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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.

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- 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 ☐ **£36.00** (including VAT)
(no admission charged and no tickets sold)

or

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(admission **is** charged and/or tickets **are** sold)

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By ticking, select one of the payment options below:

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

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

PLOT SUMMARY

With the opening song (***Life’s Good***) we meet the carpenters of Bethlehem, one of whom is a young apprentice, Joseph, who works for an elderly carpenter called Simeon. Although very happy in his job, Joseph leaves Bethlehem to start his own business in Nazareth, where there is less ‘competition’! Simeon therefore needs a new apprentice (***song – Scratch My Back***), but when all the suitable youngsters are snapped up by other trades people, the only candidate left is a poor girl called Sarah. Although reluctant to take her on (***song – The Lucky Ones***), Simeon realises that Sarah is a talented woodworker when he sees the intricate carvings she is trying to sell to make money for her poor family. The two really hit it off and over time they become the most sought-after carpentry team in Bethlehem.

One day, the Roman soldiers announce that lots of visitors will soon be coming to the town. This means all the innkeepers and guesthouse owners want their properties repairing and renovating (***song – Spick And Span***), which in turn means lots more work for the carpenters. We learn that one particular visitor will be Joseph, Simeon’s old apprentice, who is returning to Bethlehem with his new wife Mary (***song – Side By Side***). Mary is soon to have a very special baby; a gift from God.

As his workload increases, sprucing up the inns and guesthouses, the now frail Simeon finds it all too much. Although desperately sorry for Sarah, he has to hang up his chisel and saw, retire from carpentry and let his apprentice go. Sarah bravely tells him that she’ll be fine and goes back to selling her carvings, hoping she’ll make enough from Bethlehem’s visitors to support her family. However, as they arrive, the visitors are more bothered about finding somewhere to stay rather than buying souvenirs. Also, their attention is drawn to the unusually starry sky (***song – Stars Over Bethlehem***) and they pass by Sarah without noticing her.

Sitting sadly at the roadside, Sarah is approached by one of the innkeepers. He has a broken manger which urgently needs repairing, as it’s the only place to lay a baby which has just been born in his stable! Having expertly fixed the manger (for which she generously asks no payment) Sarah then meets a group of shepherds. On the instructions of angels who appeared to them, the shepherds are hurrying to see the baby whom they’ve been told is the son of God. One shepherd feels embarrassed to meet such a special child as he has a broken crook, so again without taking payment, Sarah fixes it for him and the shepherds rush off. Sarah then meets three mysterious strangers also looking for the baby, and each carrying a gift for Him in a wooden box. Unfortunately one of the boxes (containing a gift of gold) has a broken lid (***song – I’ve Broken My Box***) which the stranger feels would not be right to give to the son of God. Sarah mends the box for nothing and she is left alone once again.

However, the stranger whose box she mended soon returns and, recognising Sarah’s kindness and generosity, invites her to come to the stable (***song – Fill Your Hearts***) to meet the baby herself. On learning that Joseph is there (having heard Simeon talk fondly of him over the years) she insists that the old man comes too. After an emotional reunion around the manger, Sarah is given some of the gold as a thank-you for her help in making this wonderful night run a little more smoothly. We are told that, with the gold, she ensures Simeon has a comfortable retirement and sets up as a carpenter in her own right, securing the future of her family. So once more, life’s good! (***song – Life’s Good - reprise***)

CHARACTERS

(31 speaking parts in order of appearance)

5 Narrators

Joseph – including singing solo

Simeon – including singing solo

Weaver

Builder

Baker

Farmer

2 Carpenters

Sarah – including singing solo

4 Soldiers

4 Innkeepers

Mary

Gabriel – singing solo only, no spoken lines

2 Travellers

4 Shepherds

First Wise Man – including singing solo

(Ensemble Characters – for featured songs and choreography)

Carpenters

Trades People

Children

Soldiers

Townsfolk

Travellers

The other Wise Men

Angels

Scene 1

*(As **intro music** plays (CD track 9) the children enter and take their positions for the first scene. Fade the music when ready.)*

Narrator 1 There won't be many of you who don't know the story of the very first Christmas – the one about Mary, Joseph, angels, shepherds, wise men and, of course, the baby Jesus!

Narrator 2 These characters will be in *our* story, but we'll also be telling you about a few you may not have heard of before. They're not so well known, but they still had an important part to play in what happened all those years ago.

