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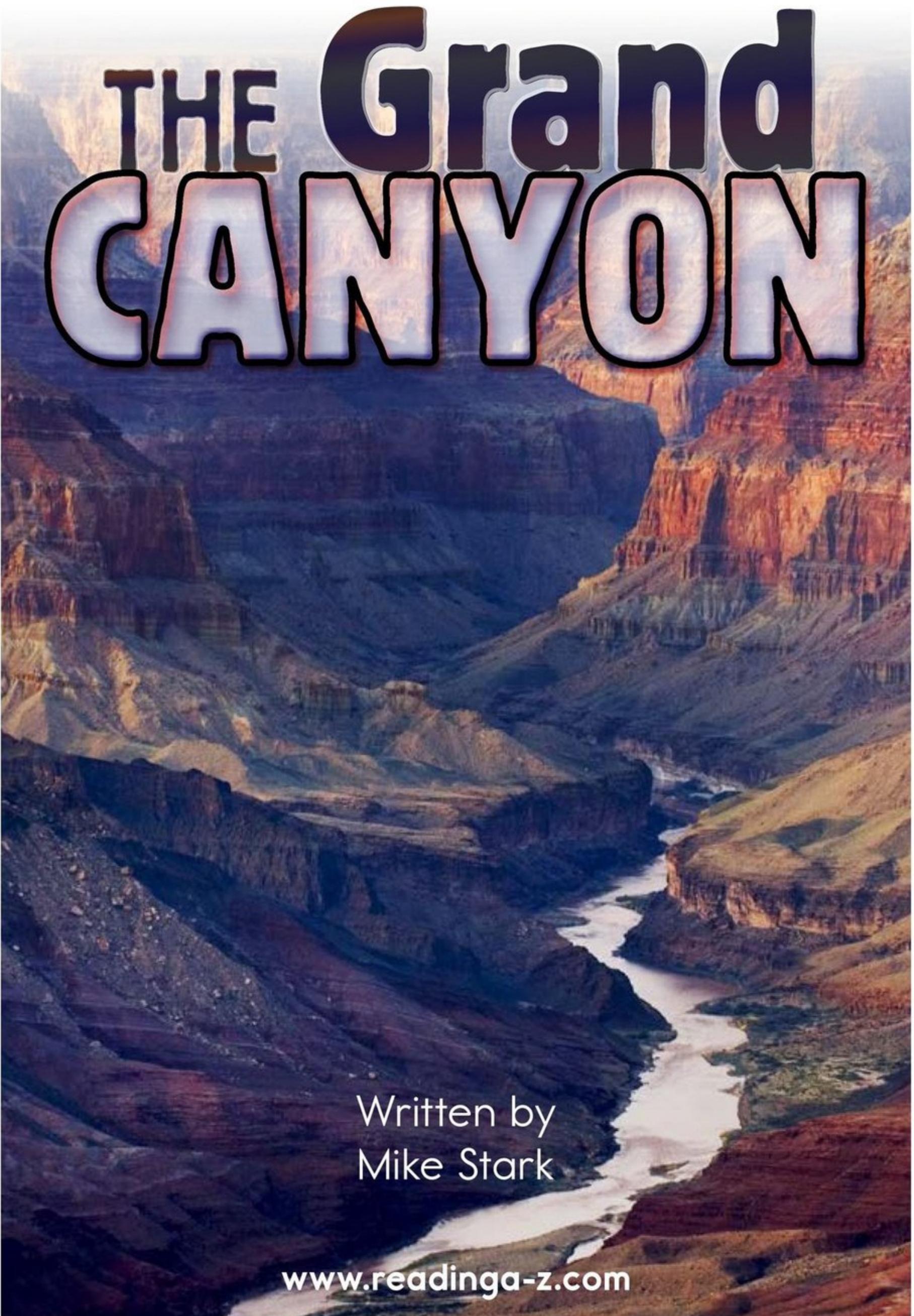
THE Grand CANYON

MULTI
level
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Written by Mike Stark

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THE Grand CANYON



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Focus Question

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

Words to Know

dangerous
erosion
national park

protected
sediment
tribes

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LEVEL K	
Fountas & Pinnell	J
Reading Recovery	17
DRA	18

Location of the Grand Canyon



Table of Contents

A Canyon So Grand	4
Formation	7
Exploration	9
Make Your Own Adventure	12
A Natural Wonder	15
Glossary	16



Many people consider the Grand Canyon to be one of the natural wonders of the world.

