

# Scene 1

(To opening **intro music (CD 8)** the cast enters. All stand for the first song.)

## **Song Going Crackers** (CD 1 & 9 – lyrics p18) (Whole cast)

(The cast moves from the main stage to the seating areas. To one side, on a separate staged area Mr Humbug is sitting on a swivel chair, at his desk in his office. In front of him are a laptop and lots of sheets of paper. A bookcase bulges with files. A graph entitled 'Achievement' is on the wall. Three narrators stand to the other side.)

**Narrator 1** It's Christmas! Yeah! A time for making merry, having fun,  
When a blanket of goodwill is wrapped round everyone,  
When smiles and joyous laughter light up everybody's face.  
And yet, here at St Ebenezer's School, that's not the case.

**Narrator 2** Headteacher, Mr Humbug, is not a Yuletide fan.  
In fact, it's fair to say he is the world's grumpiest man.  
He can't abide those jingle bells, or crisp and even snow...

**Mr Humbug** So what if they all think that I'm a rotten so and so!  
Children should be shouted at! The staff have books to mark.  
What is it I'm running here? Not an amusement park!  
All this merry making, everybody having fun,  
It's nowhere to be found in my ideal curriculum.

**Narrator 3** And each time he encountered evidence of festive mirth (CD 10)  
He would clench his fists in rage and holler.....

**Mr Humbug** WHAT ON EARTH.....!?! (looking at his watch)  
Why are they not working hard at maths or literacy?  
No-one's taking anything that I say seriously!

(There is a knock at his door and Miss Palette, a flamboyantly dressed art teacher enters with a smiling, yet apprehensive look on her face.)

**Miss Palette** Just to let you know, I've overspent on my art budget  
On lots of shiny, glittery things. I hope you don't begrudge it.  
Now each class can make some super Christmas decorations,  
And really add some sparkle to our festive celebrations.

**Narrator 1** But the look on Mr Humbug's reddening face was not  
A look of joy. He screwed his eyes up and yelled.....

**Mr Humbug** YOU'VE DONE WHAT?  
Now listen here, Miss Palette, you can send it back today!  
How dare you spend school's money in such a frivolous way!

(Upset, Miss Palette exits. She passes five cooks approaching Mr Humbug's office.)

- Cook 1** I have to admit, Betty, you're idea is pretty good.
- Cook 2** Yes indeed, a one pound coin in every Christmas pud!
- Cook 3** Well, thanks. I just thought every table needs a little treat,  
To take their minds off all those brussel sprouts they have to eat!
- Cook 4** This could be the best school lunch that there has ever been.
- Cook 5** Even Mr Humbug can't say no – he's not that mean!

*(The cooks approach and explain their idea to Mr Humbug.)*

- Narrator 2** But yes, you've guessed it folks, they did not get a warm reception.  
Mr Humbug threw a wobbly at such a suggestion.
- Mr Humbug** WHAT! POUND COINS! No way, José. And as for the menu,  
Turkey burgers and spaghetti hoops will have to do!
- Narrator 3** The cooks, upset he didn't think Betty's idea a winner,  
Vowed to add some chilli seeds to Humbug's next school dinner!

*(The cooks exit, passing a little girl carrying a card. She knocks and enters the office)*

- Little girl** Mr Humbug, I've been sent to show you what I've made.  
It's a Christmas card and I've drawn baby Jesus laid  
In the manger, with the shepherds and the wise men too.  
It's taken me all morning and it's 'specially for you.

- Narrator 1** Now, surely this would cause even the hardest heart to melt.  
But not our Mr Humbug, it was utter rage he felt.

- Narrator 2** He angrily grabbed the card from out of the girl's hand  
And scrawled across it in felt-tip the words "Christmas is banned!  
There will be an emergency assembly right away!"

- Mr Humbug** Here! Take this note round the classes. Hurry! On your way!

*(The poor girl takes it and exits. To the **intro music (CD 11)** all the children gather and sit facing the main stage, to where Mr Humbug and the other teachers have now moved.)*

- Narrator 3** A hush descended upon everybody gathered there,  
As an almost unbearable tension filled the air.  
The look on Mr Humbug's face made every knee go weak.  
They all listened intently as he cleared his throat to speak....

## **Song Christmas Is Banned** *(CD 2 & 12 – lyrics p19)*

*(Mr Humbug, supported by whole cast)*

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