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PLEASE READ THIS IMPORTANT INFORMATION BEFORE PLANNING YOUR PERFORMANCE

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General Guidelines

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- Perform a musical up to 5 times in one academic year, to a public audience, within your school.*
 - Reproduce song lyrics on paper or for display on interactive whiteboards or similar screens.
 - Photocopy the script and score for the cast to learn lines, and musicians to play the songs.
- * **If you are performing outside of your school premises, for example in a local theatre, please contact us as further conditions apply. For more information, visit www.edgyproductions.com/licences**
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Audio and Video Recordings

If you wish to make an audio or video recording of the performance of any of our musicals, you will need an additional **recording and duplication licence** from Edgy Productions. This will also allow you to make and sell copies of your recordings if you wish to do so. We no longer request that you pay a commission to us on the money you raise from the sale of recordings.

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You are not permitted to share any of our copyrighted material, either in printed form, on disc or in digital file format, with anyone who is not a pupil or teacher within your school or organisation. We will take immediate action should an incident of illegal file-sharing be reported or discovered.

You can, of course, phone or email us for advice – we are more than happy to discuss all your licensing needs.

Tel: 01858 288081
Email: info@edgyproductions.com

PERFORMANCE LICENCE APPLICATION FORM

For any performance of any part of 'Mr Humbug Sees The Light' to an audience other than staff and children (eg. to parents), a valid performance licence from Edgy Productions must be held. Please note, your PRS, MCPS, CCLI or similar local authority-issued licence does not cover you for this.

Unless you purchased an instant performance licence and/or a recording & duplication licence when you bought this production pack, please ensure you complete and return this form at least 28 days before your first performance:

- by post – Edgy Productions, 8 Roman Way, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 7PQ
- by FAX – 0845 833 33 49
- by email – info@edgyproductions.com

The performance licence will permit the holder to do the following:

- Perform a musical up to 5 times in one academic year, to a public audience, within your school.*
- Reproduce song lyrics on paper or for display on interactive whiteboards or similar screens.
- Photocopy the script and score for the cast to learn lines, and musicians to play the songs.

Contact name:

Name of school / organisation:

Address:

..... **Postcode:**

Tel: **email:**

Number of performances: **Performances Dates: from** **to**

By ticking, select one of the performance licence options below:

Standard Performance Licence ☐ **£30.00** *(including VAT)*
(no admission charged and no tickets sold)

or

Performance Licence with charges ☐ **£36.00** *(including VAT)*
(admission **is** charged and/or tickets **are** sold)

☐ * Tick if you are performing outside your school premises, for example in a local theatre, as further conditions apply – see www.edgyproductions.com/licences

If you are recording any performance, and/or selling copies of the recording, you will **also** need a recording and duplication licence.

Recording and Duplication Licence ☐ **£30.00** *(including VAT)*

By ticking, select one of the payment options below:

☐ **I enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to Edgy Productions Ltd**

☐ **Please send me an invoice for £.....** *(payment terms 30 days)*

**Writers rely on payments from public performances for their livelihoods.
Please ensure they receive their dues.**



Plot Summary

With Christmas approaching we share the excitement felt by the adults and children at St Ebenezer's School. **(song – Going Crackers)** However, it soon becomes clear that someone isn't happy. Headteacher, Mr Humbug, hates Christmas at school because it gets in the way of doing 'proper' work, wastes time and costs money! And so he cancels it **(song – Christmas Is Banned)**, much to the distress of everyone, in particular Miss Palette the Art teacher, the school cooks, and a little girl who wants to do nothing more than offer him the season's best wishes! Whilst pouring over paperwork at his desk that evening he is visited by the ghost of his old deputy headteacher, Miss Penny Pincher, who met a sticky end whilst telling children off for having fun! **(song – Old Miss Pincher)** She warns him that if he doesn't change his ways and embrace the true spirit of a school Christmas, he will, like her, spend eternity suffering. She warns him that three more spirits will be visiting him to really 'ram this message home'.

Dismissing this weird encounter as the result of a dodgy school lunch, Mr Humbug returns to his paperwork, only to be scared witless by the arrival in his office of the Spirit of School-Christmas-Past. The two take a journey back to Mr Humbug's own school days, when Christmas was celebrated in style. We see children filled with festive mirth, and enjoying the prospect of roast turkey, the infant nativity, making hats and decorating the classroom. **(song – This Time Of Year)** Any warm feelings this brought back to Mr Humbug soon disappear as he returns to his desk in his cold office.

Next up is the rather 'jolly' Spirit of School-Christmas-Present, who shows the headteacher just how miserable the children and adults at St Ebenezer's really are, now that Christmas has been banned. It's wet playtime and the children discuss how to smuggle out Christmas cards from school, while in the staffroom everyone considers resigning **(song – We've Had A Belly Full)**. Mr Humbug is shocked at the bad feelings towards him and we see signs that maybe changes are afoot.

The sinister Spirit of School-Christmas-Yet-To-Come finally arrives and transports Mr Humbug to a time where teachers are on the scrap heap and their classrooms are now run by robots. They enslave children at computers for fifteen hours a day and any child who steps out of line is taken to the 'lab'! Art, PE and Music are no more and Christmas is very much a thing of the past. Mr Humbug is horrified to discover that this terrible situation is all his fault! **(song – Why Did Everything Go So Horribly Wrong)** We are told that he had become an MP and soon after Prime Minister! He had introduced harsh measures that resulted in the sad state of affairs we now witness. He begs the spirit to change this future, but is told that any changes must begin with him.