A Canyon So Grand

The Grand Canyon, located in the Arizona desert, is so big that we can see it from space.

A canyon is a big, steep valley that is usually formed by a river. The Grand Canyon **National Park** covers about 1,900 square miles (4,921 sq km). In some places the canyon is more than a mile (1.6 km) deep. It can take two weeks to go through the canyon on a river raft.



The canyon walls are made from rocks that are millions of years old.



Theodore Roosevelt was the first president to make steps toward protecting the Grand Canyon.

The Grand Canyon became a national park in 1919. National parks are special places. The land and the animals that live there are **protected**.

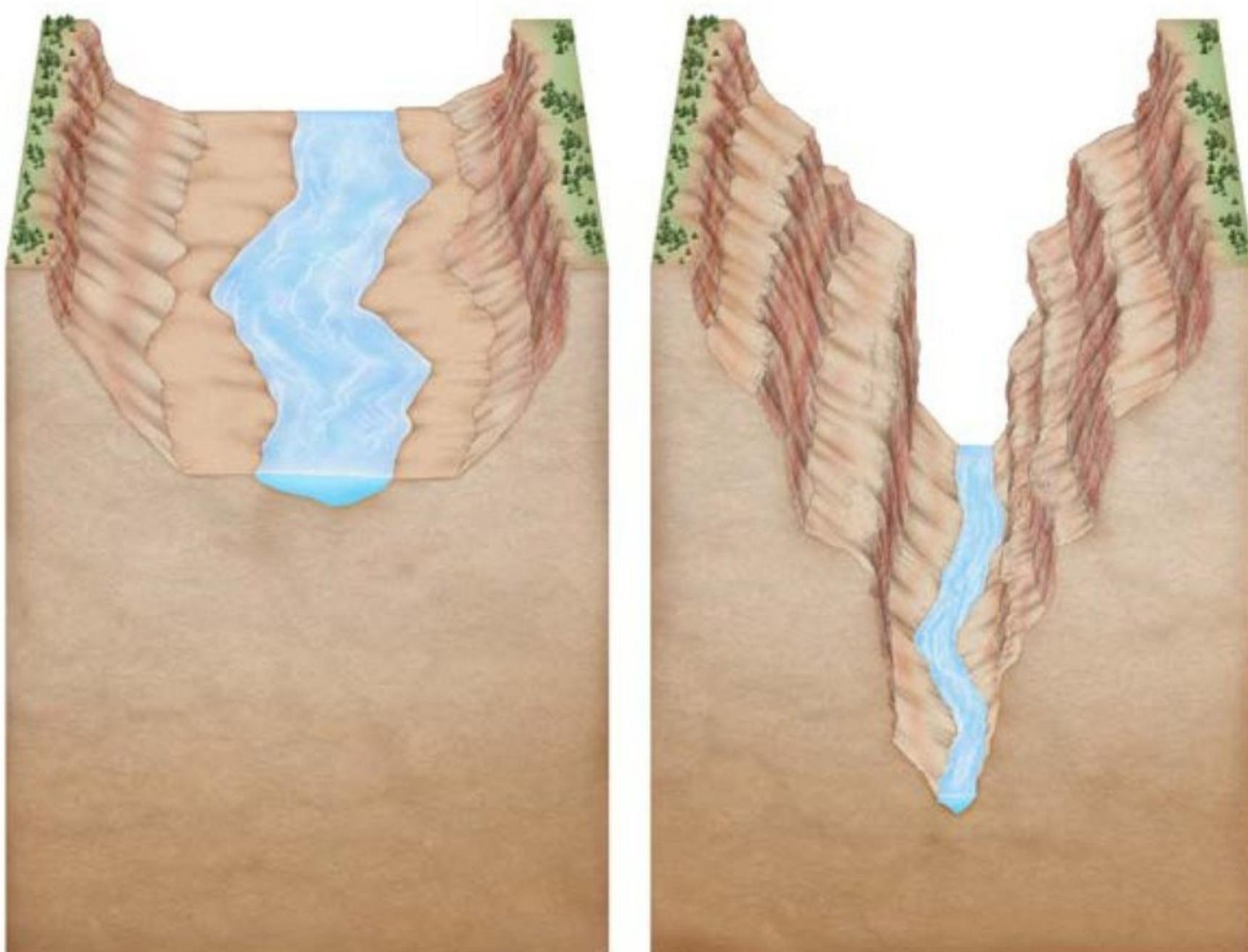
Incredible Condors

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 California condors living in the wild.