(Joseph enters carrying a chisel and a saw.)

Narrator 3 But let's start off with someone who is well-known. Joseph (we mentioned him earlier) was a carpenter in a village called Nazareth. But he wasn't born there. No, Joseph was born and grew up in a different town, which was called Bethlehem.

Narrator 4 Bethlehem was where he learned his trade. With other keen youngsters he spent his early years mastering the saw, hammer, chisel and plane, until he and his friends became skilled craftsmen.

(The other carpenters enter, each carrying tools of their trade.)

Narrator 5 The carpenters of Bethlehem were a jolly lot. They would whistle merrily as they turned a piece of timber into a door, a table, a cartwheel or a simple set of bowls and plates. For them life was busy, and life was good.....

Song Life's Good *(CD tracks 1 & 10, lyrics p16)*

(Carpenters supported by the whole cast)

(As the song finishes Joseph stands forward of the other carpenters. A suitcase is slid across the floor to him. He picks it up.)

Joseph Friends, I have something to tell you. I'm leaving Bethlehem to set up in business where there's a bit less competition!

(Simeon, with a grey beard, stands forward and embraces Joseph, who then exits.)

Simeon *(waving to Joseph)* Goodbye Joseph, my friend. Things just won’t be the same without you!

Narrator 1 Simeon was an older carpenter. When Joseph was a boy he had been Simeon’s apprentice. That means Simeon had taught Joseph all his carpentry skills and had given him a job.

Narrator 2 They worked happily together for many years, but now, with Joseph gone, Simeon was a man down. He needed a new apprentice.

Simeon And I know just where to find one!

(The trades people enter; builders, bakers, weavers, farmers etc, two or three of each, all carrying a sign showing the tools/products of their trade and the word ‘HIRING’. With the carpenters, they stand in their groups at one side of the stage – see staging suggestions/props.)

Narrator 3 One day every month the local trades people would gather in Bethlehem’s town square, to hire youngsters who were looking for work.

(The children nervously enter and stand on the other side of the stage.)

Narrator 4 These children, who wanted to start earning a living, would become apprentices to bakers, builders, weavers, farmers and, of course, carpenters.

Narrator 5 And in this way the town prospered and everybody kept themselves busy.

Song Scratch My Back *(CD tracks 2 & 11, lyrics p17)*

(Trades people and children supported by the whole cast)

(As the song finishes the trades people and children mingle. The trades people inspect the children, checking their hands, muscles, teeth and behind their ears. As the following conversations take place, they ‘pair-up’.)

Weaver Hmmm, you’re a bit grubby but I reckon I can make a weaver out of you.

Builder With a bit of fattening up we’ll have you carrying bricks in no time. You’re hired!

Baker Kind of rough round the edges, but I think you show promise. Fancy being a baker, you little whipper-snapper?

Farmer *(sniffing)* Phew! You’ll fit in on my farm! The goats and sheep are going to love you!

Carpenter 1 Ten fingers - good! That means you can afford to lose a couple while you learn how to use a saw!

(The rest of the children and trades people mingle then all exit in pairs, leaving only one tradesman, Simeon, and one child, Sarah. Sarah sits cross-legged, looking sad. She has a cloth bag slung across her shoulder.)

Narrator 1 When the trades people had chosen their apprentices, off they went to start teaching them their new skills.

Narrator 2 All except Simeon had found someone. He still needed to fill the position left by Joseph, but the only child left was a little girl called Sarah.

Narrator 3 Sarah was from a poor family who needed her to earn extra money so they would have enough food to see them through the coming winter.

Narrator 4 But a small girl like this couldn’t become a carpenter, surely? Who’d ever heard of a girl making a living hammering and sawing great lumps of wood? Yet Simeon was a kind man and the least he could do was offer this lonely little girl a few minutes of his time.....

Song The Lucky Ones *(CD tracks 3 & 12, lyrics p18)*

(Sarah and Simeon supported by the whole cast)

Narrator 5 Simeon longed to help Sarah, but what could he do? As he put a comforting arm around her, he noticed the cloth bag she had over her shoulder.

Simeon What is in your bag, child?

*(Sarah takes out three or four intricate wooden carvings – **see staging suggestions/props**. She hands them to Simeon.)*

Sarah I like to carve wood, you see. I make these ornaments and try to sell them to get money for my family.

