By 1885 Moran was recognized as a landscape painter and discontinued his illustration work. He began using his artworks featuring the West shifting. Moran looked for new subjects on which to focus both in America and across the Atlantic Ocean. His interest in Venice was as he was already quite knowledgeable about it through his studies of J.M.W. Turner’s paintings featuring it. When he returned for the first time in 1840, and during his six-week stay around numerous images of the old Italian city. Take note that when viewing his Venetian artwork he used architecture to “anchor” the painting, and using his artistic license he created elements in the foreground. After his second visit in 1890 with his wife, Venice had left such an impression on him that he was able to paint for the rest of his career. These Venetian paintings became more popular than his American West artworks.

Discussion Questions
What do you see? Use your four outer senses to describe The Pearl of Venice.
What is the story Moran trying to tell? Who or what is the focus?
What buildings did ‘Thomas Moran’ include in this painting?
What place do you want to visit based on the image you have seen?
Should artists have the freedom to take artistic license when depicting places unknown? Why or why not?
Why was Thomas Moran important to the creation of the National Parks System?
What would the United States be like without National Parks?
Which captures a more accurate impression of a place: a painting or a photograph? Why?

Chromolithographs
By 1875 printer Louis Pang produced chromolithograph from Thomas Moran’s watercolor painting of the first national park, Yellowstone. He published a portfolio of 11 images considered to be among examples of chromolithograph and they were the first color images of Yellowstone widely accessible to the public. In 2006, John F. Moran adds complete Vose Lithographic National Park portfolio to collection.

What is a chromolithograph? It’s a type of lithography process. First a drawing is created as a plate or stone or with a greasy substance. Next the artwork is imprinted with water. The printable applies oily ink to the surface which adheres to the greasy drawing, and removed by the water. A sheet of paper is placed on the plate and pressed through a press. For a chromolithograph, a stone or plate is used to create several color prints alternatively and more than likely dry. They must be carefully registered and lined up to ensure each color is properly aligned in place.

Mountain of the Holy Cross
A year after Thomas Moran created Mountain of the Holy Cross, it was shown at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) was taken by the painting that he wrote a poem to express the loss of the old ski.

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