Mr Humbug wakes next morning at his desk, just in time for assembly. He is a new man. Having seen the error of his ways he addresses the school in an unusually pleasant tone. He expresses sorrow and apologises for his behaviour, then stuns everyone by declaring that no expense will be spared and that this will be the best Christmas St Ebenezer's has ever seen **(song – He's Seen The Light)!**

CHARACTERS

(individual speaking parts in order of appearance)

3 Narrators *Our Yuletide tale-tellers.*

Mr Humbug *Headteacher of St Ebenezer’s School. Move over Scrooge, there’s a new boy in town.*

Miss Palette *Flamboyant art teacher who enjoys a good ‘spend’.*

5 Cooks *Kind-hearted culinary queens.*

Little girl *A real Christmas angel.*

Miss Penny Pincher *The ghost of Mr Humbug’s vile partner in crime.*

Spirit of School-Christmas-Past *A ghoulish guide to how things used to be.*

Teacher from School-Christmas-Past *Lovely and cuddly.*

Young Humbug, Cathy, Tommy and Sally *Carefree kiddies from a bygone age.*

Spirit of School-Christmas-Present *On a very ‘merry’ mission to right some wrongs.*

5 Children of School-Christmas-Present *Are these really the best days of your life?*

3 Teachers of School-Christmas-Present *Not exactly filled with festive mirth.*

Spirit of School-Christmas-Yet-To-Come *Sinister messenger of what the future holds.*

Robot Teacher *Swift and efficient and takes no nonsense – just like the real thing.*

4 Children of School-Christmas-Yet-To-Come *15 hours at school each day’s the norm.*

Security-Bots *It’s off to the ‘lab’ with any child who doesn’t sit in silence.*

(Ensemble characters)

Staff and Children of St Ebenezer’s School – present day

The Class of School-Christmas-Past

More Cooks and Nativity Infants

The Class of School-Christmas-Yet-To-Come

Future Down-and-out Teachers

Scene 1

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

Song **Going Crackers** *(tracks 1 & 9 – lyrics p17)* *(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! A time for making merry and having fun, especially at school! And yet, here at St Ebenezer's, that was not the case.

Narrator 2 Headteacher, Mr Humbug, was not a fan of festive things. In fact, it's fair to say he was the world's grumpiest man. He couldn't abide all that seasonal nonsense, especially in the classroom.....

Mr Humbug Well, it's a school I'm supposed to be running here, not an amusement park!

Narrator 3 And each time he encountered evidence of Christmas fun **(track 10)**, he would clench his fists in rage and yell.....

Mr Humbug Why are they not working hard to improve standards round here? Does nobody take anything 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 a little on my art budget, on lots of shiny, glittery things. I hope you don't mind. It means every class can make some super Christmas decorations.

Mr Humbug YOU'VE DONE WHAT? Now listen here, Miss Palette. You can send the whole lot back! I won't have St Ebenezer's money wasted 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 pudding!

Cook 3 Well, thanks. I just thought every table needs a little treat, to take their minds off all those brussel sprouts!

Cook 4 This could be the best school lunch that there has ever been.

Cook 5 Surely even Mr Humbug can't say no to that.

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

Narrator 1 But yes, you’ve guessed it folks; they did not get a warm reception. Mr Humbug threw a wobbly when he heard the idea.

Mr Humbug WHAT! POUND COINS! NO WAY! And as for the menu, I want it changing to something cheaper. Turkey burgers and spaghetti hoops – they can make do with that.

Narrator 2 The cooks were understandably upset, and vowed to add hot chilli powder to Humbug’s food when next he had a school lunch!

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

Little girl Mr Humbug, I’ve brought you a Christmas card I made in class. It took me all morning. Look, I’ve drawn baby Jesus laid in the manger, with the shepherds and the wise men around Him. I’d like you to have it. Happy Christmas.

Narrator 3 Now, surely this would cause even the hardest heart to melt. But not our Mr Humbug..... he was furious!

Mr Humbug You’re joking! Three whole hours just to make this piece of rubbish! Your morning should have been spent doing numeracy and literacy!

Narrator 1 Mr Humbug grabbed the card from the girl and scrawled across it, in felt-tip, the words, “There will be an emergency assembly right away!”

Mr Humbug Here! Take this note round the classes. Hurry!

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

Narrator 2 A hush descended upon the assembly hall. The look on Mr Humbug’s face made every knee go weak. Then he spoke.....

Song Christmas Is Banned *(tracks 2 & 12 – lyrics p18)* *(Mr Humbug, supported by whole cast)*

*(To the **intro music (track 13)** the cast disperses and Mr Humbug returns to his desk.)*

Scene 2

Narrator 3 At half past three the children headed home, still in shock. This news had hit them really hard. But despite her upset at the dreadful things Mr Humbug had said to her, the little girl lingered behind to offer him a kind word.

- Little girl** Mr Humbug, just to let you know, I understand that school can be quite stressful for the person in charge. So please just let me know if there’s anything I can do to help.
- Narrator 1** Okay, by now we’ve realised that Humbug is a bit of a swine, but with the words he uttered next he really plummeted new depths! Through gritted teeth he snarled.....
- Mr Humbug** You don’t know anything! Just clear off home and don’t waste my time!
- Narrator 2** With glistening eyes the little girl slipped out the office door, *(spoken slowly)* clueless as to all the strange events that would happen that night.....