Formation

Time and **erosion** helped form the Grand Canyon. Erosion happens when bits of the ground are worn away. For millions of years, the Colorado River ran over and wore away the earth until a canyon was made. The rocks at the bottom of the canyon are almost two billion years old.



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 stacked on top of each other over many years. Each layer helps us learn how Earth has changed over time.



Nearly forty rock layers form the walls of the Grand Canyon.

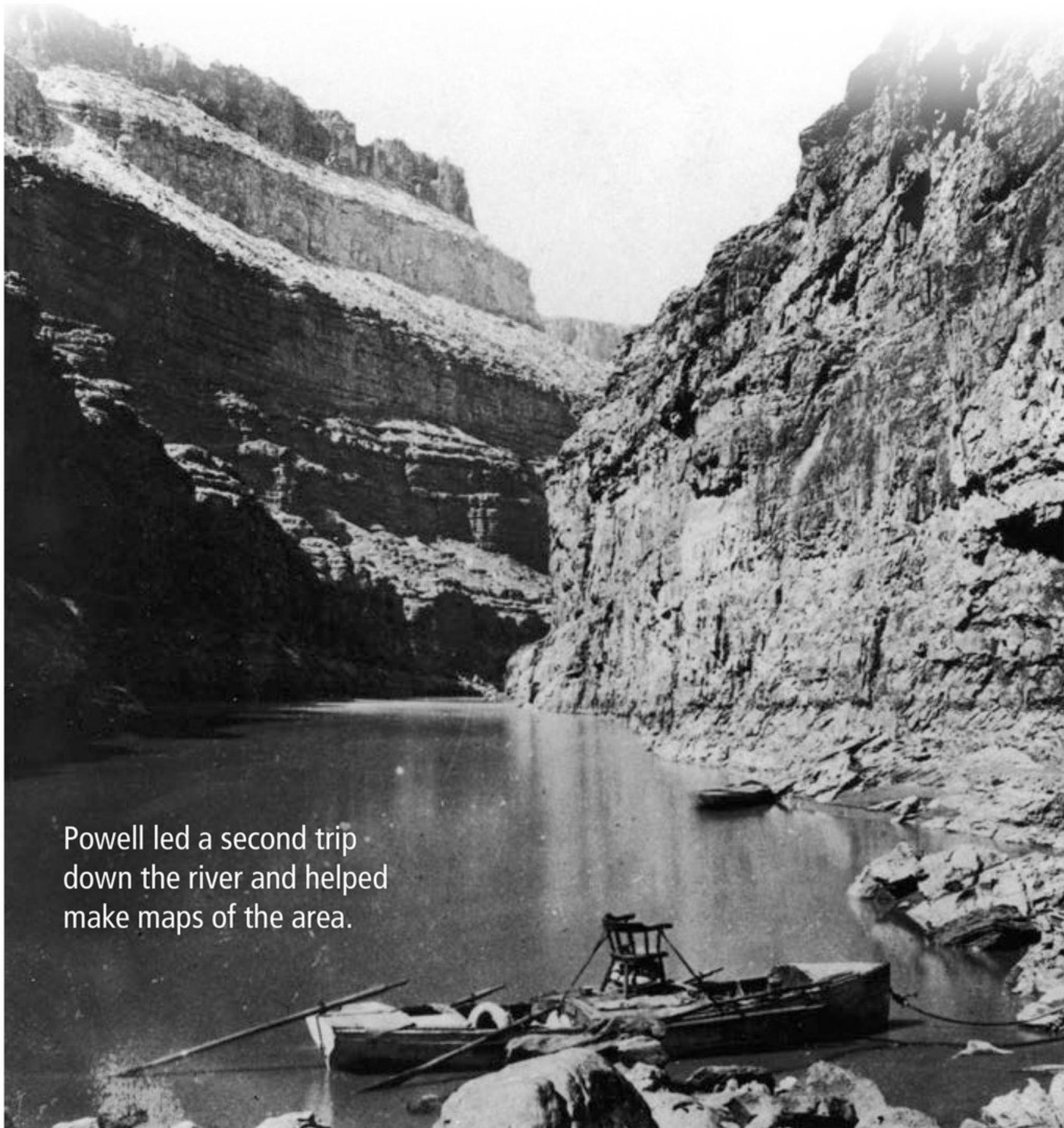


Old Native American homes can still be seen in the cliffs today.

