

**Plaster cast of a stela from Quirigua showing an image of King K'ak' Tiliw Chan Yopat.**

**Slide 1:** King K'ak' Tiliw Chan Yopat (pronounced *CAR-HACK-TILLY-CHAN-YO-PAT*) was a ruler of the Mayan city of Quirigua (pronounced *KILLY-GWA*) from 724 – 785 AD.

**Slide 2:** This tall standing stone is called a stela. It stands in the Great Plaza at Quirigua, which is now in modern day Guatemala. It shows portraits of King K'ak' Tiliw Chan Yopaat on two sides. It stands 35 feet tall and weighs 65 tons.

**Slide 3:** This is a plaster cast of part of the stela, it's on the second floor of the museum. It was made around 1885 and shows one of the portraits of King K'ak' Tiliw Chan Yopaat.

**Slide 4:** This is a drawing of the cast. It will help us to see more of the detail. Everything in the picture tells us that this is an image of a great Mayan ruler. The people who lived in the city would know that this is a picture of a king just as we know when we see a picture of Queen Elizabeth II. What does the queen wear on special occasions that tell us she is the queen? Discuss.

Now let's look at each part one at a time.

**Slide 5:** The king has large almond-shaped eyes and a large nose, both signs that this is a portrait of a king. The king's mouth is slightly open and he has a narrow beard, again signs that this is a portrait of a king.

**Did you know** that the Ancient Maya believed their souls lived in their noses? We might point at our chest and say, "Are you talking to me?" whereas the Ancient Maya would point to their nose. A large nose was a sign of beauty.

**Slide 6:** The king's ears have been stretched through wearing ear spools made of jade and obsidian. Do you know what colour these materials are and where they come from? (Jade is a greenish stone and obsidian a grey to black glass-like material from volcanoes).

**Did you know** that the Ancient Maya believed that jade was a living thing?

**Slide 7:** This is a staff with feathers attached. They come from a bird whose feathers could only be worn by rulers and priests.

**Do you know** what type of bird this was?

**Slide 8: Answer:** A Quetzal: a colourful bird from the humid highland forests of Mexico and Guatemala. Only royalty and priests could wear feathers from these sacred birds.

**Slide 9:** This is the king's headdress. It's made to look like a creepy god or an animal from the underworld. It reminds us that the king is such a brave and powerful ruler that he's not scared of anything!

**Slide 10-11:** These are glyphs. They are similar to the hieroglyphs from Ancient Egypt. They are pictures which tell a story, though no ones worked out what these say!

**Slide 12-13: Any idea what these are?** That's right, they're feathers from the Quetzal. Did you know that the Ancient Maya never killed a Quetzal for its tail feathers? They just plucked one or two and let the bird go free!

**Slide 14:** So, now we know what the stela is all about!