

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 Noooooooooooo!

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 track12, 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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