*(As the lights dim Mr Humbug looks at his mountain of paperwork, sighs then yawns and lays his head on the desk. An **eerie sound** is heard (**track 14**) as the ghostly figure of Miss Penny Pincher, ex deputy-head, enters and stands nearby. She is weighed down with bags of books and files. Humbug slowly lifts his head and a look of confused shock spreads across his face.)*

- Narrator 3** I’m sure you’re all familiar with the term ‘a blast from the past’; well here was one that left our Mr Humbug absolutely gob-smacked! For there stood the ghost of Miss Penny Pincher, his old deputy head!

- Mr Humbug** Miss Pincher! Surely not! You popped your clogs ten years ago! Yes, I remember, you were shouting at some children who were playing in the snow, and your shrieking caused an avalanche to cascade down off your classroom roof! It killed you stone cold dead - literally!

- Miss Pincher Yes. Thank you for reminding me! Now listen, I am but the *spirit* of your old colleague and friend, Miss Penny Pincher, but I’m now a little less of a battle-axe than I was in the flesh!

(Miss Pincher sits in a vacant chair at the desk and the two fall into conversation.)

- Narrator 1** For years Mr Humbug and Penny Pincher ruled with a rod of iron over St Ebenezer’s School. They’d stay behind ’til ten at night, including weekends too, setting targets and writing plans for improving standards of each child and member of staff.

- Miss Pincher** But you see, my old friend, we had got our priorities wrong. A school should shine and its roof should lift with laughter. Teachers need encouragement and children respond to praise. I’ve paid the price for what I did here; I’m cursed to spend eternity carrying these things, but you could still be saved if you change your ways.

(She stands to show how the weight of books and files has taken its toll on her posture. As the lights come up she hobbles over to the main stage. A selection of teachers and children stand by and sing ‘at’ her.)

Song **Old Miss Pincher** *(tracks 3 & 15 – lyrics p19)* *(whole cast)*

Narrator 2 Her task now nearly done, Miss Pincher left Mr Humbug with this warning.....

Miss Pincher The torment that’s awaiting you in the afterlife is far greater than mine, and yet it is avoidable if you make the true spirit of Christmas welcome in this school. Just to help you understand, to make things crystal clear, three old friends of mine have said they’ll be popping in to see you. Believe me, you’re in for one heck of a night.....

(To the eerie music (CD 16) Miss Pincher exits. The lights dim.)

Mr Humbug That never really happened, did it? Ghosts with bags! I think not! What’s wrong with me? It must be something I ate – a bad school lunch no doubt. It’s time those cooks learned a bit about kitchen hygiene.

*(He starts ploughing through his paper work again and, as the **intro music (track 17)** plays, he yawns and nods off at his desk. During the music the main stage is made ready for the next scene.)*

Scene 3

Narrator 3 As Humbug snoozed, that eerie sound echoed again round his office.

*(To the **eerie sound (track 18)** the Spirit of School-Christmas-Past makes a grand entrance, walking towards the office through the audience.)*

Everything in the office shook, and when the poor headteacher woke he nearly wet himself!

(Mr Humbug yells and cowers, shaking, behind his desk. The spirit approaches the side stage and addresses the audience.)

Spirit I’m the Spirit of School-Christmas-Past. I believe that my coming here has been foretold to you. *(sniffing)* Ah yes, I recognise that smell – the familiar whiff of fear. I generally have that effect on people!

(The ghost surveys the scene then spots Mr Humbug.)

Up you get, you snivelling little toad. Hurry now and grab your coat. We need to get going!

Mr Humbug I can’t...you see...my wife...she’s cooked...and...I’m already late.

Spirit If that’s so then I’m a monkey’s uncle. NOW MOVE IT!

*(Mr Humbug jumps to attention, picks a jacket off the back of his chair and takes the spirit’s outstretched hand. To the **eerie music (track 19)** they cross and stand to the side of the main stage. The lights are raised. Rows of children, in dated clothes, sit happily at desks making paper chains, Christmas decorations, hats etc. A smiling teacher sits on a chair, with a child either side reading to her from a reading book. Mr Humbug at first looks confused, but then starts making sense of the scene in front of him.)*

Narrator 1 Soon it dawned on Humbug just exactly where he was. His stony face began to crack, and a smile appeared when he recognised the classroom in which he'd spent the best days of his childhood!

Spirit Look at all their faces. This is how Christmas should be, not like it is at your school.

(Mr Humbug leaves the spirit’s side and makes his way round the tables as he excitedly remembers the faces from his past. They do not see or hear him.)

Narrator 2 But Humbug wasn’t listening. Excitedly he was trying to catch all his old friends’ attention, but failing miserably.

Mr Humbug Tommy Taylor, Dickie Dixon, Johnny Johnson, Sally Simpson, Cathy Cross! Can none of you see me? I’m your old friend Harry Hum....*(stops abruptly)*

Narrator 3 But the face he noticed next stopped him in his tracks.

(Speechless, Mr Humbug moves back to the spirit’s side, pointing at a boy.)

Spirit I know it’s hard to take on board, but that young lad is you. See how he’s enjoying life, the way that children are supposed to. This is what all the youngsters at St Ebenezer’s go without.

Teacher That was lovely reading you two, now sit back down please. We’ve got decorations to make.

Young Hum. Isn’t life just wonderful? We’re having so much fun. The school is going to look fantastic when we get all these stars and paper chains up.

Cathy And don’t forget it’s Christmas lunch today. Mmm, I can’t wait!

Tommy And then we’ll watch the infants perform their nativity play.

Sally And is it true, Miss, Father Christmas might be dropping by to say hello?

Teacher Of course, my dear! Imagine having Christmas without him, or without any of this.....

