

LEVELED BOOK • M

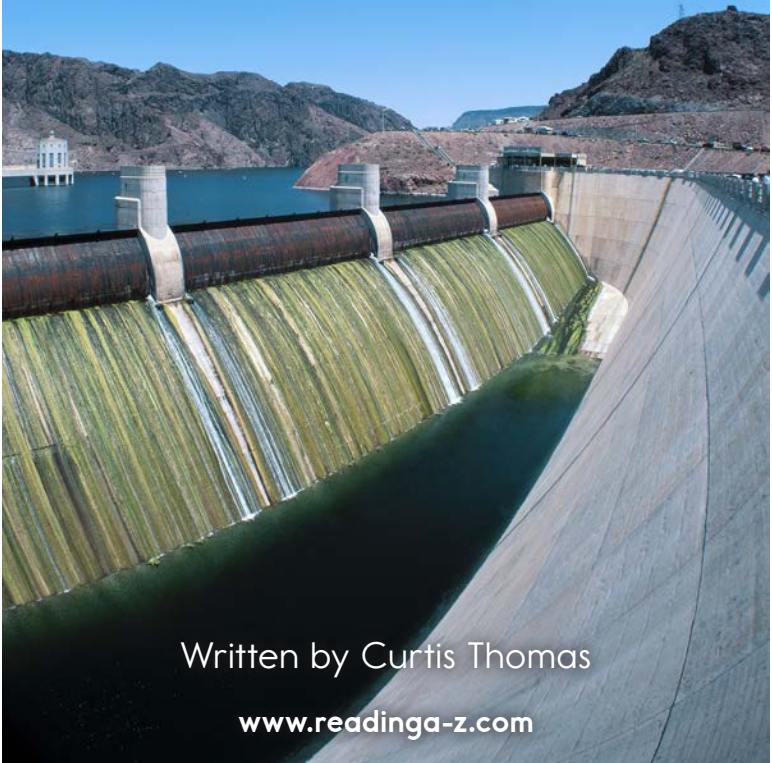
Hoover Dam



Written by Curtis Thomas

www.readinga-z.com

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Focus Question

Why is Hoover Dam an important place in the United States?



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More than five million barrels of cement were used to build Hoover Dam.



A Mighty Dam

When Hoover Dam was built in the 1930s, it was the tallest dam in the world. The dam is as tall as a sixty-story building!

Hoover Dam is on the Colorado River. The dam controls the flow of the river's water. The dam's **power plant** uses the water to make **electricity**.

Dry Desert

Hoover Dam is on the border between Arizona and Nevada. It is about 30 miles (48 km) from the city of Las Vegas. Hoover Dam is in a very dry desert. The dam is in a deep, narrow valley between mountains.