Narrator 1 Simeon was amazed. He’d never seen such beautiful woodwork, especially by a child. He immediately had a change of heart.

Simeon I’d be a fool not to make you my apprentice. Sarah.... you’re hired!

(As intro music plays (CD track13) Simeon and Sarah exit and the stage is made ready for the next scene. Fade the music when ready.)

Scene 2

(A workbench stands centrally – see staging suggestions/props. Sarah, now wearing an apron, is sanding a length of wood. Simeon sits on a stool looking tired.)

Narrator 2 During the next few years, under the watchful eye of Simeon, Sarah became a skilful carpenter. Together they made a great team.

Narrator 3 Simeon would make large beams, posts, doors and frames while Sarah carved them to fit exactly, often adding beautiful details. Of all the buildings in Bethlehem, it was easy to tell which ones had been worked on by Sarah and Simeon, because they looked the best!

Narrator 4 However, Simeon was now an old man and began to struggle with his heavy workload. This was not going to get easier, especially after an announcement made in the town one afternoon.

(A small regiment of Roman soldiers marches on. In formation they stand across the front of the stage – see staging suggestions/costumes. The rest of the trades people, extra townsfolk and the innkeepers follow on and gather round to listen. Soldier 1 reads from a scroll.)

Soldier 1 Caesar Augustus, the ruler of this land, has ordered that every man must return to the town of his birth, to register his name for a new tax.

- Soldier 2** This means the few of you who weren’t born here in Bethlehem will have to clear off for a while. But seeing as most of you *were* born here, most of you will be staying!
- Soldier 3** Now, our records show that over the years hundreds of men born in Bethlehem now live somewhere else. This means *they* will all be returning here to sign the register.
- Soldier 4** So brace yourselves, ’cause this town is going to get pretty busy! Oh, and you might want to tidy up a bit.....

Song Spick And Span *(CD tracks 4 & 14, lyrics p19)*

(Soldiers supported by the whole cast)

(As the song ends the soldiers exit.)

- Narrator 5** So why would this mean things were going to get harder for Simeon? Well, with lots of expected visitors, the innkeepers and guesthouse owners of Bethlehem had to make sure their properties were in a good state of repair.
- Innkeeper 1** The rafters in my roof have woodworm! I can’t have them collapsing on my guests’ heads!
- Innkeeper 2** And I’m going to need a much bigger dining room table. I can’t have my guests eating off their laps!
- Innkeeper 3** Well, the door on my outside toilet is missing! I can’t have my guests sitting in there with the whole world watching!
- Innkeeper 4** And my stable needs a complete makeover. The last thing I need is horses and donkeys complaining about their accommodation!
- Narrator 2** This meant the carpenters of Bethlehem were going to have a lot of work to do. Unfortunately, Simeon wasn’t sure his old bones were up to the job.....

(As intro music plays (CD track15) all exit, with Sarah supporting the fragile Simeon. The stage is cleared for the next scene. Fade the music when ready.)

Scene 3

Narrator 3 Now, you’ll remember that one of the men who left Bethlehem, the town of his birth, was Joseph. A lot had happened to him since he set up as a carpenter in Nazareth, a town far away.

Narrator 4 Actually, it’s fairer to say that a lot had happened to Mary, the young woman he had just married. We’ll leave it to the happy couple to explain the details to you.....

(Mary and Joseph enter, hand in hand.)

Song Side By Side *CD tracks 5 & 16, lyrics p20)*

(Mary, Joseph and Gabriel supported by the whole cast)

(Two suitcases are slid across the floor to Joseph. He picks both up.)

Joseph All that way just so that Caesar Augustus can clear me out of this year’s profits!

Mary Look on the bright side, Joseph. Maybe you’ll catch up with your old friend you speak so much about.

Joseph Of course, Simeon! Well that would make this trip worthwhile. Come on Mary, we’re off to Bethlehem!

Narrator 5 So, with Mary’s baby due any time, they set off on their long journey back to the place Joseph was born.

(As intro music plays (CD track 17) they exit. Fade the music when ready for the next scene.)

Scene 4

Narrator 1 Back in Bethlehem those hundreds of visitors had started to arrive. The local trades people, especially the carpenters, had been very busy sprucing up the town. But as expected, Simeon had been finding the workload very difficult.

(Simeon hobbles on supported on each arm by two other carpenters. Sarah follows and watches from a short distance, unseen by them.)

