ARIZONA

THE GRAND CANYON STATE *Became a state February 14, 1912 (48th)*

Arizona is a land of red rock canyons, giant cactus and pine-covered mountains. People have lived here for thousands of years, and 22 Native nations call it home today.



Why the Grand Canyon State?

The Grand Canyon is 277 miles long, up to 18 miles wide and more than a mile deep. The Colorado River began carving it about five or six million years ago, cutting a little deeper year after year. Its walls are like a history book made of rock. The layers at the very bottom are nearly two billion years old.



A Castle Named by Mistake

About 900 years ago, the Sinagua people began building a home with five stories and twenty rooms high in a cliff. They climbed to it on ladders. Settlers who saw it in the 1860s wrongly linked it to the Aztec ruler Montezuma. He never came near it. Some Hopi clans and other Native nations count the builders among their ancestors.



Navajo Land, Navajo Code

The red towers of Monument Valley stand on the Navajo Nation, the largest reservation in the country. It covers more than 27,000 square miles in three states. During World War II, Navajo Marines called Code Talkers sent secret radio messages using words from the Navajo language. The enemy never broke the code.



The Five Cs

Arizona schoolchildren learn the five Cs that built their state: copper, cattle, cotton, citrus and climate. Copper comes first. Arizona mines more of it than all the other states put together, and much of it becomes the wire that carries electricity. Citrus means lemons and oranges. Climate means the sunshine that brings visitors every winter.



The Town Named Tombstone

In 1877, Ed Schieffelin went looking for silver in the hills of southeastern Arizona. The story goes that soldiers told him all he would find was his own tombstone. He found silver instead and named his claim Tombstone. A rough mining town grew up nearby. In 1881 it saw the most famous gunfight of the Old West, near the O.K. Corral.



London Bridge in the Desert

By the 1960s, London Bridge in England was slowly sinking into the River Thames, so the city sold it. Robert McCulloch, who was building a new town in the Arizona desert, bought it in 1968 for about 2.5 million dollars. Workers numbered its outer stones, shipped them across the ocean and fitted them onto a new concrete frame.

BY THE NUMBERS

Population	About 7.6 million (14th most)
Size	About 114,000 square miles (6th largest)
Highest point	Humphreys Peak, 12,633 feet
Counties	15
Neighbors	California, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, Colorado at one corner, and Mexico to the south

DID YOU KNOW?

- A saguaro cactus is usually 50 to 70 years old before it grows its first arm.
- Most of Arizona never changes its clocks for daylight saving time. The Navajo Nation does.
- The palo verde, Arizona's state tree, has green bark. The bark can make food from sunlight, the way leaves do.
- At Four Corners, you can stand in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado at the same time.

FIND IT ON THE MAP

1. Which city is both the capital and the largest city?
2. Which city is closest to the London Bridge?
3. How many rooms does Montezuma Castle have?

Answers: 1. Phoenix 2. Lake Havasu City 3. Twenty