



U6 Aural > Word Setting II

EXERCISE 1

Prologue: The truth – the pity – and the truth *from* Peter Grimes Benjamin Britten (1945)
<http://naxosmusiclibrary.com/catalogue/item.asp?cid=CHAN9447-48> (track 4)

Peter Grimes is questioned at an inquest over the death of his apprentice. The townsfolk, all present, make it clear they think Grimes is guilty and deserving of punishment. Although the coroner, Mr. Swallow, determines the boy's death to be accidental and clears Grimes without a proper trial, he advises Grimes not to get another apprentice.

In this extract, as the court is cleared, Ellen Orford, the schoolmistress, attempts to comfort Grimes as he rages against what he sees as the Borough community's unwillingness to give him a true second chance.

Listen to the extract and follow along in the score provided. Answer the following questions on a separate sheet. The extract will be played four times.

Comment on the following aspects of the extract. In every case, relate your observations to the text, and discuss how Britten's music communicates the meaning of the libretto.

- 1 Britten's use of key
- 2 The relationship between the two musical lines
- 3 Rhythm
- 4 The vocal range and intervals

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EXERCISE 2

Façade William Walton (1922)

Façade is a series of poems by Edith Sitwell. Sitwell began to publish some of the Façade poems in 1918, in the literary magazine 'Wheels'. In 1922-3 many of them were given an orchestral accompaniment by Sitwell's protégé William Walton, and it is in this form that Façade is best known.

Walton's instrumental ensemble consists of flute/piccolo; alto saxophone; trumpet; clarinet/bass clarinet; cello (may be divided between 2 players); and percussion (1 player).

A complete recording is at <http://naxosmusiclibrary.com/catalogue/item.asp?cid=CHAN8869>
The texts can be found at <http://www.williamwalton.net/works/vocal/facade.html> (under 'Movements')

Choose one of the movements and describe how the text has informed Walton's musical accompaniment.