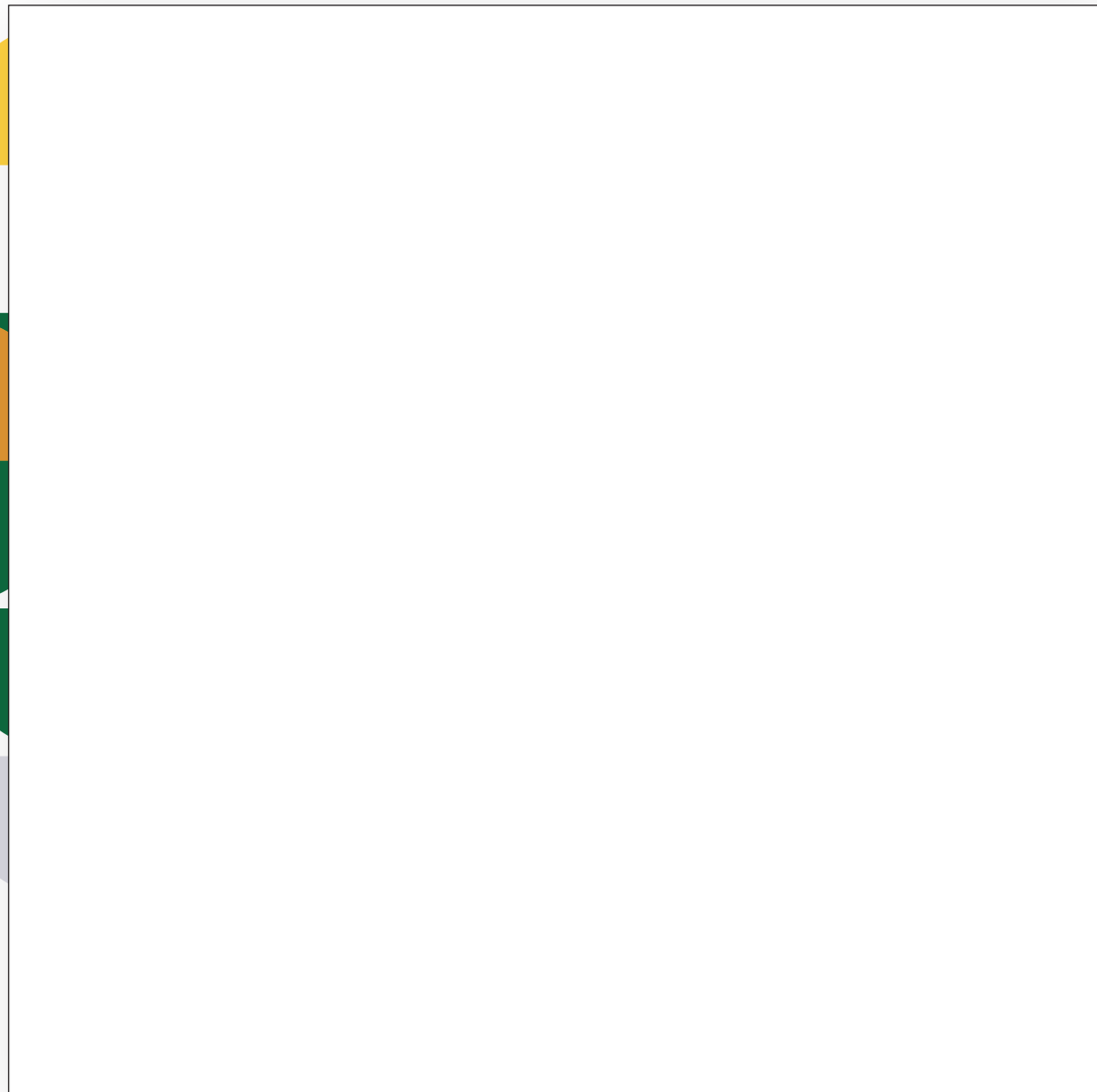


Name: _____

Date: _____

Your task: Draw a diagram of the House of Assembly Chamber and mark the location of the following people.

- Speaker
- Premier
- Leader of the Opposition
- Ministers
- Crossbench
- Clerks
- Advisors
- Media



Can you name any of the other people in the Chamber?

Question Time

in the House of Assembly

What are the main roles of the Members of the House of Assembly?

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

Question Time is a period in the House of Assembly sitting day in which the Tasmanian Government is scrutinised. Non-government Members are able to examine and directly question the work of the Government.

Questions are directed to the Premier or the Minister responsible for a Government department. The Premier and Ministers are held accountable for their decisions and must explain or defend their actions. It is one of the few times when Opposition Members set the agenda in the House of Assembly. The Government is reacting to, instead of leading, the debate.

Question Time is the most widely reported business of the Parliament by the media. This allows Tasmanians to assess if they are being governed in a manner they see fit and allows the media to report on important issues raised.

Question Time can sometimes be loud and rowdy because all Members want Tasmania to be the best it can be but can disagree on the best way to do this. It is the role of the Speaker during Question Time to ensure Members follow the rules (the Standing Orders) and engage in respectful debate.



Your task: Observe Question Time closely and answer the following questions.

What is the purpose of Question Time in the House of Assembly?

- a. to form a Government
- b. to keep journalists entertained
- c. to make new laws for Tasmania
- d. to scrutinise the work of Government

What is the role of the Speaker of the House of Assembly?

- a. to do all the speaking in Parliament
- b. to keep order and ensure Members follow the rules (Standing Orders)
- c. to take the place of the Prime Minister
- d. to answer questions about the election

The Clerk and the other Clerks-at-the-Table sit in front of the Speaker and work for the House of Assembly. They are not elected Members. Why don't the Clerks speak during Question Time?

Who takes part in Question Time?

Listen closely to two questions during Question Time and fill in the details below.

Question 1.

What issue was raised? _____

Asked by? _____

Answered by? _____

Question 2.

What issue was raised? _____

Asked by? _____

Answered by? _____

Do you think the Member who asked the question was satisfied with the answer? Give reasons why.

Which Members of Parliament are the most vocal during Question Time and why do you think this is?

Why is it important to have Question Time in the House of Assembly?

Is there anything you would change about Question Time and why?