Exploration

Native Americans have been coming to the Grand Canyon for at least twelve thousand years. Many **tribes** lived in the area. They camped, hunted, and grew food there. They built into the sides of the canyon.

In the 1850s, Americans had not seen much of the Grand Canyon. In 1869, John Wesley Powell led a **dangerous** trip down the Colorado River. It was the first recorded trip of its kind.



Powell led a second trip down the river and helped make maps of the area.



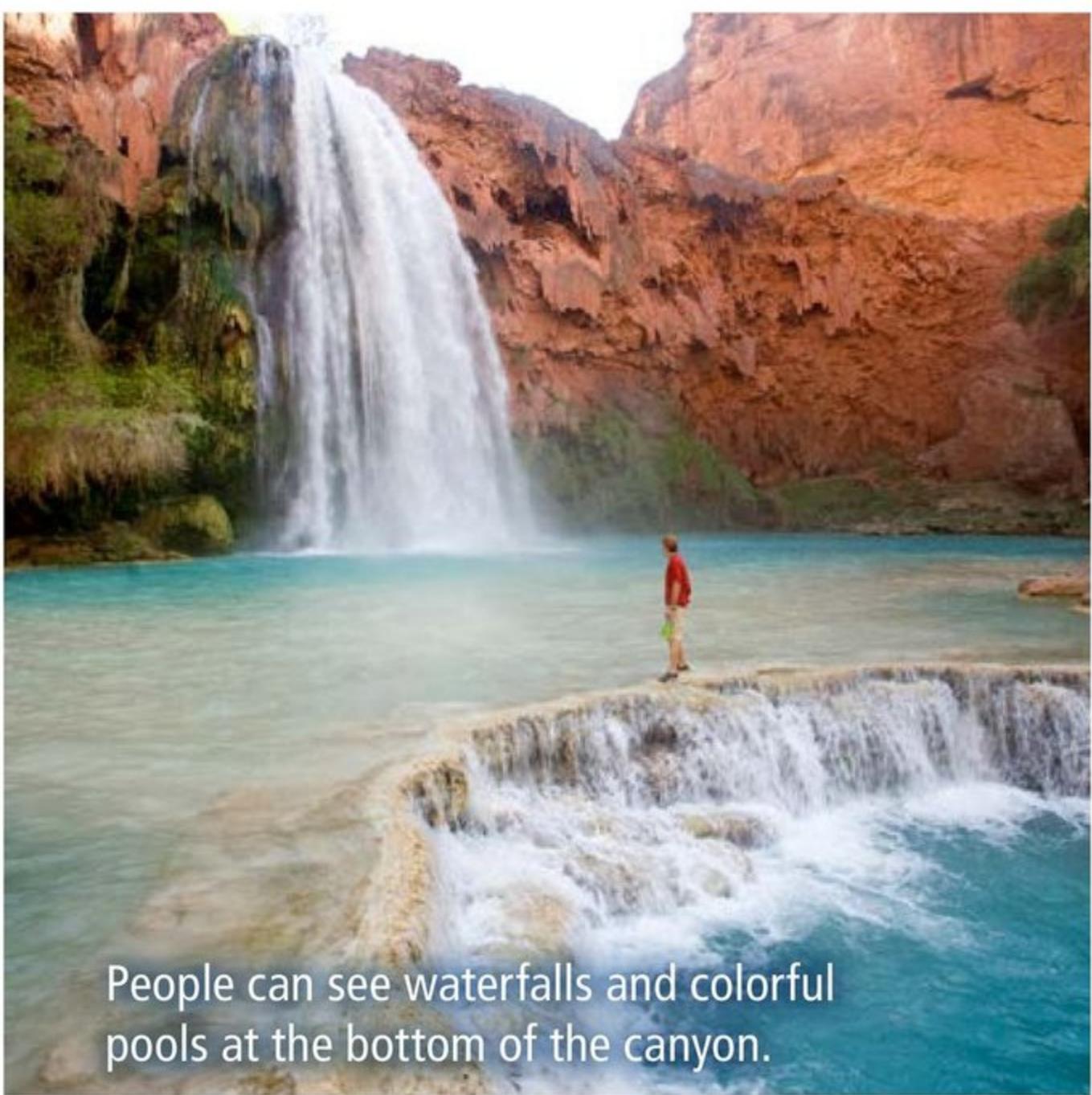
The South Rim has many popular viewing points.

