



**Title:** *Landscape of Florida*

**Artist:** Peter Moran (1841-1915)

**Date:** 1880

**Size:** framed: 16 3/8 x 13 3/8 in. ; image: 10 5/8 x 7 7/8 in.

**Medium:** Etching

**Acquisition #:** 2000.5.79

**Additional works in the collection by the artist?:**

Yes: X    No:



### Artist's Biography

In 1844, three years after his birth in Bolton, Lancashire, England, Peter Moran was brought to America by his parents as the youngest of four brothers. At the age of sixteen he was apprenticed by his father in lithographic printing at Messrs. Herline & Hersel of Philadelphia. He was disinterested in trade work, however, and succeeded in getting his indenture cancelled after picking a serious argument with his employers. As a result, he chose to go to his brothers' studio (Thomas and Edward) to study painting — specifically landscapes, Thomas's concentration, and marine paintings, Edward's focus. Peter Moran came to be known for his paintings and etchings, especially his landscapes and animal subjects, and in 1876 he was awarded for his most notable work, *Return of the Herd*, at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition. In 1914, Moran passed away as one of the founders of the Art Club of Philadelphia and the president of the Society of Etchers.

### Peter Moran and the 19th-Century American Landscape

The emergence of the Hudson River School of landscape painting in the mid-19th century resulted in a romanticized view of the American landscape. These romantic landscape paintings idealized nature and created scenes of grandiose scale and epic proportion. Although Peter Moran worked in the same studio as his older brother Thomas (1837-1926), who painted many romantic landscapes (particularly of the West), Peter quickly became inspired by the more realistic landscape paintings gaining popularity in Europe. Peter Moran's landscapes continue the romantic tradition of beautiful, meticulously planned landscape composition and rendering, but eschew utopian grandiosity in favor of a more intimate realism featuring animal subjects such as wildlife and farm animals. In this etching, for instance, the viewer can find herons walking among the grasses. Floridian landscapes are rare in 19th-century art due to the state's large swaths of seemingly impenetrable swampland, but in 1877 Peter's brother Thomas travelled to St. Augustine and returned with sketches and watercolor studies to use in his New Jersey studio. It can be speculated that Peter either made a similar trip himself or may have worked from his brother's studies to create this etching.

### The Etching Process

Originating in Germany, etching involves a simple process of incision accompanied by a complex procedure of printing the plate. Through the use of a metal plate, ground, and needle, etching is completed by laying the ground (acid-resistant wax) on the plate and then cutting designs into the wax layer with the etching needle. The metal exposed by the incisions is marked when the plate is bathed in acid. These markings deepen the longer the plate is left in the acid, which will result in bolder, darker lines on the final print. Afterwards, the ground is cleaned off the plate and the image can be printed by spreading ink across the plate, wiping away excess to leave ink only in the incisions, and pressing the plate against a piece of paper with a heavy roller.

Right: lines are etched through the wax layer on a metal plate using an etching needle. The final image will be printed in reverse using ink on a piece of paper.



### Resources

<https://americanart.si.edu/artist/peter-moran-3405>      <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20569219>  
<http://www.morsemuseum.org/on-exhibit/landscape-in-nineteenth-century-america>  
[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/etch/hd\\_etch.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/etch/hd_etch.htm)      <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25588451>  
<http://www.vivavaquero.com/etching-tutorial-by-deborah-kunic> (source of righthand etching image)

Completed Summer  
2018 by Dakyung Ham  
and Ridley Thomas

## K-5 Lesson Plan: Floridian Landscapes

**Time to Complete:** Several days (based on time spent on nature walk).

### Session Objectives:

1. Students will analyze their surroundings to identify the major characteristics of Florida's landscape.
2. Students will incorporate ideas inspired by their surrounding landscape into their artwork.

**Materials:** Image of Peter Moran's *Landscape of Florida* etching, drawing paper (any size), colored pencils, markers, crayons, camera.

**Activity:** Peter Moran was inspired by the specific details in landscapes when creating his artworks. The students will examine his *Landscape of Florida* etching and observe the way he incorporated various features such as plants and animals into his artwork. The teacher will then lead the students outside to observe the scenery and take pictures. Thomas Moran, Peter Moran's brother, explored St. Augustine in 1877, and he returned to his studio with sketches depicting his observations. Peter Moran may have based his Florida landscape on his brother's studies. Similarly, the teacher will have the students use the pictures taken from the class's nature walk as the basis for creating their own artworks that display their views of the Florida landscape they observed.

### Procedure:

1. The students will view Peter Moran's *Landscape of Florida* to analyze an example of an artwork depicting Florida's flora and fauna.
2. The students will brainstorm elements of nature (especially plants and animals) they have seen daily or at specific times and locations in Florida.
3. The teacher and the students will go outside in the area surrounding the school to take note of the landscape's components.
4. The teacher can take pictures of anything memorable or significant in the area, such as animals and plants.
5. In the classroom, the teacher can print the photos taken outside, present them to the students, and explain the way Peter Moran may also have used images of Florida for inspiration while developing his etching. The students will then create their own landscape artworks based on their observations outside as well as their prior knowledge of Floridian wildlife and greenery.
6. The students will research and describe one or two major elements (for example, any specific birds or flowers) from their artworks on the backs of their papers.

### Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (K-5)

**Big Idea:** CRITICAL THINKING AND REFLECTION

**Enduring Understanding 1:** Cognition and reflection are required to appreciate, interpret, and create with artistic intent.

VA.3.C.1.1 Use the art-making process to develop ideas for self-expression.

### Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (6-12)

**Big Idea:** HISTORICAL AND GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

**Enduring Understanding 1:** Through study in the arts, we learn about and honor others and the worlds in which they live(d).

VA.912.H.1.8 Analyze and compare works in context, considering economic, social, cultural, and political issues, to define the significance and purpose of art.



**Above:** Untitled 20th c. landscape by Florida Highwayman Al Black, with a cypress swamp and white egrets.

**Below:** *In the Jungle, Florida*, 1904, by American landscape artist Winslow Homer, showing a palmetto grove with palm trees and a Florida panther.



## 6-12 Lesson Plan: The Landscape of Florida, Then and Now

**Time to Complete:** Several Class Periods

**Session Objectives:** Students will be able to conduct research on the history of Florida landscape painting in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and identify the plants and animals in such paintings. They will identify the ways Florida has changed in the twenty-first century and paint their own Florida landscapes from real life or from photographs.

**Materials:** Computers with internet access, paint of choice (e.g. watercolors, acrylics, oil paints), brushes, water or paint thinner/turpentine, paper or canvas.

**Activity Procedure:** Students will research artists and groups of artists who have painted landscapes and animals of Florida in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries such as Peter Moran, Winslow Homer, and the Florida Highwaymen. The class will identify and discuss differences in the styles, techniques, and motivations for painting these landscapes. Questions raised may include the reasons color, style, and technique differ between nineteenth-century formal romantic style and that of the mid-twentieth-century self-taught Highwaymen, as well as which social, economic, cultural, or political factors resulted in these differences. Students may also discuss the way in which the landscape and wildlife of Florida have changed in the twenty-first century. How have these changes altered the representation of Florida in contemporary art? Students will paint their own modern Florida landscapes en plein air or from photographic references, if suitable outdoor spaces are not readily available.

**Resources:** [https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/homr/hd\\_homr.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/homr/hd_homr.htm)  
<http://www.authenticflorida.com/articles/things-to-do/celebrating-florida-s-highwaymen-historic-outsider-artists/>