

The Maya Knowledge Organiser – Year 4

Key dates and events	
1500 BC	The Olmec civilization develops, the Maya take on much of their culture.
1100 BC	The first hunter gathers settle along the Pacific Coast and then expand into the central highlands.
1000 BC	The Maya begin to form larger settlements.
800 BC	Village farming and trade becomes established throughout the Maya Region.
700 BC	Mayan writing is first developed in Mesoamerica.
600 BC	Large buildings are built in the city of El Mirador The Maya begin to farm. The settlement at Tikal is formed.
400 BC	The first Mayan solar calendars are carved into stone.
300 BC	The Maya adopt the idea of a monarchy for their government. They are now ruled by kings.
100 BC	The city-state of Teotihuacan is established in the Valley of Mexico. The first pyramids are built.
450 AD	The city-state of Tikal becomes the dominant city and rules over the Maya highlands, tropical lowland and the central region.
560 AD	The city-state of Tikal is defeated by an alliance of other city-states.
600 AD	The city-state of Caracol becomes a major force in the land.
683 AD	Pakal the Great of Planque dies and is buried in the Temple of Inscriptions.
800 AD	Sites in the rainforests and tropical lowlands are abandoned whilst northern lowland sites flourish.
900 ADD	The southern lowland cities collapse and Teotihuacan is abandoned.
1502 AD	First contact with Europeans made.

Key people	
King Yax Moch Xok	The first King of Tikal (in modern day Guatemala). 219 AD
Pakal the Great (Ki'inich Janaab Pakal)	King of Planque from 615-683 AD. Pakal became king when he was 12 years old. He was king for longer than another of ruler in the Ancient Maya world.
Yax K'uk Mo	The first king of the dynasty that ruled the Maya city of Copan (in modern day Honduras) for 350 years. The city of Copan grows under his rule from 426-437 AD.



The Maya Key Vocabulary – Year 4

Nouns

architecture	civilisation	pyramid
Armada	conquistador	Spanish
astronomy	farms	Tenochtitlan
calendar	glyph	Tikal
Central America	invasion	trade
Chichen-Itza	mathematics	vegetation

Verbs

abandon	disappear	observe
attack	fuel	progress
bury	invent	reign
celebrate	investigate	revoke
destroy	manipulate	sacrifice
develop	master	surround

Adjectives

ambitious	exceptional	precious
aristocratic	humid	primitive
cultured	intelligent	rare
devious	manipulative	rival
distinguished	mountainous	sophisticated
encrusted	perishable	tropical

Etymology

chocolate	The Nahuatl 'xocolatl' is made up of the parts 'xococ', meaning 'bitter', and 'atl' meaning 'water'. The Maya gave us chocolate.
hurricane	Our English word 'hurricane' comes from the Taino word 'hurican' who was the Carib Indian god of evil. Their hurican was derived from the Mayan god of wind, storm and fire 'huracan', When the Spanish explorers pass through the Caribbean, they picked it up and it turned into 'huracan', which remains the Spanish word for hurricane still today. By the 16 th century, the word was modified once again into our present day 'hurricane.'
shark	The origin of shark is under some debate, the English word is from a Mayan word, 'xoc', which might have meant 'shark'. Northern Europeans seem not to have been familiar with sharks before voyages to the tropics began.

