5. Should it be reunited with the other Bronzes?
6. How might the \$10,000 be used?