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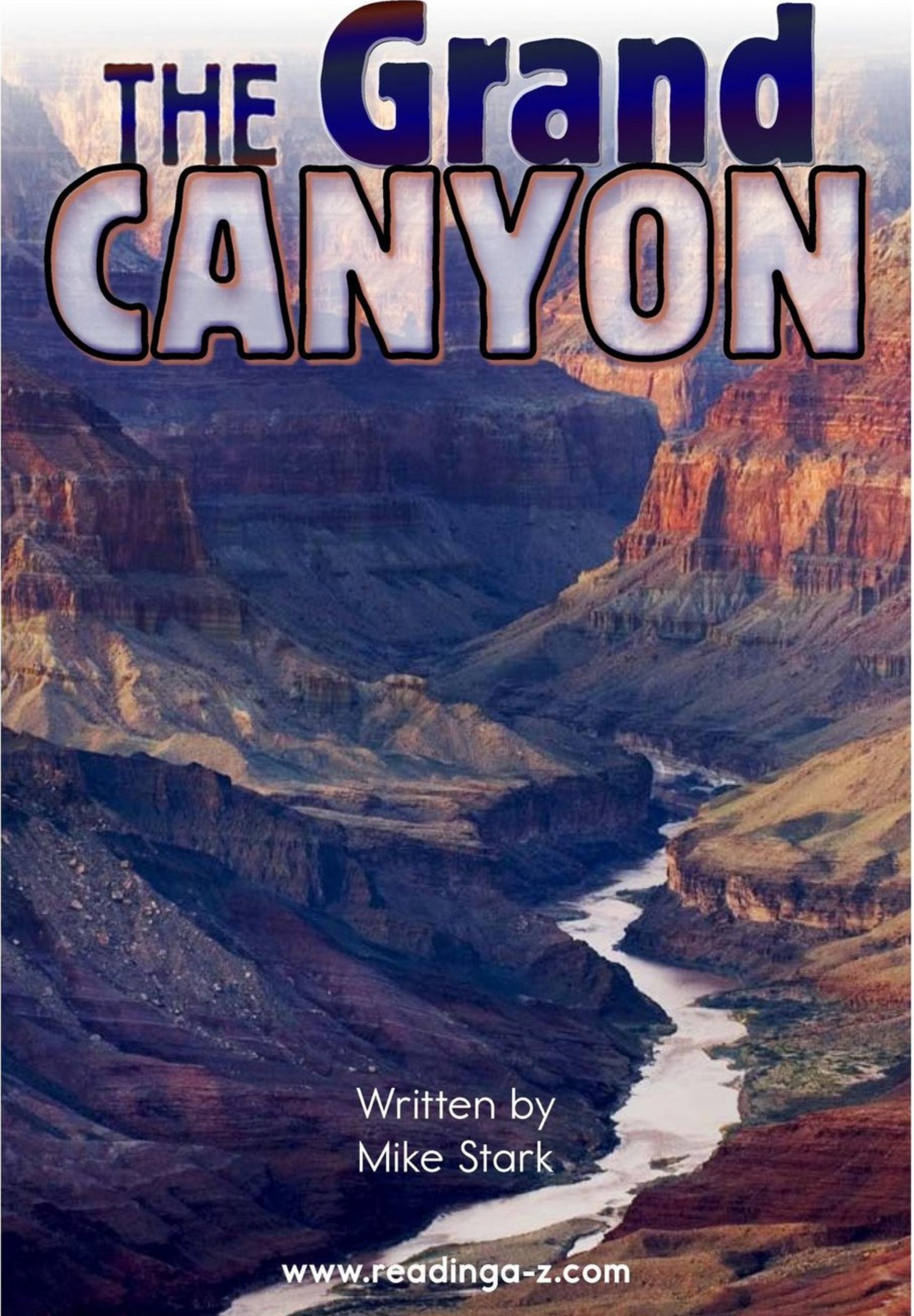
THE Grand CANYON

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level
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Written by Mike Stark

www.readinga-z.com

THE Grand CANYON

A wide-angle photograph of the Grand Canyon at sunset. The sky is filled with warm orange and yellow hues. The canyon walls, composed of layered rock, are illuminated from behind, creating a dramatic silhouette effect. The Colorado River flows through the bottom of the canyon, its path winding through the rock layers.

