

## **LESSON NOTE FOR WEEK EIGHT (FAMVAR INTERNATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL )**

**SUBJECT:** HISTORY

**CLASS:** JSS1

**TOPIC:** HISTORICAL SITES IN NIGERIA: NOK CULTURE

The Nok culture was one of the earliest known societies of Western Africa. It existed in the Zaria province in Kaduna from around 500 B.C.E. to 200 C.E. This date was verified through carbon dating by the famous archaeologist Bernard Fagg who studied the area from 1945 to 1956.

Historians and archaeologists refer to this culture as the Nok culture because its artefacts and material remains were first discovered close to the small Nigerian village known as Nok, near Kafanchan in Southern Kaduna State. Research and archaeological findings have shown that the Nok culture covered a large portion of Northern and Central Nigeria, especially Benin, Plateau, Niger, Abuja and Kaduna

The first Nok terracotta sculptures were discovered in 1928 by Colonel Dent Young, a co-owner of a mining partnership, near the village of Nok in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Almost a decade later in the year 1936, some tin-ore miners accidentally dug up the terracotta head of a monkey and after some years more terracotta sculptures were discovered in other places such as Wamba, Jema and Katsina-Ala, Kagara, Jos and Ankiring. They also discovered a mining furnace in Taruga.

### **Nok people and their occupation**

Nok were socially organized society with a mixed economy. They were farmers, technologists, religious worshippers and artists. According to historical evidence, Nok people were very skillful in iron and tin smelting and this is proved by complex iron tools produced by them. The site of this evidence is in Taruga which is located in the present day Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Besides, they were also great sculptors, the Nok people have the oldest sculpture (terracotta i.e baked clay) in Nigeria and the entire black race around the world.

### **FEATURES OF NOK CULTURE**

1. It is regarded as the first place where the use of iron in Nigeria was identified.
2. The Nok people made figurines from terracotta.
3. They have the oldest terracotta sculptures in Africa and among the entire black race across the globe.
4. Like that of Ife culture, Nok culture is characterized by figurines that are not perfect.
5. Most of the figure have pierced lips, eyes and nose

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF NOK CULTURE IN HISTORY**

1. The Nok artefacts show that the people had a good knowledge of iron smelting and human security.
2. Nok culture proves that clay arts existed in black Africa before the advent of the Europeans.
3. It is believed that the Nok cultural art influenced the Yoruba art work a thousand years later.
4. It is proof that there were contacts and interactions among the tribes before colonization.
5. The Nok village is a tourist site which attracts tourist from different parts of the world.

6. Nok culture provides proof of a black race that was knowledgeable, hardworking, artistic, religiously inclined, agriculturally advanced and technologically relevant.

### **HOMEWORK**

1. The Nok culture existed in the Zaria province in Kaduna from around \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_
2. The first Nok terracotta sculptures were discovered in the year \_\_\_\_\_ by Colonel Dent Young.
3. Two places where Nok terracotta artefacts were dug up after 1936 were \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
4. The site of this evidence is in Taruga which is located in the present day \_\_\_\_\_
5. Nok figurines and sculptures were made from \_\_\_\_\_