Simeon *(wincing in pain)* It’s no good. I just can’t cope with the work. I hate to say it, but I think my carpentry days are over.

Carpenter 1 But what will you do Simeon? How will you make ends meet?

Simeon I’ll get by, but I’m worried about Sarah, my apprentice. Perhaps one of you could take her on?

Carpenter 1 I’m sorry Simeon, but I already have an apprentice, a strong boy who can lift heavy timber.

Carpenter 2 No other carpenter in Bethlehem is going to take on a girl, Simeon.

Simeon But her family rely on her. They will really suffer this winter, all because of me.

(The carpenters exit as Simeon rubs his aching joints. Sarah approaches him.)

Narrator 2 Sarah had overheard this. She loved Simeon and didn’t want to worry the old man. She knew what she had to do.

Sarah Simeon, I don’t think I want to be a carpenter anymore. I’m going to look for another job, perhaps as a weaver or a baker.

Narrator 3 She thanked him for everything he’d done for her. Then before he could see the tears in her eyes, she turned and walked away.

(Sarah exits in one direction. Simeon hobbles off in the other direction.)

Narrator 4 Simeon wasn’t a fool – he knew exactly what Sarah was doing and why. As he shuffled home he asked God to watch over this kind and brave little girl, hoping that one day he would see her again.

*(As **intro music** plays (CD track 18) they exit. Fade the music when ready for the next scene.)*

Scene 5

(Sarah enters, carrying her shoulder bag, and sits centre stage. She takes out the wooden carvings and displays them in front of her. She also takes out a piece of wood which she begins whittling with a knife.)

Narrator 5 Sarah sat at the side of the road with her wooden carvings, hoping to sell a few to the visitors who were flocking to the town.

(The Travellers enter. They ignore Sarah and stare at the sky instead.)

Narrator 1 But not a single one of them noticed her. Everyone was gazing at the evening sky, which was alive with shimmering light. And there, directly over Bethlehem, was a bright new star, lighting up the heavens and the earth below.

Song Stars Over Bethlehem *(CD tracks 6 & 19, lyrics p21)*
(Travellers supported by the whole cast)

Traveller 1 Well, I really can’t stand around looking at the sky. I have to find a room for the night.

Traveller 2 And I heard there aren’t many left! Best be quick or else we’ll be sleeping on the streets!

(The Travellers exit, leaving Sarah alone.)

Narrator 2 Things were looking hopeless for Sarah. She hadn’t sold a single wooden carving, and without a job she had no idea how she might provide for her family.

Narrator 3 But then she was approached by someone she recognised. It was the innkeeper whose stable she and Simeon had recently repaired! He was carrying something quite heavy and looked very worried.

(Innkeeper 4 enters, carrying a manger – see staging suggestions/props.)

Innkeeper 4 *(garbling anxiously)* Oh Sarah, you have to help me! There’s a woman in my stable...she’s just had a baby. This manger... it’s all I can offer her....but it’s broken!

Sarah A manger? Why would someone with a baby need a manger? Isn’t it for animals to eat out of?

Narrator 4 He explained how a woman and her husband had begged him for a room for the night, but the only free space was his stable. The woman was about to have a baby and needed a cradle. The manger of hay was all there was to lay the baby on....but it was broken.

Innkeeper 4 There’s something special about these people, Sarah, and their baby. I can’t explain it, but I know we have to help them! Can you mend this?

(Sarah takes the manger and works on it with some tools from her bag.)

Narrator 5 Quickly and skilfully, Sarah mended the manger. Without taking any payment she gave it back to the innkeeper, who thanked her and hurried away. But he wasn’t the only person that night who was in need of some emergency woodwork!

(The innkeeper exits. A group of shepherds then hurriedly enters. One shepherd stops by Sarah while the rest continue in the same direction as the innkeeper. They stop just before exiting and turn to the shepherd with Sarah.)

Shepherds WILL YOU PLEASE HURRY UP!

Shepherd 1 Wait a moment! *(to Sarah)* Sarah, please help me! I can’t visit the new baby king with a broken crook!

Sarah The new baby king? Whatever do you mean?

Shepherd 1 The son of God! He’s been born tonight in a stable! Angels came to us on the hillside to give us the wonderful news and to tell us to visit him! But the top of my crook has snapped off and it doesn’t seem right to show up carrying it in this state!