Song This Time Of Year *(tracks 4 & 20 – lyrics p20)*

(The class of School-Christmas-Past, with cooks and infants in nativity costumes)

(The class disperses and the lights dim. The spirit leads Mr Humbug back to the office.)

Spirit As far as loving life is concerned, you’re a bit out of practice, old boy. Anyway, it’s time to bid you farewell, but you won’t be left alone for long, as two friends of mine are on their way to really ram the message home!

(The spirit exits, leaving a stunned Mr Humbug at his desk. He slaps himself in the face a couple of times and shakes his head. He pulls a hip flask from a drawer.)

Mr Humbug This is ridiculous! Just how many sneaky sips from this thing have I had? *(smiling)* Still, that experience was quite pleasant, I guess. *(frowning)* But no! Just get a grip! It’s all nonsense.

*(He dozes off at his desk. To the **intro music (track 21)** the main stage is set for scene 4.)*

Scene 4

Narrator 1 So Humbug was not convinced by what he saw. His methods got results and he’d never change them. *(spoken slowly)* Well, don’t be so sure, because he’d not banked on what would happen next.

*(To the **eerie music (track 22)** the slightly ‘merry’ Spirit of School-Christmas-Present makes a grand entrance, walking towards the office through the audience.)*

Spirit Boy, I’m feeling festive! So would you folks if you’d had as much mulled-wine as me! Yes, I’m seeing double, and I’m not too steady on my feet, but I realise that I’ve a serious job to do here.

(The spirit steadies him/herself, taking deep breaths, then looks round the office.)

Narrator 2 Spying Humbug in his swivel chair, sleeping quite soundly, this Spirit of School-Christmas-Present began to spin the poor headteacher round and round!

Spirit WAKE UP! WAKE UP, MISERY GUTS! There’s no time to lose!

(The spirit gleefully spins the chair, as a dazed Mr Humbug wakes in shock.)

Mr Humbug What?...Who?...Why?....Oh no, not another one! I thought I’d seen the last of you lot.

Spirit Now, that’s no way to welcome guests. I should give you a lesson in manners. But that can wait – we’ve got to go. Come on! Oh, and bring that hip-flask just in case!

*(As the lights come up, Mr Humbug reluctantly picks up his jacket again and retrieves the hip-flask from the drawer. He hands it to the spirit who takes a swig. To the **eerie music (track 23)** the two cross over and stand to the side of the main stage, which has been arranged in two sections: stage-right is an arrangement of chairs representing a staffroom, occupied by depressed-looking teachers and one of the cooks, and stage left a group of children in modern school clothes are sitting on tables cautiously making decorations, paper chains etc. out of scraps of paper. A few wear dreary-looking Christmas hats. The little girl from scenes 1 and 2 is amongst them. One child appears to be on ‘look out’ duty.)*

Narrator 3 Again, it didn’t take long for Humbug to realise just where he was, although it did come as a big surprise that these children from present-day St Ebenezer’s seemed to be ignoring his ‘no decorations’ rule.

(Mr Humbug moves around the children, waving his arms in a ‘Stop’ motion. They carry on with what they’re doing, unable to see or hear him.)

Mr Humbug This is mutiny! Were my demands not made quite clear? Tidy up this mess or else.....

Spirit Oi! Get back over here! *(Humbug moves back to the spirit’s side)*
Be quiet and listen to just how bad things have got in this place.

Child 1 Wet playtime! That gives us fifteen minutes to at least pretend that Christmas celebrations round here are still allowed.

Child 2 If we can get these hats and cards finished before the bell, we can sneak them home at half past three!

Child 3 But if Baboon Face catches us doing this, we’ll be for it! He’ll hit the roof!

Child 4 *(looking out)* Don’t worry, the coast seems clear. He’ll be locked in his office, like some bat in a cave, with his head stuck in a pile of paperwork!

(The children laugh, and Mr Humbug looks a little dejected.)

Child 5 At least at home we know how to have Christmas properly. It’s rubbish here, and I hate Mr Humbug.....

All children SO DO WE!

Little Girl Don’t be so mean, you lot. It’s the season of goodwill. I know that everybody’s fed up with him but he’s not that bad. I think underneath it all he’s really kind. *(Mr Humbug smiles)*

All children *(sarcastically)* Yeah, right!

(Mr Humbug’s face drops at this. The classroom action freezes.)

Mr Humbug They’re just silly children, Spirit. They don’t have a clue about how difficult my job is.

Spirit It’s not just them you’ve upset with your miserly ways. You’re hardly Mr Popular among the staff either.

(The spirit points over to where the staff members are seated.)

Miss Palette It’s not as if I asked him for much – just a few paints and rolls of shiny paper. But he still flipped his lid!

Cook And pound coins in the Christmas puddings wouldn’t cost a lot, but when we asked him he looked as if he wanted to shoot us!

Teacher 2 And when he found out we’d been singing songs instead of doing Maths, I swear his face swelled up and turned bright red!

Teacher 3 And banning Christmas altogether! He can’t do that. Hey, you lot, I reckon we should all resign!

Teacher 4 I agree! We don’t need this! As far as Humbug is concerned we’ve well and truly had a belly-full.

Song We've Had A Belly Full *(tracks 5 & 24 – lyrics p21)*

(The teachers and children supported by the whole cast)

*(To the **intro music (track 25)** Mr Humbug dejectedly follows the spirit back to the office and sits back at his desk. The lights are dimmed and the main stage is set for scene 5.)*

Scene 5

Spirit Things do seem to have got out of hand, don’t they? Well, I must be off now, but you’ll be getting one more visitor tonight.