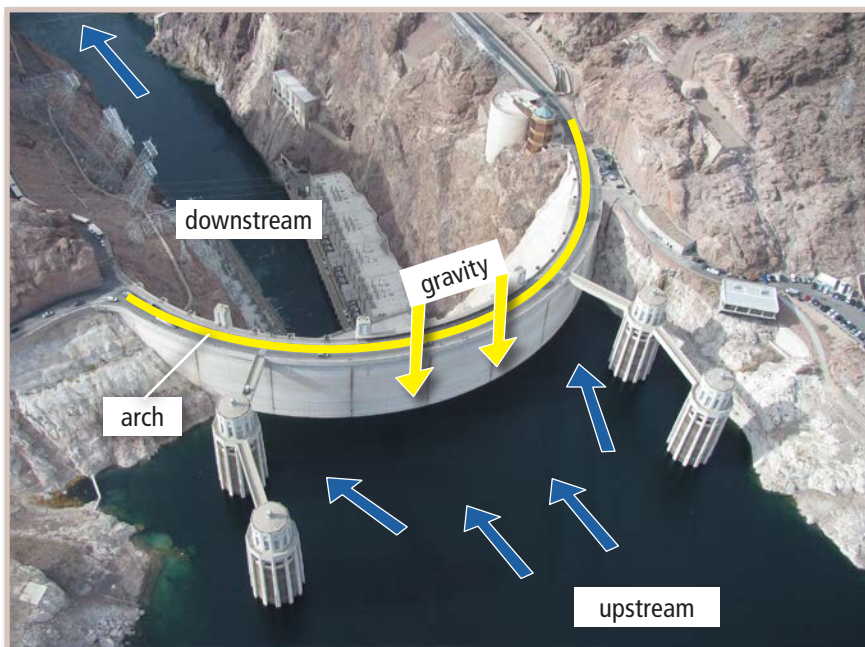




Strong Dam, Huge Lake

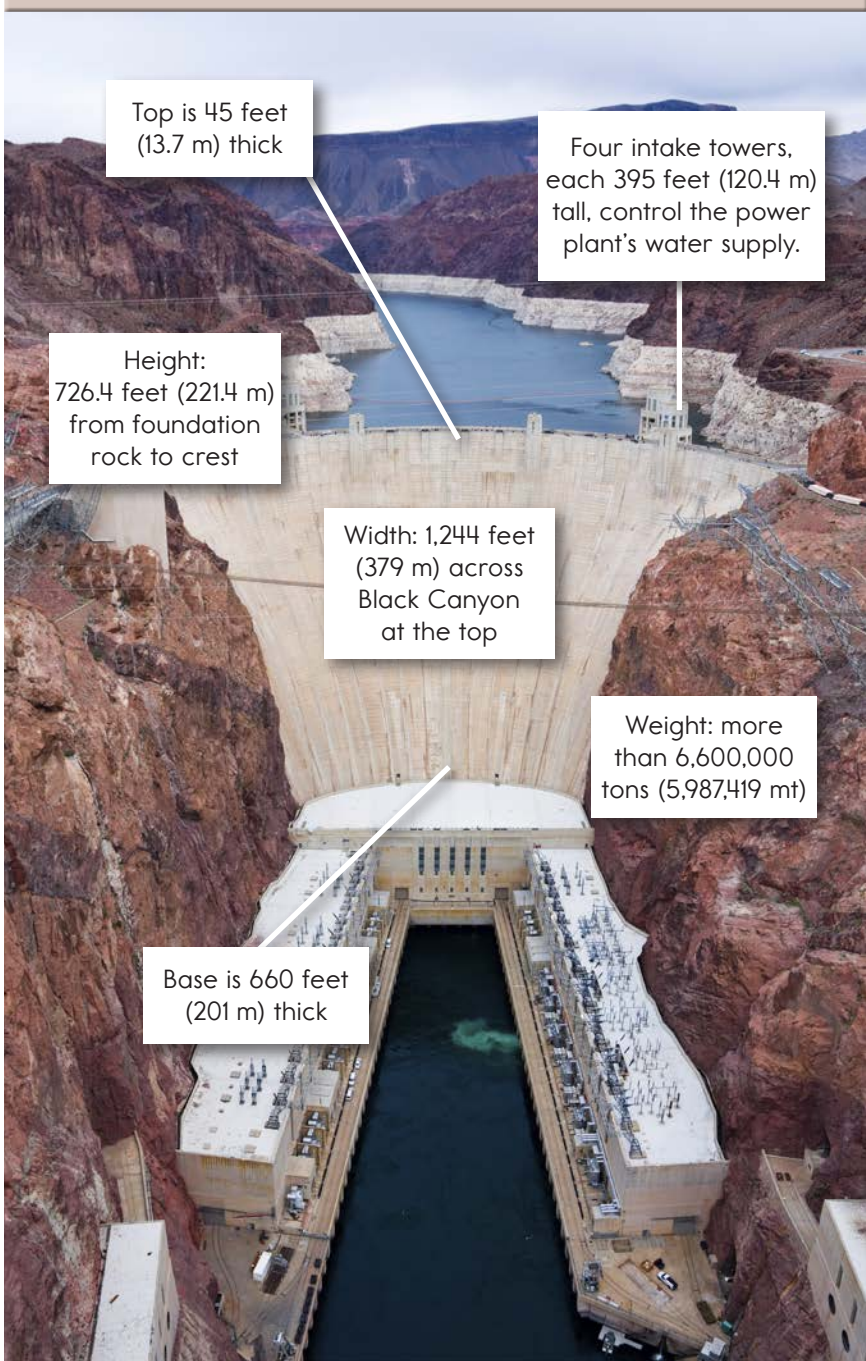
The Colorado River flows downhill to Hoover Dam. The dam stops the water from flowing quickly. Water collects above the dam to form Lake Mead. It is the biggest lake in the United States made by people.