After the United States made it a national park, more people took trips to the Grand Canyon.

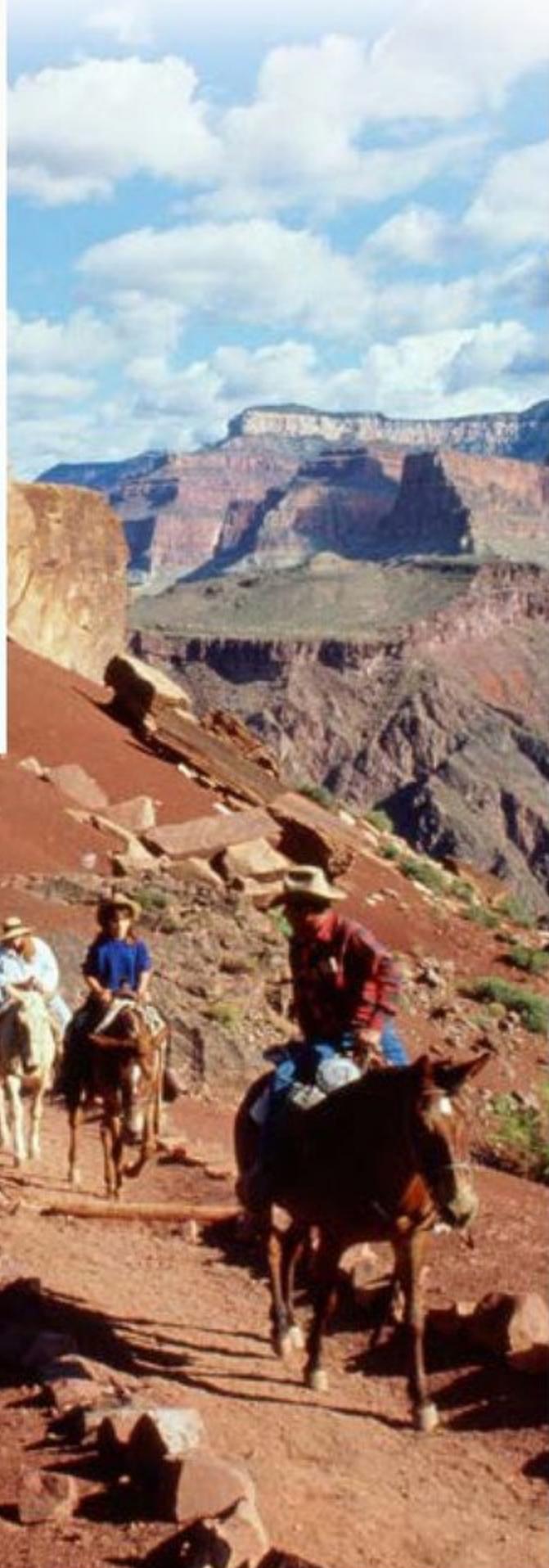
A Tale of Two Rims

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 in the warmer months of the year.