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Focus Question

What is the Grand Canyon,
and why is it special?

Words to Know

canyon

erosion

national park

Native Americans

protected

sediment

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Correlation

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Location of the Grand Canyon



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A Canyon So Grand

The **Grand Canyon** is so big that we can see it from space.

It became a **national park** in 1919.



The Grand Canyon is 277 miles (446 km) long and more than a mile (1.6 km) deep in some places.



Theodore Roosevelt was the first president to try to protect the Grand Canyon.

A national park is an area of **protected** land.

Incredible Condors

Don't forget to look up! The Grand Canyon is home to giant birds called California condors. These birds almost died out. People caught the birds and kept them safe so they could have babies. Today there are about four hundred living in the wild.

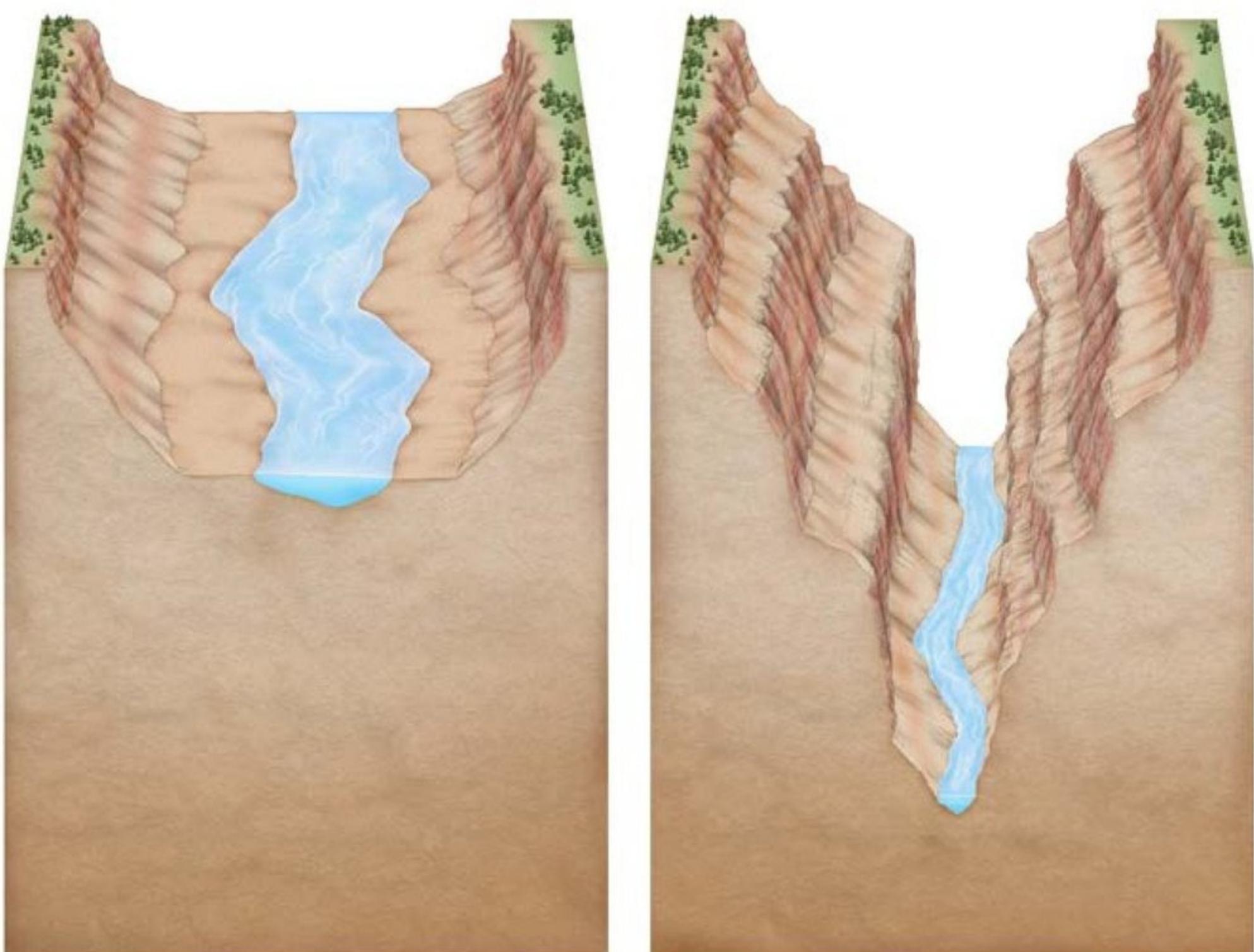


Formation

The Colorado River made the Grand Canyon through **erosion**.

Erosion happens when bits of the ground are worn away.

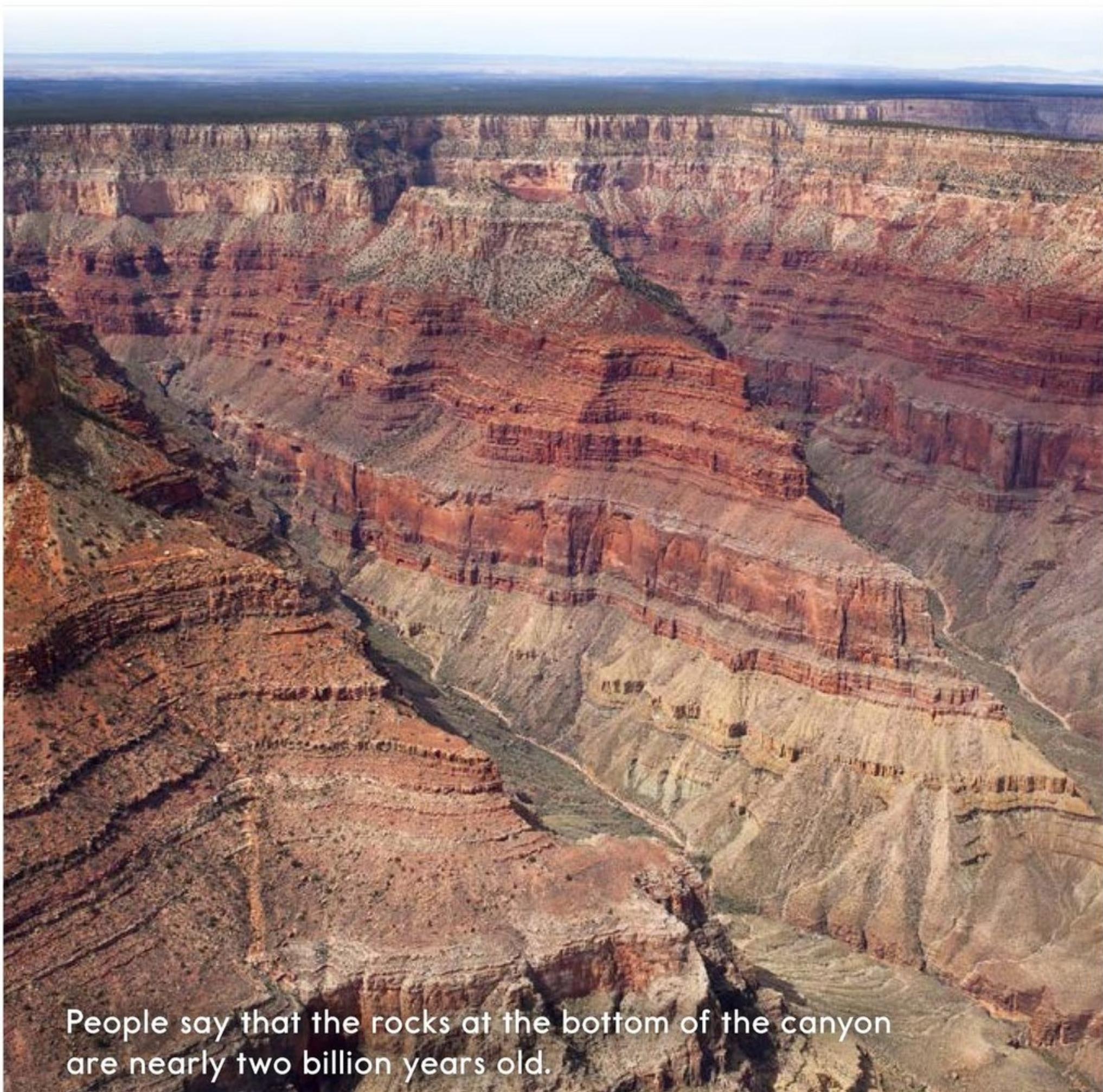
The river ran over the earth, and after many years, a canyon was made.