Mr Humbug Oh no!

(The spirit exits, swigging from the hip-flask. Mr Humbug slumps back in his chair.)

Narrator 1 Mr Humbug’s mind was racing with everything he’d seen. He’d watched his past and present and what he saw had shocked him. He sat silently reflecting, thinking long and hard.

*(The **eerie music (track 26)** plays but this time quietly enough to be spoken over. The hooded figure of the Spirit of School-Christmas-Yet-To-Come quietly appears behind Mr Humbug’s chair. Sensing its presence Mr Humbug curls into a ball on the chair and hides his face.)*

Narrator 2 The Christmas ghosts who’d already been to St Ebenezzer’s were scary, yes, but turned out to be quite friendly characters. But this final one had Mr Humbug crying like a baby – the Spirit of School-Christmas-Yet-To-Come.

Mr Humbug Spirit, I fear you far more than the two that came before you.

Spirit So you should! I’m here to show you the consequences of living life the way you do. You will see exactly what the future holds for everybody in this school if you continue as you are.

*(To the **eerie music (track 27)** the two cross over and stand to the side of the main stage. The lights come up. Occupying most of the space is another classroom scene, but with a difference. The children are in identical futuristic outfits, wearing headphones connected to personal computer consoles, sitting upright and still, but with vacant expressions. In a smaller section of the stage, standing huddled round a fire, is a group of down-and-out ex-teachers, in balaclavas, big coats and fingerless gloves.)*

Narrator 3 This time there was nothing Mr Humbug recognised. It was a class of children working, without a teacher there? At least that’s what he thought, but then a curious robotic creature hovered into view.

*(To **ominous music (track 28)** a robot-teacher enters and stands in front of the class. It gives instructions in a robotic voice. The children respond by typing on keyboards.)*

Robot Students, please enter your personal ID. Thank you. Register complete. Now log on to ‘lesson 24’ of ‘Maths fast-track’. Thank you. Download complete. Begin the task. No talking!

(The children obediently type as the robot moves round their tables. When it is out of earshot, certain children sneakily talk to each other.)

Child 1 Psst! I’m really stuck. What did you get for number four?

Robot SILENCE! Talking is forbidden until ten to eleven. Then you will have five minutes for some brief communication, five more to relieve yourselves, then back to your work!

Child 2 So when exactly do we get to do PE or art? And as it’s Christmas, what about making cards?

Child 3 And Christmas carols? Christmas lunch? Christmas trees? Are we going to get the chance to enjoy any of those things!

Robot We forbid discussion of that topic. Christmas is a thing that schools no longer celebrate. It’s the law. You have to study fifteen hours a day. Relaxation is distraction. It prevents you from learning.

Child 4 I can’t take this anymore. I’m going mad! I need a break!

Robot CALL SECURITY!

*(To more **ominous music (track 29)** two security-bots enter.)*

Bot 1 Another specimen that is short-circuiting.

Bot 2 S/he will be no trouble once we change her/his hard-wiring.

*(To more **ominous music (track 30)** they drag the child away. The action freezes.)*

Narrator 1 Mr Humbug begged the spirit to do something to help the child.

Spirit But this is all your doing, Humbug. You’ve caused all this. If you don’t believe me then just take a look over there.

(The spirit points to the group of ex-teachers standing round the fire.)

Song Horribly Wrong *(tracks 6 & 31 – lyrics p22)*

(The down-and-out teachers sing round their fire. Supported by the children and robots of Christmas-Yet-To-Come they tell us in the song how this situation came about.)

*(During the **intro music (track 32)** Mr Humbug, very much in shock, follows the spirit back to the office and sits down. The lights are dimmed and the main stage is cleared for scene 6.)*

Scene 6

Narrator 2 Mr Humbug sat shaking in his chair, biting his fingernails!

Mr Humbug Spirit, does the future have to be that way?

Spirit Haven't you been listening? We've told you all along, it's up to you to stop these things happening. Only you can change things, only you can make it right. Have you got it in you, Humbug?

*(To the **eerie music (track 33)** the spirit exits and Mr Humbug falls into a fitful sleep. After a short pause the lights come up and all the children and staff from scene 1 noisily enter and take their positions facing the stage for assembly.)*

Narrator 3 At nine-fifteen next morning everybody gathered in the hall, making their usual din! It's an ancient riddle which nobody seems able to solve; why do children in assembly always make such a racket?

Narrator 1 In spite of the commotion Mr Humbug didn't wake. Miss Palette thought she'd better go and check on him.

(Miss Palette crosses to the office and knocks timidly on the door. There is no answer. She knocks again but still no answer. She cautiously walks in and sees the sleeping headteacher. She gently pokes him. He doesn't respond so she starts to shake him with increased force, eventually shouting.....)

Miss Palette WAKEY WAKEY, MR HUMBUG. IT'S ASSEMBLY!

(Mr Humbug wakes confused and bewildered, with Postit labels stuck to his face!)

Mr Humbug UGH! WHAT? WHERE AM I? OH SPIRIT, DON'T HURT ME!

(Shocked, Miss Palette jumps back. He composes himself, then sees her cowering.)

Miss Palette, did I scare you? Please forgive me. Assembly, yes!
Hold on one moment and I'll be right there.

(Surprised at his pleasant tone, she goes back to the assembled crowd. Mr Humbug rubs his face. He looks at his watch and a huge smile spreads across his face.)