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

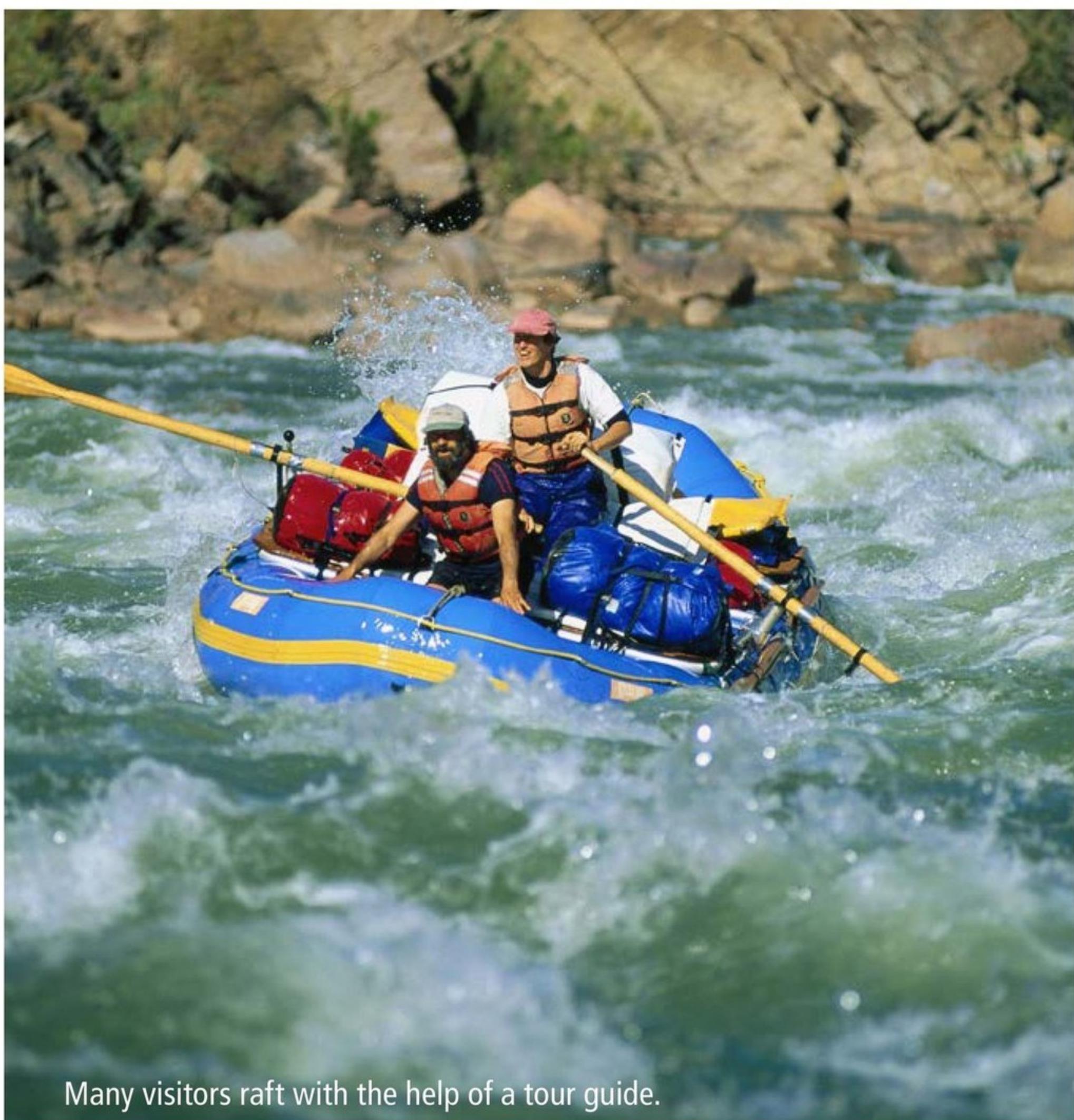


Some people ride mules into the canyon.

Make Your Own Adventure

Today, millions of people visit Grand Canyon National Park. Some people hike to the bottom of the canyon and explore for weeks.

People like to raft on the Colorado River. The river winds through the canyon for about 277 miles (446 km). It can be rough, fast, and rocky, making for a grand adventure.



Many visitors raft with the help of a tour guide.



More than 250 people are rescued from the canyon each year. People who want to take short hikes may walk along the easier rim trails.

People also love to walk on trails along the rim of the canyon. They can look out at miles of red and yellow walls and watch shadows move across the cliffs.



The Skywalk is a glass bridge that stretches over the canyon for an amazing view.



Big horn sheep are one of many kinds
of animals that are protected in the Grand Canyon.

A Natural Wonder

The Grand Canyon is one of the most amazing sights in nature. Its land, animals, and history will be protected for years to come. Everyone who visits this national park is in for an adventure—and a view—unlike anything else.



The national park is a beautiful sight in winter.

Glossary

dangerous <i>(adj.)</i>	able or likely to cause harm (p. 10)
erosion (<i>n.</i>)	the natural removal of rock or soil by water, wind, or ice (p. 7)
national park <i>(n.)</i>	an area of government-owned land protected for its historic importance or natural landscape and wildlife (p. 5)
protected (<i>adj.</i>)	guarded or defended from harm or danger (p. 6)
sediment (<i>n.</i>)	particles of dirt and rock that are carried by water, wind, or ice and deposited elsewhere (p. 8)
tribes (<i>n.</i>)	groups of people who share a culture and land (p. 9)

The Grand Canyon

A Reading A-Z Level K Leveled Book

Word Count: 394

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.

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