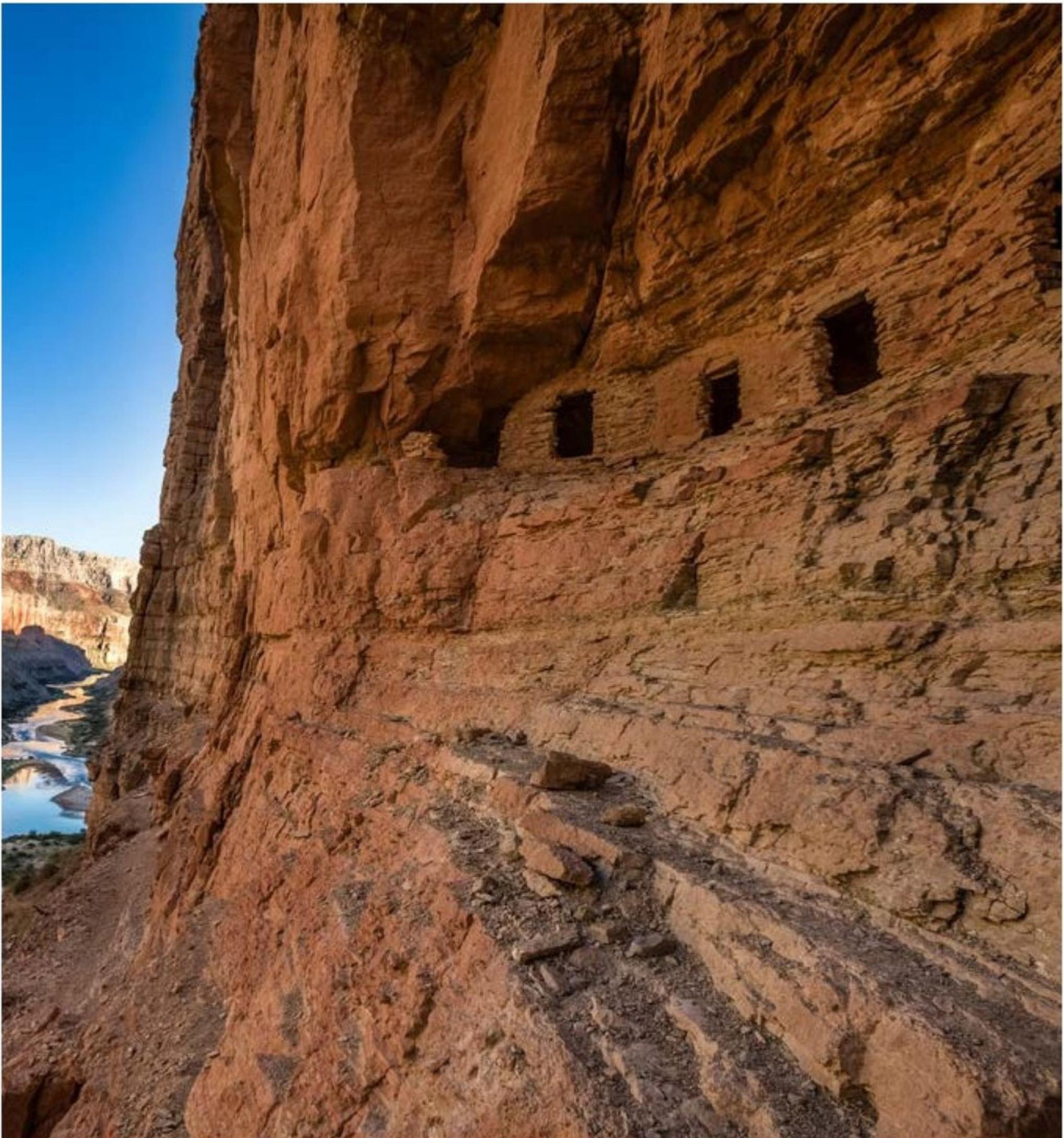
The Colorado River wears away soil, rock, and other materials, making the Grand Canyon deeper every day.

