

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Your task:

Tick the things you can see.

- The Mace
- A camera
- The Speaker
- 4 flags
- Someone who is asking questions
- Someone who is answering questions
- Someone who is writing
- Someone who is silent



# Question Time in the House of Assembly

## What does the Parliament of Tasmania do?

The Parliament of Tasmania has four main roles.

1. Represent the people of Tasmania
2. Make and change Tasmanian laws
3. Form the Tasmanian Government
4. Closely examine (scrutinise) the work of the Tasmanian Government

## What is Question Time?

Question Time is an opportunity for the House of Assembly to scrutinise the Tasmanian Government's decisions and actions. Each Minister, including the Premier, is in charge of several areas of government work (portfolios) and answers questions about their portfolios. The questions are usually about issues that are very important to the people of Tasmania.

## Who asks the questions?

Most questions come from non-government Members, particularly the Opposition. Ministers do not know what the questions will be, so they study beforehand and come prepared with notes to answer questions accurately. The Opposition questions are intended to be difficult. They aim to find out important information, whilst trying to test the Government's effectiveness. Government backbenchers ask the Ministers' questions too but their questions are usually easy and the questions promote government work. These questions are most often planned with the Minister and have the nickname 'Dorothy Dixers'.

## Are there rules to follow in Question Time?

The House of Assembly has a set of written rules, called the Standing Orders, which determine how Question Time operates. It is the Speaker's responsibility to ensure the Standing Orders are followed. If a Member believes a Standing Order has been broken, they draw the Speaker's attention to it by calling a 'Point of Order' and the Speaker makes a ruling. Members are very passionate about Tasmanian issues, so sometimes, the Chamber can become unsettled or rowdy. If this happens, the Speaker will remind the Members to behave appropriately.



**Your task:**

**Answer the following questions.**



What was the most interesting thing for you?

Did anything surprise you?

What did you learn?

What are you wondering about?

