



Scene 1

(As **Intro Music** plays (cd track 8) the cast members enter and take their places for the opening song – see staging suggestions.)

Song 1 – What Does Christmas Mean To You? (CD track 1 & 9, lyrics p16) (Whole Cast)

(As **Intro Music** plays again (cd track 10) the cast members sit. A smaller stage to one side is set up to represent a Christmas classroom – see staging suggestions/scenery. Six children sit at tables, while a teacher stands.)

- Teacher** Children, as you know, we've only a few days left until school finishes for the Christmas holidays.
- Children** Yessssssss!
- Teacher** Now, I know you're excited, but we do still have work to do.
- Children** Nooooooooo!
- Teacher** I'm afraid so. Today we'll be doing some writing, but first I'd like us discuss ideas that will help us produce a piece of work with this title – 'What Christmas Means To Me'. So, who'd like to start things off?
- Child 1** Well, what's there to discuss? It's easy – Christmas means presents! Loads and loads of presents!
- Child 2** And loads and loads of food!
- Child 3** And loads and loads of cool stuff to watch on the telly!
- Child 4** And loads and loads of kisses under the mistletoe!
- Other children** Eurgh!
- Child 5** It means getting all excited on Christmas Eve, watching the clock and wishing it would go faster!
- Child 6** Well, I'll tell you what it means to me – getting dragged round town doing last minute Christmas shopping! I said to Mum, "Don't worry, I'm sure Santa's got it covered." Does she listen? No. Christmas Eve will be a mad race round the shops watching her get more and more worked up! I can't wait.....

(The action moves to the main stage. Three shoppers, holding baskets of shopping, stand in a queue at a checkout – see staging suggestions/scenery. A checkout assistant sits at a till, struggling to scan one of the items of Shopper 1, who has a child with her.)

Assistant ~ (calling for help and holding up a large bag of Haribo sweets) Can I get a price check on an item? (to Shopper 1) Sorry for the delay, Madam.

- Shopper 1** (surprised) Hang on a minute, I don't remember.....(to child) Ooh, you little....How many times have I told you about taking things off shelves and putting them in mummy's basket when she's not looking?! Well OK, seeing as it's Christmas you can have them.
- Shopper 2** (*impatiently to Shopper 3*) I've got a shopping list as long as my arm to get through before the end of today. I've still no turkey for Christmas dinner tomorrow. They're all sold out here, so I need to get to ASDA before it closes, but it looks like I'll be stuck in this queue 'til New Year!
- Shopper 3** I've still got Christmas presents to buy! Oh, why do I never learn? I always leave it until the last minute! I should be more like my sister – she does all her Christmas shopping in the January sales!
- (A man, Shopper 4, enters carrying a basket. He speaks into a mobile phone.)
- Shopper 4** Hello...it's me...Yes I know this is the sixth time in ten minutes, but I can't find it...Yes I've looked everywhere...I don't want to ask, everyone seems so busy....Yes, I know it's for your mother, but couldn't we just give her a box of chocolates? They've got a wide selection here...But I've told you, I can't find it...Yes, near the deli counter, I've looked there...What?...Which shop?! Well why didn't you say? Right! I'll pay for this stuff then I'll go there...No, I won't forget the sprouts. Where are they again? (*holding the phone away from his ear and wincing in pain*)...No need to shout...What was that? Sorry, dear, (*pretending*) it's a bad signal...I'll have to go. Bye! (*closing his phone and joining the queue*) Phew!
- (Shopper 5 enters, looking quite relaxed, and joins the end of the queue.)
- Assistant** (*still holding up the sweets and calling out*) Still waiting for a price check!
- Shopper 1** (*to Shopper 5*) I hope you're not in a hurry? This is taking forever!
- Shopper 5** No, not at all. I've just finished off some last minute present-buying. Everything on the list ticked off – a stress-free Christmas shopping trip!
- Shopper 2** How do you manage that? You can't have many people to buy for.
- Shopper 5** Actually, I've a very large family and a wide circle of friends.
- Shopper 3** So what's your secret?
- Shopper 5** Socks! (*taking a handful of different pairs of socks from her/his basket*)
- Shoppers 1, 2, 3 & 4** Socks?

- Shopper 5** The best present in the world! I buy socks for everyone. Thermal socks for my parents, football socks for my nephew, Barbie socks for my god-daughter, woollen bootees for the baby, ski socks for my brother and his wife, a 3-pack of black socks for my cousin who works in the bank....it's easy. I'm in and out of the shop in no time.

Shopper 3 Well, I'd never have thought of that. What a great idea.

Shopper 4 (*speaking into phone*) Hello, it's me again. Listen, how about we get your mother some socks? They've got lots here to choose from and....(*holding the phone away from his ear and wincing in pain*)....OK, OK, no socks! (*closing his phone*)

Assistant (*still holding up the sweets and calling out*) Still waiting for a price check!

Shoppers 1, 2, 3 & 4 Tut!

(We hear a **Store Announcement** (CD track 11))

Announcement Ladies and gentlemen, the store will close in ten minutes. Please would you proceed to the checkout. Thank you, and merry Christmas!

(Suddenly a large crowd of shoppers rush on and jostle for position in the queue.
Shoppers 1, 2, 3, & 4 look annoyed.)

Shopper 2 This is ridiculous! Nobody can move! Do you know what they should do...and I can't believe nobody's thought of this...to stop all this chaos why can't they just move Christmas to a time when the shops aren't so busy!

Song 2 – I'd Rather Stay At Home (CD track 12, lyrics p17)
(Shoppers supported by whole cast)

(To **Intro Music** (CD track 13) all exit, and the stage is set up for the next scene.)

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