The Grand Canyon is striped with colors.

The stripes are layers of **sediment** that built up on top of each other. They show how Earth has changed over time.



People say that the rocks at the bottom of the canyon are nearly two billion years old.



Old Native American homes can be found in the cliffs of the canyon.

Exploration

Native Americans went to the Grand Canyon first.

People can still see some of their homes there.

In 1869, a group of Americans took the first reported trip through the canyon.



The group took a second trip down the river and helped make maps of the area.



The South Rim has many viewing points.

More people went to the Grand Canyon when it became a national park.

A Tale of Two Rims

The South Rim of the Grand Canyon is very popular. It is open every day of the year. Across the canyon is the North Rim, which is a long drive away for most people. The North Rim is much higher up, so it gets more snow. It is only open for the warmer months of the year.



Make Your Own Adventure

Many people go to the Grand Canyon every year.



Some people ride mules to the bottom of the canyon (top).
The Skywalk is a glass bridge that goes over the canyon for an amazing view (bottom).

Some people hike to the bottom
of the canyon.

They can walk around the bottom
of the canyon for weeks.



People can see waterfalls and pools at the bottom of the canyon.



The Colorado River can be rough, fast, and rocky in some places.

Some people raft
on the Colorado River.
The river is many miles long.

Some people walk by
the canyon rim.

The view from the rim is amazing.



People who want to take short hikes may walk along
the easier rim trails.



Big horn sheep and many other animals are protected in the Grand Canyon.

A Natural Wonder

The Grand Canyon will be protected for years to come. People who go there are in for a view like nothing else.



The national park is a beautiful sight in winter.

Glossary

canyon (n.)	a deep valley with steep sides that is usually formed by a river (p. 4)
erosion (n.)	the wearing away of rock or soil by water, wind, or ice (p. 6)
national park	an area of land that is protected for its historic importance or natural landscape and wildlife (p. 4)
Native Americans (n.)	people whose ancestors lived in the Americas before Europeans arrived (p. 8)
protected (adj.)	guarded or defended from harm or danger (p. 5)
sediment (n.)	pieces of dirt and rock that are carried by water, wind, or ice and left elsewhere (p. 7)

The Grand Canyon

A Reading A-Z Level H Leveled Book

Word Count: 213

Connections

Writing and Art

What would you like to do at the Grand Canyon? Why? Draw a picture and write five or more sentences about it.

Social Studies

Trace the Colorado River on a map.

List which states it flows through or between.

The logo for Reading A-Z, featuring the word "Reading" in a large, red, sans-serif font with a stylized sun icon above the letter "i", and "A-Z" in a smaller, red, sans-serif font.

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