

Orkney Schools Metasaga

Welcome to Sanday's Metasaga



ORKNEY SCHOOLS OF AMBITION
ISLANDS LEARNING TOGETHER

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

Inspiration for developing the Metasaga came from Kate Coutts, Headteacher at Uyeasound Primary School 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 storytelling teaching of our culture, the Norse saga.

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

Map showing the locations of Metasaga sites in Sanday



We hope you enjoy your personal journey through Sanday's Metasaga

The Metasaga was created by these four children with two members of staff.



Throughout the booklet you will find questions (in italics) for you to consider.

The Wind Turbines at Loth,

As the boat approaches Sanday, and you get your first glimpse of the island, these powerful, beautiful giants will fill your vision. Their mighty forms, spinning in the rhythm of the wind, using nature's energy to create electricity, are an awesome sight.

For those of us who live here, travelling by ferry or by air, the sight of the windmills tells us we are nearly home.

They are like a “Welcome Home sign” after a sea voyage



When you are near your home – how do you feel?

Are there any special markers that you look for on the way?

If you walk up from the pier you can go right up to the base of the windmill that stands alone. As you enter the gate you can discover its owner, and as you look up its little red light it will wink down at you.

Look closely at the windmill:

How many steps does it have?

I wonder what is inside the little door?

Why does it need that little red light?

But try this.....lie on the ground right underneath the tower and look up.

Relax and let your mind think

Do you have things you need to turn over in your mind and consider?

Is there something in your life that you would like the wind to blow away for you?

The wind releases so much energy.

Do you have a special way that you like to release your energy?

Is there a special place you go to, to refuel your emotional energy when you are feeling low or release your emotional energy when you are feeling angry or frustrated?

The windmills have a rhythm regulated by the wind, a bit like the rhythm of your heartbeat.

What feelings or emotions would make your heart beat speed up or slow down?

www.scottishpowergreen.co.uk

**Tall white turbine, Slices deep blue sky
Keeping the planet green, Shouldn't we all try?**

Anon

Cross Kirkyard

This quiet, peaceful place between the loch and the sea is the final resting place for many people. In the field across the track 11 massive sperm whales were buried in 1994 after beaching themselves on the smooth soft sand of Backaskaill bay. But it is an interesting place too – with some interesting inmates- human and non-



Many of the graves are coated in lichens. Did you know that lichen is not a plant? It is a symbiotic relationship between an algae and a fungus. Together they help each other survive.

Think about your own life – is there someone in it who you rely on completely? Your relationship may be symbiotic...perhaps you do your bit too.....or maybe you just take...?

Look around the graves- what is the oldest one you can find?

Can you find graves of the very old, and graves of the very young?

Are there some family graves?

Some graves have no names at all – some are merely marked by headers and footers- people too poor to have a proper stone.



There are two special graves for you to find.

One is of a famous Sanday person called Walter Traill Dennison.

See if you can find his grave and find out what he was famous for.

There is a coffin shaped grave and a ‘table top’ grave with incredible carvings on.

Can you find the hourglass symbol?

Our time on this Earth is limited.

What would you like to be remembered for?

Remember friend as you pass by,

As you are now,

So once was I.

As I am now,

So shall you be.

Remember friend,

We all must die.

Anon

You don’t choose how you’re going to die.

Or when.

You can only decide how you’re going to live.

Now.

Joan Baez

The Devil's Clawmark

Some may think this is a Spooky place

.....a Sinister place

.....Scary

.....Atmospheric and exposed.

Do you feel that sense of abandonment and uneasiness here too?



The old Lady Kirk is no longer used. It was abandoned long ago.

Have you ever abandoned something in your life that you later regretted?

The Kirk has no roof, but the steps on the outside are still tempting.

Why do you think the stairs are here...?

where did that upper door lead?

Climb to the top and look at the wall.

Can you see the deep scratch marks in the stone?

They are the Devil's Claw marks – or so the story goes

The legend has it that the Devil was chasing someone who escaped into the safety of the Kirk, where God would protect them.

In his anger the Devil scored his mark in the stone for all to see.

If you needed sanctuary and safety, where would you go?

Who would protect you?



Now look out- what a view!

Can you spot three big double storey houses.

See if you can discover their names from the map.

In one lived the Laird. In another the Minister. The third was owned by a farmer.

Can you work out which is which? How did you make your choices?

Every spirit builds itself a house, and beyond its house a world, and beyond its world a heaven. Know then that world exists for you.

Every spirit builds itself a house, and beyond its house a world, and beyond its world a heaven.

Know then that world exists for you.

Ralpho Waldo Emerson

These houses and this Kirk are landmarks for all to see. They are all built of stone and took tremendous effort to build.

When you look back over your own life what special effort or achievement might stand out and be remembered by others?

The Red Boxes of Burness

At the T junction stands the Burness Communication Centre.

