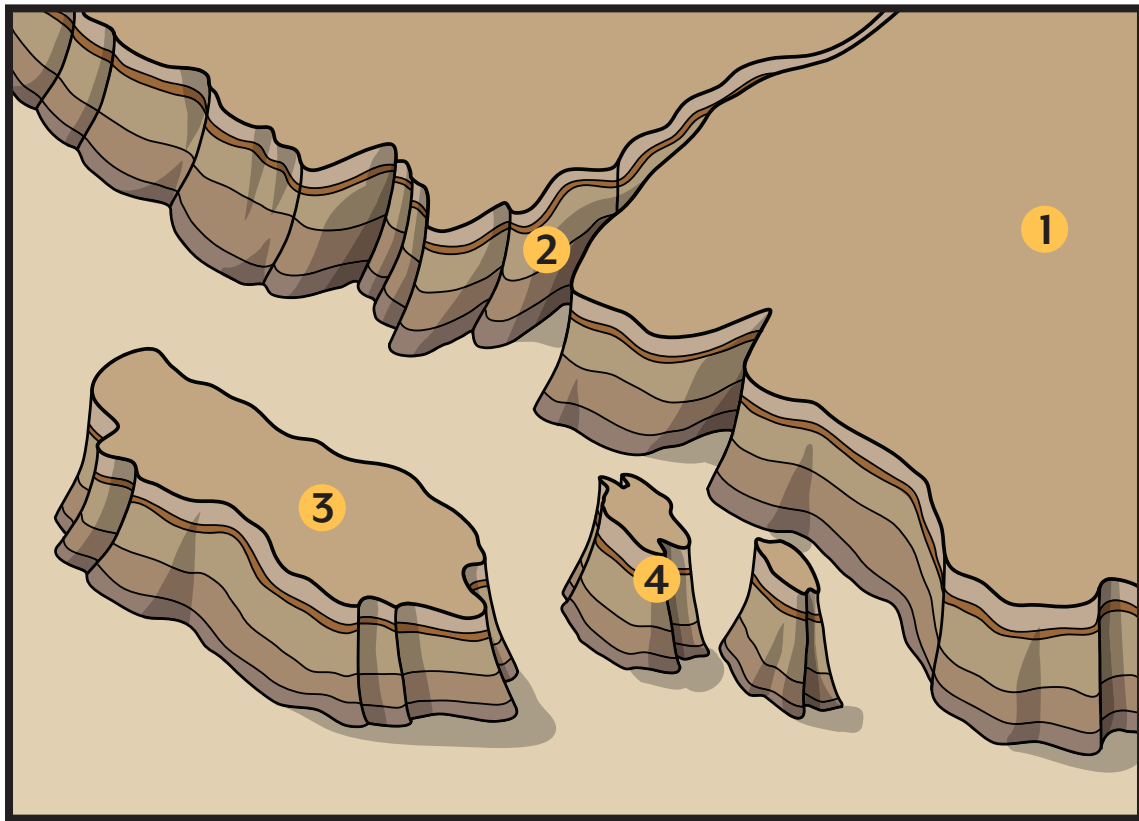


Plateaus

A **plateau** is a large, flat area of land that is raised higher than the surrounding land. They are usually caused by uplift through tectonic action, and then are worn down by wind and water, forming canyons, mesas, buttes and other formations.

Landscape Labeling!

Read the following two pages about buttes, mesas and canyons. Use what you learned to label this landscape.



- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

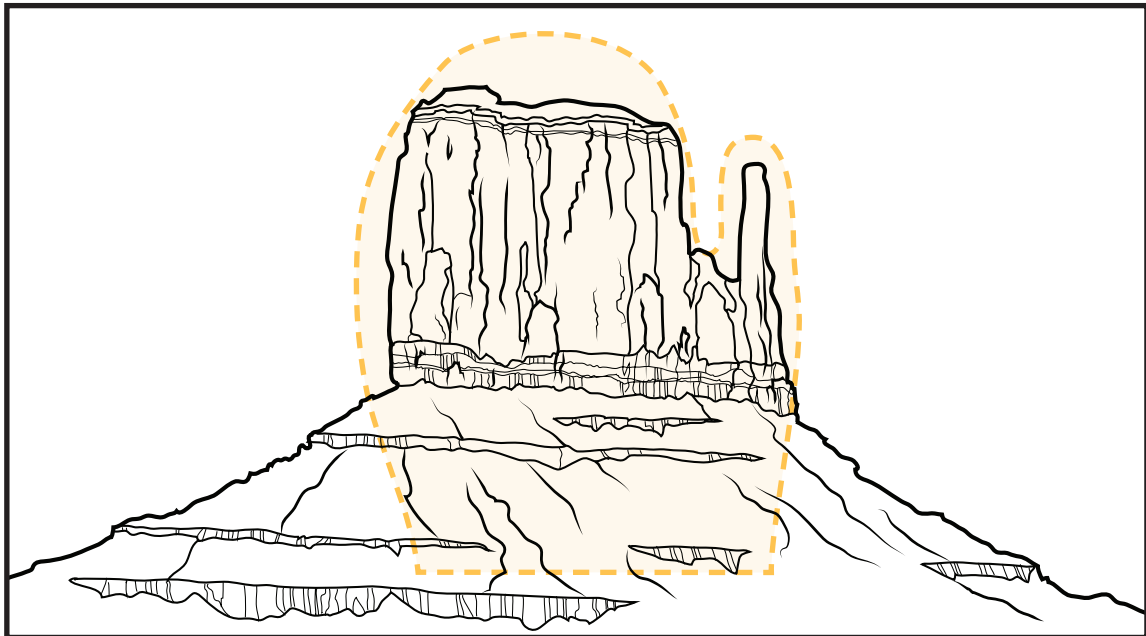


Did you know? The layers of rock seen in the walls of the Grand Canyon, located on the Colorado Plateau, were deposited over millions of years. Erosion and weathering from the Colorado River have exposed these ancient rock layers. The bottom of the canyon contains the oldest layers: the Vishnu, Brahma, and Rama Schists. These layers were formed between 1.73 and 1.75 billion years ago, during the Precambrian period!

Buttes

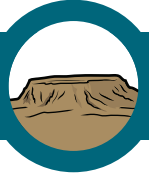


A **butte** is a tall, steep-sided hill, with a top that is narrower than its height. Buttes look like rock towers.

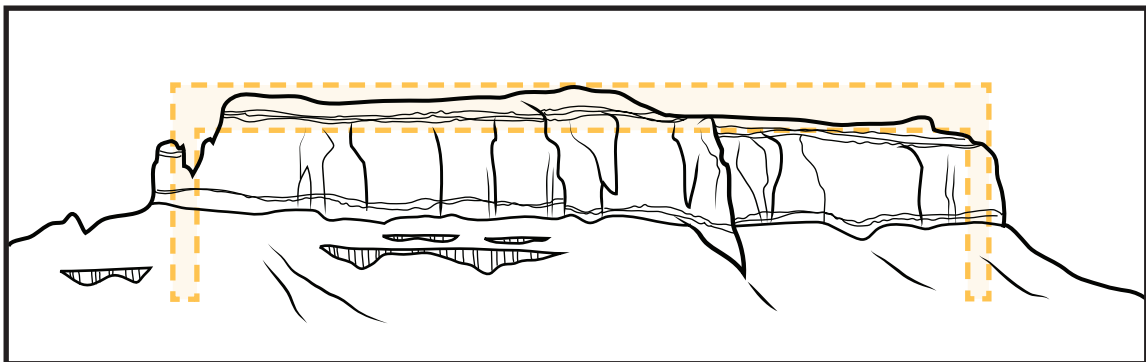


West Mitten Butte in Monument Valley, located on the border of Arizona and Utah, got its name from its unique shape, which looks just like a mitten. In fact, there is a matching East Mitten Butte nearby, making a pair!

Mesas



A **mesa** is a steep sided hill with a flat top that is wider than it is tall. *Mesa* is Spanish for table, so these features are sometimes nicknamed “table tops.”



Sentinel Mesa in Monument Valley is a good example of a mesa, because you can clearly see the table shape.