It’s over! What a night I’ve had. Those spirits scared the life out of me! Now I understand just what a real fool I’ve been. It’s time to do something about it. Okay, let’s go!

(He takes a pen and starts scribbling notes on a piece of paper. A long speech will follow so to help the actor playing Mr Humbug the paper can already contain the lines of this speech. It can then be read, or referred to, to prevent the words being forgotten.)

Narrator 2 Mr Humbug’s mind was racing with ideas, and with images of Christmas he’d forgotten over time. Frantically he made some notes, then walked into assembly, swallowing hard and sweating slightly!

Narrator 3 Everybody in the hall expected nothing new, just a few harsh words as usual. But seeing Mr Humbug’s face they all gasped in surprise.....

All Goodness me he’s smiling!

Narrator 1 And anyone who knew the man would never have believed the words that then came out his mouth.

(Mr Humbug takes a deep breath and nervously steps forward, glancing at his paper. The teachers hush the children and they look at him expectantly.)

Mr Humbug Good morning everybody. How lovely to see you here! No, don’t worry, I’ve not lost my marbles, but I regret that in the past my behaviour has been, well, rather odd. But I’m delighted to tell you that things round here are going to change.

(There is confused muttering from everyone.)

Firstly, children, let me say how proud I am of you. Your smiling faces and cheerful voices don’t seem to fade, in spite of all the truly terrible things I’ve done.

(More muttering.)

And all you grown-ups of St Ebenezer’s School, I am so impressed with the jobs you do day in and day out. You’re simply the best! *(They gasp)* I know I’ve made things really hard for you, but I promise things will be much better from now on.

(Everybody cheers! As he proceeds to mention individuals and groups they join him on the main stage until he is at the centre of a happy crowd.)

Forget I said Christmas was banned. It’s all back on again! So come on, why can’t I see any paper chains hanging up? Miss Palette, let’s get spending. Make a list of what we need – it’s time to flash the cash!

(Big cheers!)

Kitchen staff, I take back all the things I said about our Christmas lunch. Get those turkeys roasting, and I also think you should hide a shiny TWO-pound coin in every Christmas pudding!

(More cheers!)

And you little ones in your nativity costumes, where are you?
Joseph and Mary, shepherds, wise-men, let's put on a show to
have them dancing in the aisles!

(More cheers!)

And lastly, where's the little girl, to whom I was so rude? I'll
never forget your forgiveness and kindness. Thanks to you, to all
of you, the future looks a little rosier. Now I know how
Christmas at school should be. I'VE TRULY SEEN THE LIGHT!

(Biggest cheers of all!)

Song He's Seen The Light *(tracks 7 & 34 – lyrics p23)*

(Whole cast, in sunglasses, singing and clapping like a traditional gospel congregation.)

Narrator 2 And so, with this lovely happy ending, our story is finished. All
that's left to say is.....

All MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!

Song Going Crackers *(tracks 1 & 35 – lyrics p17)*

(Whole cast)

THE END



Going Crackers

- Verse 1** We're going crackers! Such excitement we can't hide.
Hope Santa's sack has lots of things for us inside.
When Christmas morning comes,
(So sorry dads and mums)
We'll be out of bed before
5:30 AM for sure!
We're going crackers! It happens every year,
And that's 'cause Christmas time is here!
- Verse 2** We're going crackers, let our inhibitions go.
Hope for some smackers underneath the mistletoe!
But Great-Gran's sloppy kiss
Is one I'd like to miss!
Still I'll put up with it,
She's bought me a Man U kit! *
We're going crackers! It happens every year,
And that's 'cause Christmas time is here!
- Verse 3** We're going crackers, tucking in to Christmas fare
That's burnt as black as coal, but no-one seems to care!
We crash out finally
In front of the TV,
Where her majesty the Queen
Tells us how her year has been.
We're going crackers! It happens every year,
And that's 'cause Christmas time is here!
- La la la la la.....

* *Replace with any alternative 3-syllable item, eg:
'...West Ham kit' or '...new Spurs kit'*

Christmas Is Banned

Verse 1 *(Sung or spoken by Mr Humbug)*
As I look around I see that things aren't up to scratch,
Too many bad eggs that I must not allow to hatch.
Too much time being wasted, which is something I can't stand.
So, to get this train back on the tracks...
CHRISTMAS IS BANNED!

Chorus 1 *(Sung by rest of the cast)*
(Gasp) NO!
Mr Humbug, what have you done?
We've worked hard, can't we have some fun now?
Mr Humbug, give us a break,
Just a little icing on the Christmas cake, now.
Mr Humbug, you're not thinking straight, Mate!

Verse 2 *(Sung or spoken by Mr Humbug)*
I've been closely monitoring everything you do,
Drastic action on my part is very overdue.
Cards and hats and decorations, parties you have planned
Only serve to cause distraction, so...
CHRISTMAS IS BANNED!

Chorus 2 *(Sung by rest of the cast)*
(Gasp) You gotta be kidding!
Mr Humbug, we're begging you please
Change your mind. Look, we're on our knees now!
Mr Humbug, say it's a joke,
Show us all you really are a decent bloke now.
Yeah! Maybe someday pigs will fly.
Might as well kiss Christmas goodbye!

