

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

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

# 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:** 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?

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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?

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

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## Listen

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

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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?

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What problems did they discuss?

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## Think

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

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

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

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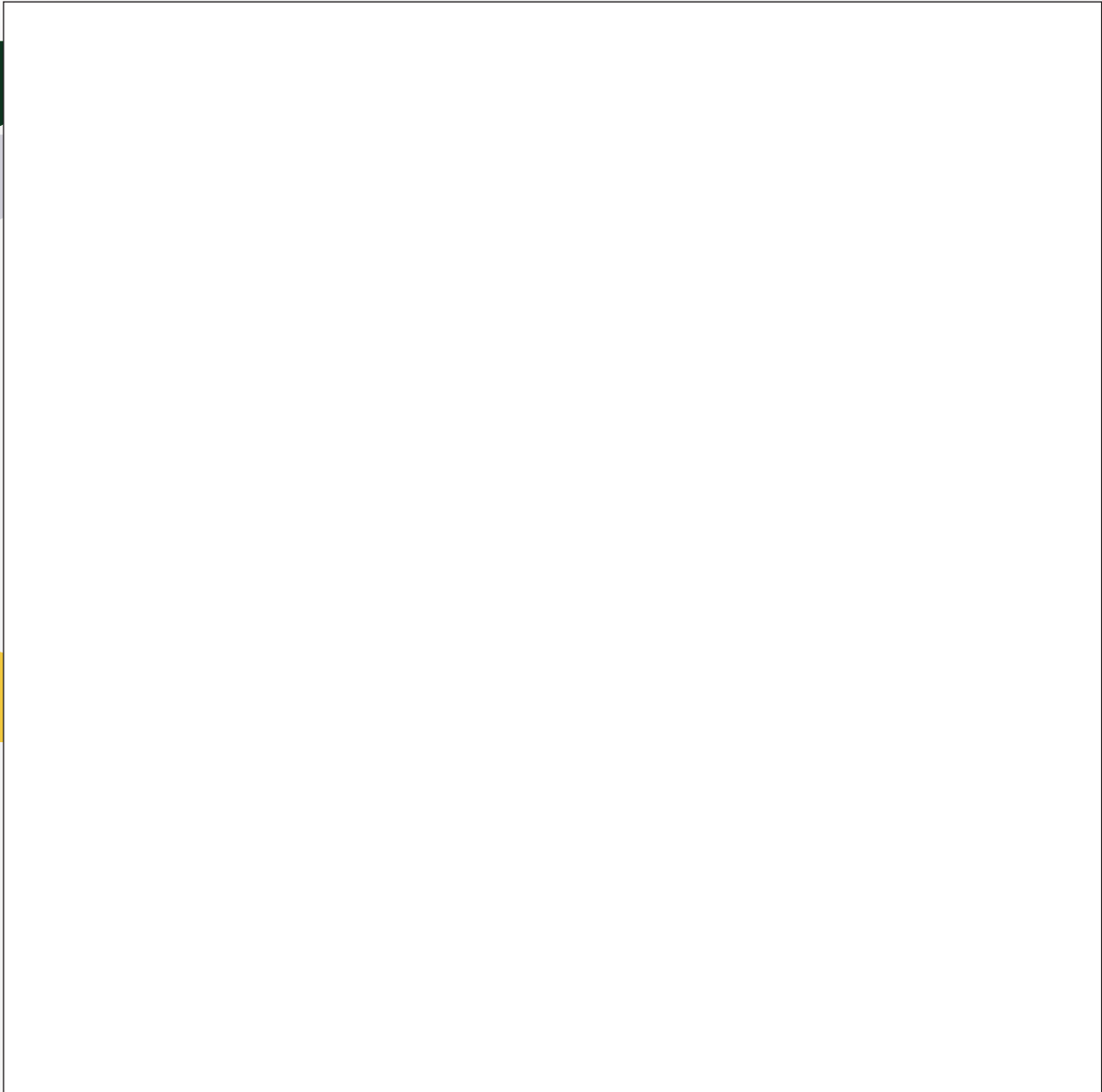
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**Like to draw? Turn to the back page of this booklet.**

**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?

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