The telephone kiosk and the post box.

Read the inscription on the post box .

What happens to a letter you post on a Friday afternoon?



**The phone box has lots of little windows (*how many?*) ,
but the post box has just one and it has a flap over it...*why do you think that might be?***

What number would you dial to reach the phone box?

They are a landmark- we refer to them when directing people- “turn right at the phone box”....

Have you ever wondered why they are both painted bright red?

They are remote from the rest of the world, but both can connect you with others far away.

They are both old on the outside, but rely on modern technology—maybe they are young on the inside!

Do you know a person like that – whose heart is full of optimism and ideas, even though they are very old?

If you had some lovely exciting news who would you phone to share it with?

Which would you prefer to receive – a letter or a phone call?

Does it depend on what the message is and who’s sending it?



**Think about dialling a telephone number -
*how many digits does it have ?***

**What if you just dialled one digit wrong and a
complete stranger answered the phone.**

Think of all the possible reactions you could have!

**Who knows where that one misdialled number
could lead in your life.**

**The phone box and the post box both sit at this
junction.**

Your life too has many junctions.

Think about a choice you have made recently.

***Let your mind consider: “What if you had made
the other decision?”***

**Think back over your life and wonder for a
moment about some of those junctions, when
you chose one path over another.**

***Have you made choices that have made you
happy?***

***Would you make the same choice now, knowing
what you now know?***

**Life has many crossroads and maybe it is our
choices that shape our lives.**



There are no little things.

**“Little things” are the hinges of
the Universe**

Fanny Fern

I chose the road less travelled on.

**And that has made all the
difference**

Robert Frost

Quoyness Chambered Cairn

You follow the sign, and drive across that spit of land with the sea on both sides of you, but the Cairn is not easy to see. Without that sign you may never have noticed it. But if you trudge out along the stony path you will find it.

Monumental
Remote
Safe
Solid
Impressive.
Historic.



The sign at the gate tells you its age – *so old*.....like the great pyramids of Egypt.

It has stood on this headland protecting the final resting place of its inhabitants for thousands of years, against the elements and intruders.

**You notice the little opening by the door.
*What do you think it was there for?***

You crawl down the dark entrance tunnel –grateful for the torch kindly put there to help you.

Can you estimate the length of the tunnel?

Crawl into one of the cells.

Inside – so quiet – peaceful - womb like.

What sort of people do you think were buried in this incredible place?



They were buried with special artefacts.

What three things would you choose to take with you on your journey to the afterlife?

Look up at the roof. Imagine it covered in stone and soil.

Now look carefully at the gigantic stones. Can you see the Runic writing engraved on some?

Like ancient graffiti.

What message would you write for someone to read 5000 years from now?

As you emerge back into the light, the elemental noises of nature surround you again. In the past it was thought that there were four elements – Earth, Air, Fire and Water

Which of the four ancient elements would you choose to be ?

Why?

We stand on our ancestors' shoulders.

It's that which makes us strong.

Native American proverb

Start Point

You drive as far North as you can and leave your car in the small car park, with its special little box containing a book.

It is a remarkable place indeed.

You walk along the eroding path until you reach the fisherman's hut. And look out. Across that thin strip of sea, to the mound of Mount Misery.

You ponder that name. What a place to live! Mount Misery! Surely it couldn't be that bad!



But come here on a wild, wet, windy day and you would believe it.

A place so barren and lonely, isolated and far away from everyone.

What sort of person could possibly live there?

What aualities would they need to survive the long, lonely winter nights?

If you had to stay there for a month, all by yourself, what three things would you choose to take with you, to make your life on Mount Misery less miserable?

Lighthouse needs the keeper, and the sailors need the Lighthouse

And this was the place it had to go.

This is a strange lighthouse - *do you notice which way the stripes go?*

It is unique. Built here by Stephenson in 1807, it has stood firm and true all that time and guided sailors away from the rocks by its beam of light.

Did you know that every lighthouse has a particular sequence of flashing lights?

Why do you think this is?

Watch the light and time the flashes with your watch.

Can you work out the individual pattern of Sanday's Start Point light?

Do you have a personal "lighthouse" in your life- a person who guides you?

What, or who, steers you away from the rocks and keeps you on a safe course through your life?

What, or who, makes your own light shine – and helps you glow with happiness?

The following is a true, (and amusing), story to cheer you in this remote place and remind you of the steadfastness of our lighthouses.....

An American admiral who, spotting a blip on his radar screen, ordered his radio operator: "Tell that ship to change course by 15 degrees". The word came back: "You change your course 15 degrees". When a more heavily phrased message met the same response the Admiral grabbed the microphone and bawled : "I am an Admiral of the US Navy -you change course 15 degrees".

A calm voice replied: "And I am a lighthouse"

The Daily Telegraph 1986

If you have enjoyed your journey through our Metasaga and would like to explore another, here are the other schools involved.