Water has a lot of force when it flows downhill. Hoover Dam is very heavy so it can stay strong when the water hits it. The dam is curved to move the water to the two sides of the **canyon**. A power plant near the dam changes the force of the moving water into electricity.



Hoover Dam's shape and size help hold the water back.

Parts of Hoover Dam





Hoover Dam helped farmers have a steady supply of water for their crops.

Solving a Problem

People have been growing crops along the Colorado River for many years. The river used to flood in spring and wash away the crops. People built dams on the river to stop the flooding. Hoover Dam was the first of those dams.

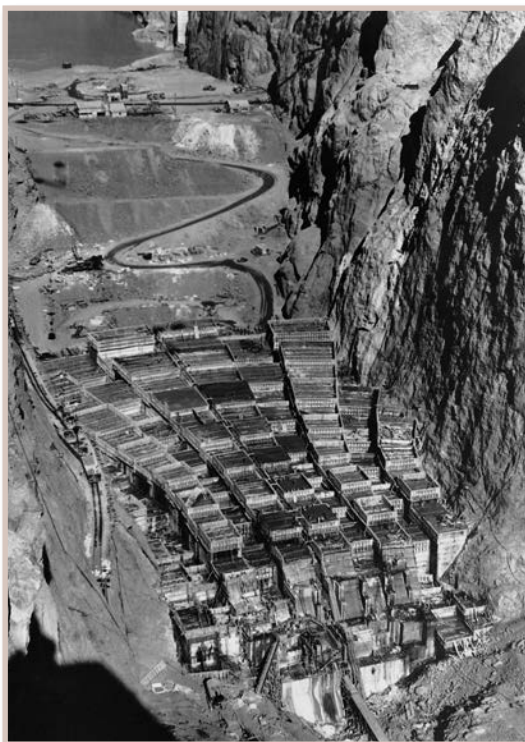


Workers used dynamite to dig the tunnels. The work was hot and unsafe.

Building the Dam

The project began in 1931. Workers had to make the river go around where Hoover Dam would be built. They dug four tunnels, and they also built huge walls above and below where the dam would be. After they finished, the water flowed into the tunnels and out lower down. Then workers moved rocks and mud away to make room for the dam.

Workers used giant **molds** to build the dam. They dumped huge buckets of **concrete** into each mold. Cold water ran through small pipes so each block of concrete would cool quickly. After each block was cool, workers built another block on top of it. Later, they sealed the stacks of blocks with **grout**.



Hoover Dam was built in small sections. It was like building with a giant Lego set.

Hoover Dam



If the river ever flooded, the water would ruin the power plant. Workers built two places for the water to go if it got very high. Those places are called *spillways*.

Finally, workers built the power plant and four towers. The towers control how much water goes to the power plant at a time.