Old Miss Pincher

- Verse 1** Old Miss Pincher, it's been a while since ya
Shook off your mortal coil.
Now you're just a ghost who is trying to make the most of
Eternity in constant toil.
You thoroughly deserve it, well as we just observed it
Was always on the cards.
That's what you get when your heart's stone-cold and hard.
- Verse 2** Old Miss Pincher, you'd always try and lynch a
Bunch of kids having fun.
Their revenge was sweeter, 'cause under seven feet of
Snow you really came undone!
Well, if you'd been much nicer, and maybe once or twice a
Smile had cracked your face,
St Ebenezer's could have been a happier place.
- Verse 3** Old Miss Pincher, well you were every inch a
Wicked old panto dame.
Cinderella's step-ma, she never took things that far,
Well next to you she seems quite tame.
You never gave a tuppence, but you've got your comeuppance
And that suits everyone.
You've got forever just to think about what you've done.

This Time Of Year

Verse 1 We've been working hard since September,
Now the end of December is here
And we're feeling wiped out.
So, we're putting textbooks away,
'Cause there are games to play,
That's what Christmas at school is about.
It's the end of term at last,
Add a sparkle to the class,
Sprinkling glitter and bringing good cheer.
Festive hats and greetings cards,
Paper chains and silver stars -
That's why we all love this time of year

Verse 2 How we love a school Christmas lunch,
We are a fortunate bunch to be treated
To such splendid food!
Turkey and the trimmings, oh bliss!
It gets no better than this,
Now we're all in a real festive mood.
Teachers have a glass of wine,
(Well, come on, it's not a crime!)
It just makes for a great atmosphere.
Laze the afternoon away,
Perfect ending to the day.
Can't it always be this time of year?

Verse 3 What would any school Christmas be
Without a nativity?
Smiling faces on each girl and boy.
Really doesn't matter that they
Just want to fidget and wave,
While their parents are weeping with joy!
How we love to join in
With songs about a new king,
Angels, shepherds and red-nosed reindeer.
Shouting out the last bit
Of 'Oh Come All Ye Faithful', it
Can't get better than this time of year.

We've Had A Belly Full

Verse 1

(Adults)

It doesn't help that the days are getting shorter,
Or cold winds are blowing where they didn't oughta!
It's enough that there's no time to do the shopping.
Feeling festive? We just feel like dropping.

(All)

And when we thought things couldn't get worse
We've fallen foul of the 'Humbug curse'.
This Christmas will be miserable,
We've well and truly had a belly full.

Verse 2

(Children)

It doesn't help that the classroom is freezing,
There's no end to the coughing and the sneezing.
It's enough that we're all shivering like jellies,
And we all have come to school in wellies!

(All)

We got as low as we thought we could get,
But it seems we ain't seen nothing yet!
This Christmas will be miserable,
We've well and truly had a belly full.

Verse 3

(Adults)

It doesn't help that our work is never-ending,
And there are cards that we've not got round to sending.

(Children)

It's enough that we'll get no free time on Sunday,
We've got homework that must be in on Monday.

(All)

We had a silver lining to our cloud,
But now we're told that's not allowed.
This Christmas will be miserable,
We've well and truly had a belly full.
We've well and truly had a belly full.

Horribly Wrong

Verse 1

(Teachers)

Listen, good people, we'll tell you about
How we came to be down and out,
And why our lives have sunk this low,
It began about ten years ago.

Verse 2

(Teachers)

Mr Humbug, already well-known
As a headteacher, had frequently shown
A lust for power which didn't stop there.
Within six months the town made him mayor!

Verse 3

(Teachers)

Then to Westminster he was sent
As a member of parliament.
In no time at all, which seemed quite sinister,
Mr Humbug became Prime Minister.

Verse 4

(Teachers)

He embarked on his ultimate quest
To make his country's schools the best.
He began by replacing all teachers
With super efficient mechanical creatures!

Verse 5

(All)

Now fifteen hours each day at school's the norm.
Anything to make the kids perform!

(Teachers)

Robotic teachers are so cheap,
We've all ended up on the scrap-heap,
And now it's hard just keeping warm.

(All)

We should have seen it all along.
How could everything go so horribly wrong?

Verse 6

(All)

We remember how things used to be,
Lots of art and music and PE.
But now they've knocked that on the head
Now we're doing 'proper' work instead 'cause
That's what our PM has decreed.
We should have seen it all along.
How could everything go so horribly wrong?
How could everything go so horribly wrong?

