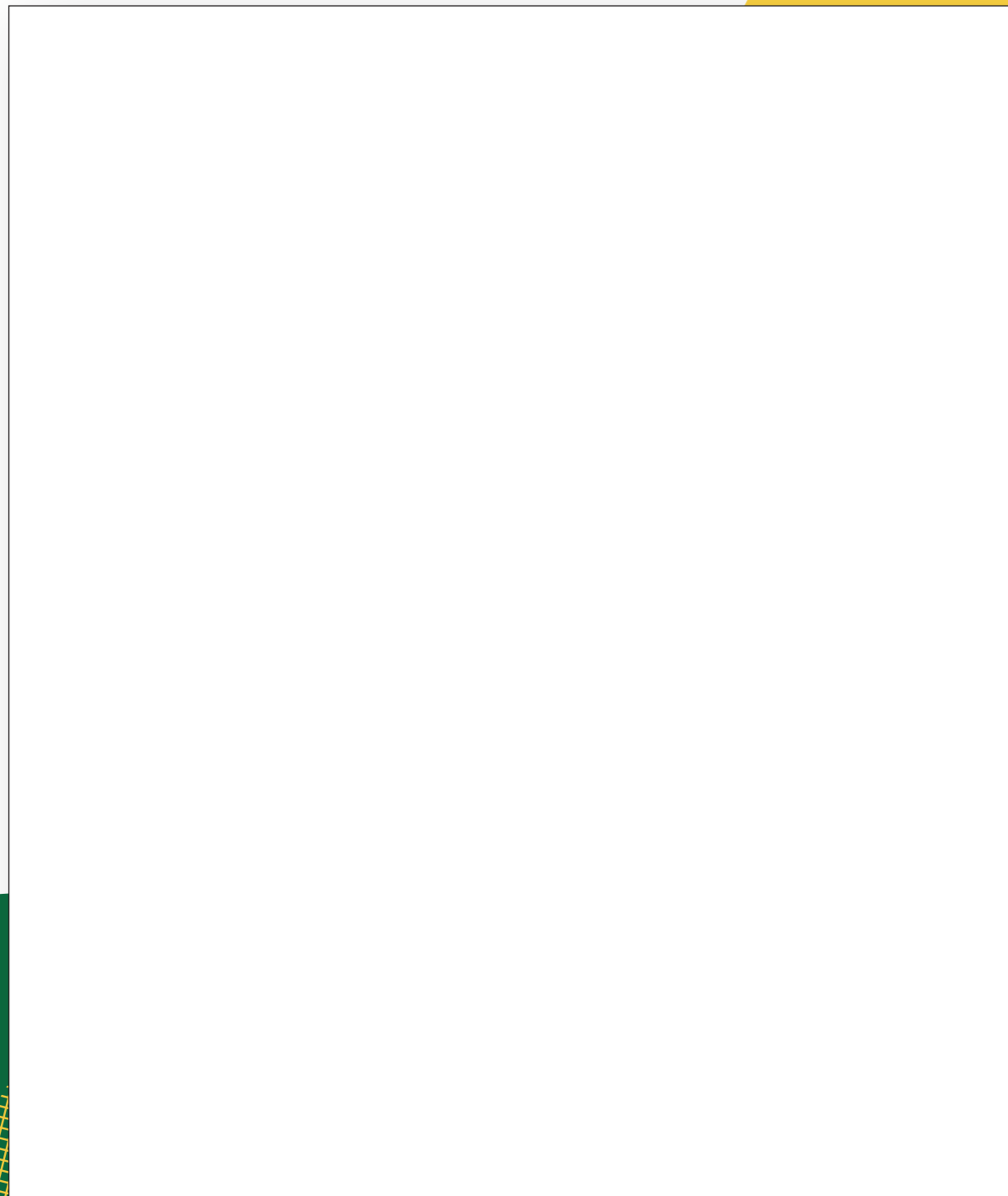


Name: _____

Date: _____

Your task:

Sketch a map of the Chamber



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: Watch Question Time and answer the following questions.

Look

There are 35 Members of Parliament (MPs) elected to the House of Assembly. Do you recognise anyone?

Most Members belong to a political party. Like a team, they sit in their parties on opposite sides of the Chamber. Which side of the Chamber has the most Members?

Did you know the political party with the most House of Assembly Members forms the Tasmanian Government? Who sits directly opposite the Government?

Listen

The Members of the House of Assembly represent the people of Tasmania. Did you hear of any Tasmanian people, animals, places or communities?

The Ministers are responsible for running government services in Tasmania and try to solve problems for Tasmania. What are two problems in Tasmania that you think the Government should work on?

1. _____
2. _____

Did the Members discuss either of your issues?

What problems did they discuss?

Think

Sometimes Members interject (call out) during Question Time. Why do they do this?

If you were a Member of the House of Assembly, which role would you like to have in the Chamber? Why?

If you could ask the Premier of Tasmania a question, what would it be?

Like to draw? Turn to the back page of this booklet.