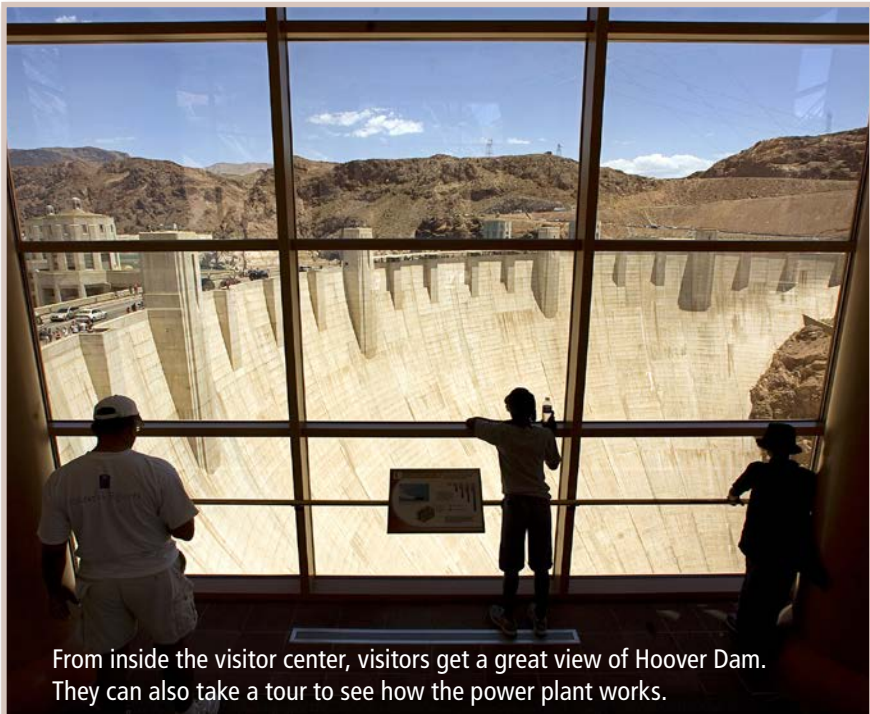
All the work was finished in 1936. The project took about five years. Building Hoover Dam was hard, unsafe work. Many workers lost their lives during the project.



President Roosevelt gave a speech at the dam after it was finished. He said it was "the greatest dam in the world."

Seeing the Dam

Millions of people see Hoover Dam every year. The visitor center has displays about the area and how the dam was built. People can go inside the dam and power plant. At Lake Mead, they can go fishing and boating. Take a camera if you go. There's a lot to see!



From inside the visitor center, visitors get a great view of Hoover Dam. They can also take a tour to see how the power plant works.



Lights come on in the evening, making Hoover Dam even more beautiful.

Hoover Dam Today

Hoover Dam changed many people's lives. The river's water helps crops grow in dry areas of the United States. The power plant makes electricity for over a million people.

Other dams have been built on the Colorado River since the 1930s. But Hoover Dam was the first, and it's still the biggest!

Glossary

canyon (<i>n.</i>)	a deep valley with steep sides that is usually formed by a river (p. 7)
concrete (<i>n.</i>)	a building material that hardens when dry, made by mixing cement, sand, and broken rocks with water (p. 11)
electricity (<i>n.</i>)	an electric current that is used as a source of power (p. 4)
grout (<i>n.</i>)	a paste or mortar used to fill in the spaces between building materials, such as tiles (p. 11)
molds (<i>n.</i>)	hollow containers that give shape to things pressed or poured into them (p. 11)
power plant (<i>n.</i>)	a building or complex that produces electricity for an area or region (p. 4)

Words to Know

canyon

concrete

electricity

grout

molds

power plant

Front cover: Hoover Dam is on the Colorado River between Arizona and Nevada.

Back cover: Four tall towers are part of the dam.

Title page: Spillways keep the dam from overflowing.

Page 3: People can take tours and go inside the dam to see how it works.

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World Landmarks
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Correlation

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Hoover Dam

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Word Count: 527

Connections

Writing

Write a paragraph about the importance of Hoover Dam. Include a main idea and at least three supporting details from this book in your paragraph.

Social Studies

Make a map of the southwestern part of the United States, including California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico. Label each state and include each state's capital. Include a map key and compass rose. Mark the locations of the Colorado River and Hoover Dam on your map.

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