He's Seen The light

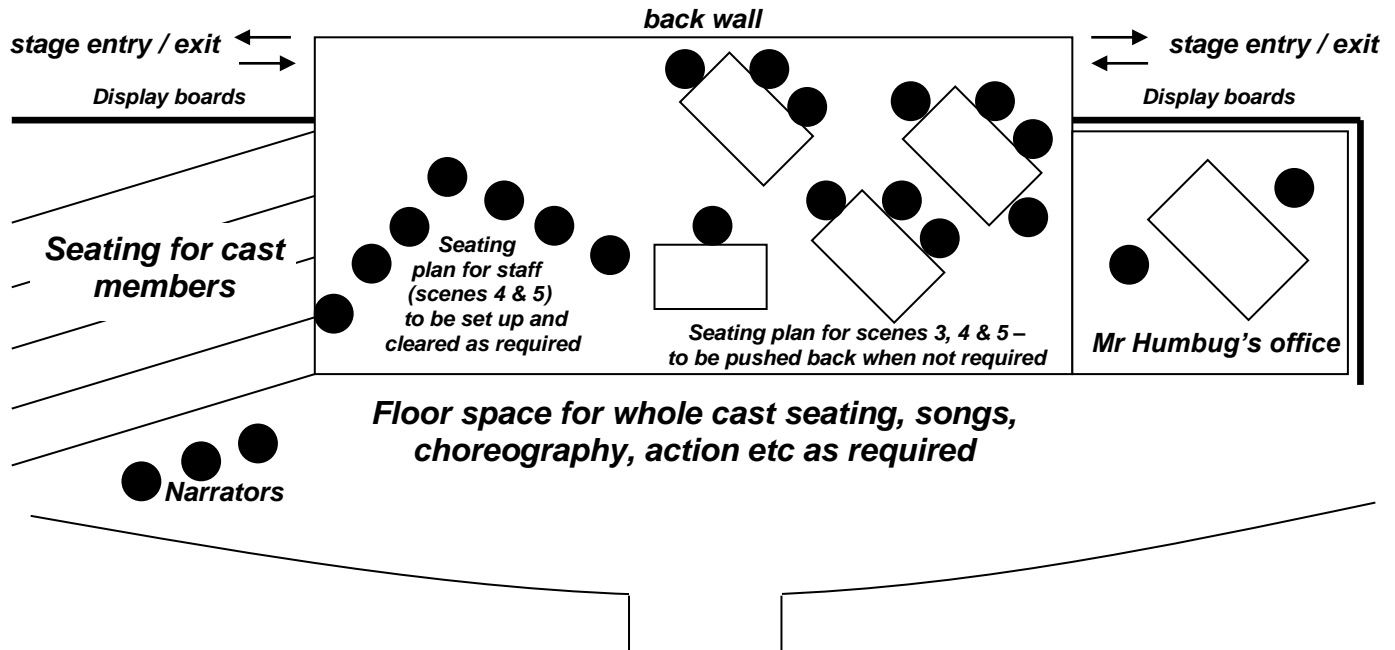
Verse 1 He's seen the light! Humbug's seen the light!
And now everything is gonna be alright.
'Cause he's one happy brother filled with Christmas joy,
Getting worked-up like an excited little boy!
Here's the biggest U-turn since Mr Scrooge himself
Thought some turkey might improve Tiny Tim's health!
O Alleluia! Let's sing in praise!
Who'd have thought that he would really change his ways?
We've got to wear these shades, the future is so bright
Now Mr Humbug, at last, has seen the light!

Verse 2 He's seen the light! Humbug's seen the light!
And now everything is gonna be alright.
'Cause he's at last been bitten by the Christmas bug,
And now he's climbing out the deep hole that he'd dug.
Here's the biggest shocker since Gabriel declared
Mary better get the family donkey prepared!
O Alleluia! Sing to the Lord!
Thank him that a cast-away is back on board.
We've got to wear these shades, the future is so bright
Now Mr Humbug, at last, has seen the light!

HE'S SEEN THE LIGHT!

STAGING AND PRODUCTION SUGGESTIONS

We suggest a staging layout similar to this, which will allow all the cast to be on view all the time, and to be heard during all the songs. Actors and groups seated to the side will easily be able to move into, and out of prominent positions for their featured songs, dialogue or choreography. For the entrance and exit of individual characters, such as spirits, space can be made behind display boards either side of the main stage, or a 'channel' can be created through the audience.



Audience

- **Scenery and furniture** – You can really go to town on the back wall, and on the display boards behind the seated cast. Lots of paper chains, pictures of various Christmas scenes, a Christmas tree etc. A mural could depict the view through a classroom or hall window, with typical school Christmas displays around it. In contrast, the display boards representing the walls of Mr Humbug's office could be grey and unwelcoming, showing shelves full of files, and a large graph charting the ups and downs of achievement over recent years. Tables and chairs from classrooms are all the furniture required centre stage, while Mr Humbug's office should have a desk, piled high with papers and files and a computer, a swivel chair, and an additional 'guest' chair. As this character has a lot of lines to learn, a script or cue sheets could be concealed on the desk too.
- **Costume** – The only costumes which might need some thought are those of the spirits. Inspiration could be taken from the original Dickensian characters. If not, the stereotypical white sheet and white

make-up, with accessories to show the different spirits’ characteristics would be an easy option. A white-faced, power-suited Miss Pincher, laden with files would be effective, as would a Santa outfit for either the spirit of school Christmas past or present. Alternatively the spirits could be dressed as teachers from certain eras – a 70’s hippy, a suited modern teacher, a space-suited futuristic teacher – but with pale, ghostly faces.

- **Props** – Props have been limited to anything and everything that can be found round school. Raid the art resources, raid the staffroom, raid the head’s office!
- **Use of Space** – The whole cast will probably want to be involved in the performance of all the songs. A space on the floor in front of the main stage could be used to accommodate extra bodies. In this space, for some songs, the cast could perform dance routines or act out the lyrical content. A seating area for resting performers could be allocated to one side of the stage. This lets them enjoy the performance as part of the audience, allows easy movement on and off the stage, and of course eliminates the need for back-stage supervision.
- **Content** – You can personalise your production by adding or changing character names, and re-writing any parts of the script to relate more closely to the things that happen within your particular school. You may find your children and staff are inspired to recall and write about other humorous or memorable events and characters from their own ‘Christmas-at-school’ experiences. Different songs that the children know and enjoy could replace, or be added to those on the CD. Don’t feel restricted – make the show your own.
- **Audience seating** – Finally, we suggest the audience be seated at tables (cabaret style), and encouraged to bring drinks and nibbles of their choice. A relaxed party atmosphere will really make the evening go with a swing, and give parents, staff and children something to remember for a long time. Please email, phone or write to us if you have any production queries at all, and we’ll be more than happy to help.

One last suggestion – have fun, enjoy yourselves and have a great Christmas at school!