

# **Orkney Schools Metasaga**

## **Welcome to the North Walls Metasaga**



Explore our Island

Think your thoughts

Find your voice



# **Orkney Schools Metasaga**

## ***Developing Leadership at all Levels***

**What's it all about?**

**A Metasaga is like a philosophical treasure hunt. It allows you to explore an area, but at the same time it helps you discover yourself.**

**On the front page of our metasaga booklet it says “Explore our Island...Think your thoughts...Find your voice”**

**When you visit a metasaga site you are asked to consider your opinions and to ponder your beliefs. You have to reflect on who and what you hold dear, to contemplate what is really important to you and fathom that which you will not compromise.**

**Taking part in a metasaga will help you understand yourself in a meaningful way. It encourages you to think and consider your place in the world and your relationships with others.**

**Inspiration for developing the Metasaga came from Kate Coutts, Headteacher at Uyeasound PS in Unst, Shetland. Kate had been initially been inspired by the work of Leif Jossefson (Metafari) in Tanzania.**

**For further information go to: <http://metafari.blogspot.com/search/label/Metasaga>**

**Metasaga is a journey through the culture, heritage and physical landscape. It allows leaders at all levels to engage in deep self-reflection by exploring their environment. It makes leaders at all levels reframe their thinking using metaphor, narrative, tradition and artifacts found in their own physical environment. It combines the business techniques of non-directive coaching, dialogue and appreciative inquiry with the traditional story telling teaching of our culture, the Norse saga.**

**Impetus for taking forward Metasaga as a highly motivational and interactive leadership tool was generated by colleagues from Orkney who took part in the original Metasaga experience in Shetland in summer 2008. They recommended that the tool be embedded as part of Orkney's Schools of Ambition project.**

### **Planning**

**Pupils and staff from each of the 6 secondary schools attended a central conference.**

**Each school was in the process of developing a Metasaga. They had explored the catchment area of their own school and identified key stopping points.**

**Pupils researched each stop and developed a series of reflective and interpretive questions. The schools then created a Metasaga in their community.**

**Each school visited a neighbouring school to trial their Metasaga. Participants could then post their responses on-line.**

**A strategy group then chose an activity from each of the schools to create an Orkney wide Metasaga. This will also be posted on the internet using the Education service's website.**

**Orkney Schools Metasaga was developed in partnership with Orkney Schools of Ambition and an Orkney - Shetland Islands staff initiative for developing leadership skills.**

#### **Participating schools:**

**Kirkwall Grammar School,**

**North Walls Community School,**

**Sanday Community School,**

**Stromness Academy,**

**Stronsay Junior High School,**

**Westray Junior High School**

**North Walls School**

## Map of Hoy



### **Berrie Dale Forest**

**You can use the OS map to walk to Berrie Dale as long as you are properly kitted out for hill walking on uneven footing / heather hopping / stream fording. From the start of the footpath at the bridge (grid ref 002200) this is about a 4 ½ mile walk. This old woodland is quite small with a trickling burn running down the hillside and through the woods. The stream is quite a torrent fed by the waterfalls above the woods when there is a lot of rain.**



**This is an ideal spot for:**

**a lazy-day picnic listening to bird song and the sound of water over rocks  
lying on your back watching cloud patterns enjoying searching for unusual alpine  
flora**

### **Interpretive Questions**

**What could these trees tell you of the lives of those that have passed through this woodland over several centuries?**

**What knowledge would you seek to fulfill your life now?**

**Would the answers be the ones you hoped for?**

**What holds you rooted to your place in time or place of self?**

**Will that strength sustain you at different times of your life?**

**Where else can you seek support or self knowledge that will keep you balanced and steady?**

### **Reflective Questions**

**As you walk through the Rackwick Valley you might find a knoll or heather bank to stay a while and enjoy reading ‘Beside the Ocean of Time’ by George Mackay Brown.**

**In the landscape forged by glaciers it is easy to lose your sense of place and time this way.**



### Rackwick Bay, Hoy

OS Explorer Map 462 Orkney – Hoy, South Walls & Flotta. The grid reference for the middle of the beach is: 205,985

Rackwick is a nice big beach at the north end of Hoy. Known for its beauty, Rackwick has lots of sand and different kinds of stones.

You will see Rackwick Burn on the way to the be garden of the small cottage called “The Bothy” near the shore (there are toilets inside!). You can also sleep in The Bothy

Other attractions nearby include: Berrie Dale, which is the most northerly native group of trees in Britain, The Old Man of Hoy, the highest sea stack in Britain, at 449, St. Johns Head - a vertical sea cliff 1,128 ft high and The Crow's Nest - a traditional Croft house/steading dating from the early 18th century.

Hyperlinks: [www.visitororkney.com](http://www.visitororkney.com)

### Interpretive Questions:

Look at the way Rackwick Burn meanders. Have a picnic and spend time soaking up the views and the atmosphere of this special place.

What would the early settlement have been like?

Who would have lived here and what would it have been like?

### Reflective Questions:

What will the views be like when the weather is different?

Walk towards the beach. Read the inscription on the bench as you go past. Then sit quietly and look out to sea thinking of your loved ones. What would they be thinking if they were here?

What could you make to leave for the next visitors to enjoy?

What does this say about your mood and personality?

Walk down to the beach and enjoy the space. Write something on the sand. Collect shells or pebbles.



## The Dwarfie Stane

OS Explorer Map 462 Orkney – Hoy, South Walls & Flotta

Grid Ref: 244005

The Dwarfie Stane is a 5,000-year-old rock-cut tomb which lies in a steep sided valley between Quoys and Rackwick. It is a block of red sandstone approximately 8½m long. There is a small square entrance which leads into 2 chambers. The name “Dwarfie Stane” probably comes from Dwarf folklore in Orkney Sagas.



Hyperlinks: [www.visitororkney.com](http://www.visitororkney.com)

### Interpretive Questions

What do you think motivated someone to create this tomb?

What do your hands do to create something lasting?

How would you feel staying the night here?

What clothing would you wear if you were here 3000 years ago?

What would you leave as an offering to represent something important in your life?

Would this offering change in six months time?

### Reflective Questions

How does light affect your feelings?

Along the valley is another similar rock slab called the Partick Stane, probably left by the retreating glacier at the end of the last Ice Age.

What extraordinary thing has happened to change this stone – what do you think it is used for now?

## **The Air raid Shelter, Lyness**

**OS Explorer Map 462 Orkney – Hoy, South Walls & Flotta**

**Grid Ref: 311949**

**The Air Raid shelter is an underground chamber built for WW2, made of concrete and stones, covered with soil and turf. There is a slippery entrance along a corridor with a room leading off it.**

**It is within easy walking distance of the Lyness Pier, by turning right in front of the big council storage sheds and then sharp left at the sign.**

**Hyperlinks: [www.visitororkney.com](http://www.visitororkney.com)**

### **Interpretive Questions:**

**The shelter is dark and damp. It is wise to have a torch**

**with you as there are corners in the corridor which**

**can be disorientating. You can play hide and seek.**

**Use your voice to make strange sounds and listen to the echo...**

**Have you been to other places that echo like here?**

**Listen with the light off in the middle of the room ... what do you hear?**

**Further along the B9047 just opposite the Lyness Naval Cemetery, there is a pillbox, another type of war time shelter.**

### **Reflective Questions:**

**In target cities further south, much of wartime life would have revolved around the air raid shelters.**

**Imagine what it must have been like to spend a night in a shelter like this.**

**Consider where your safe place would be...**





Map of the locations of the six Metasaga stops across Orkney.  
Each location have their own booklet to allow you to undertake your own voyage of personal discovery.