Narrator 1 Sarah fixed the broken head back onto the crook. She even carved some beautiful detail onto it, so that the shepherd could hold it with confidence in front of the special baby. Without taking any payment, she gave it back and the shepherds all hurried off. But the requests for Sarah’s help didn’t stop there.....

(As the next song begins, the three Wise Men enter.)

Song I've Broken My Box *(CD tracks 7 & 20, lyrics p22)*

(The three Wise Men supported by the whole cast)

Sarah *(stepping forward)* Excuse me, but I think I can help.

Narrator 1 Sarah took the broken box which had gold inside and skilfully repaired the lid. It was as good as new, a gift worthy of God’s own son. The mysterious men thanked her and hurried away to find the baby.

Narrator 2 Sarah smiled to herself. So she had sold no carvings, but she was happy that she had been able to help all those who had needed it that evening. Hungry and tired she fell asleep, her head spinning with thoughts about the special baby, the new king born in a stable.

(The lights fade slightly as Sarah lies down. After a moment, Wise Man 1, whose box was broken, re-enters and stands over Sarah. He gently shakes her awake.)

Narrator 3 But Sarah’s evening wasn’t over just yet.....

Wise Man 1 Child, wake up. There’s someone I want you to meet.

(As intro music plays (CD track 21) Sarah wakes and the two exit. Fade the music when ready for the next scene.)

Scene 6

(The nativity tableau. Mary and Joseph sit centrally by the manger. The shepherds and two wise men kneel either side. Angels stand in attendance.)

Narrator 4 That night Mary had given birth to her baby, whom she had named Jesus as the angel had told her to do. She had wrapped Him up and laid Him in the manger. Now, as He slept, angels watched over Him and the shepherds and wise men knelt and worshipped Him.

(Wise Man 1 enters with a nervous Sarah. They stand at the edge of the group.)

Wise Man 1 Sarah, this is Jesus. Because of your help, He has a comfy bed, and visitors and gifts worthy of a king.

(Wise Man 1 leads Sarah to the manger, where she kneels.)

Narrator 5 So Sarah got to see the special child. She felt so happy to be part of this small group who were there in the stable, giving thanks for His birth.

Song Fill Your Hearts *(CD tracks 8 & 22, lyrics p23)*

(Whole cast)

Mary *(smiling at Sarah)* Hello Sarah. I am Mary, His mother.

Joseph And I am Joseph. We’re from Nazareth, but I used to live here in Bethlehem. I’m a carpenter like you, Sarah.

Mary He’d have mended the manger himself, but his hands have been full with other things tonight, as you can see!

Sarah You’re Joseph? Joseph the carpenter who used to live here in Bethlehem? *(exiting excitedly)* Everyone, please excuse me! I’ll be back in just a minute!

Narrator 1 Sarah knew there was one important person who should really be here at this happy gathering. She had often listened to Simeon talk fondly of his old apprentice and friend, Joseph, so she ran to the old man’s house and brought him to the stable.

(Simeon enters with Sarah. Joseph rushes over to him and they embrace.)

Joseph Simeon! Simeon! My dear old friend! You’re here!

Narrator 2 Both men wept with joy at being reunited. Joseph introduced Simeon to his new family and Simeon knelt by the manger and thanked God for His special gift.

Narrator 3 We know how the story of Jesus’ life continued after that night, but what of Sarah and Simeon? Well, fortune did smile upon them. The wise man whose box Sarah had fixed, gave her a small share of the gold that was inside it, enough to keep her family fed and to take over Simeon’s carpentry business. This in turn gave Simeon a pension and happy retirement.

Narrator 4 In Bethlehem, Sarah became everyone’s first choice when they needed a bit of woodwork doing and, never happier than when she was standing at her workbench, for her life was busy and life was good....

Song Life's Good *(CD tracks 9 & 23, lyrics p16)*
(Whole cast)

THE END

Life's Good

Chorus *Life's good when you work with wood
And do nothing but create all day.
Hey! Hey!
Life's fine when you spend your time
With a chisel and a saw
Who could ever wish for more?*

Verse 1 There's no-one so contented,
We are such happy folk,
When sawing up a piece of pine
Or fashioning a chunk of oak! Well,
The rain may fall
And clouds may fill the sky.
You won't hear us complain
And here's the reason why....

Chorus *Life's good when you work with wood.....*

Verse 2 And when we get a splinter,
Or bash our finger tips,
Or drop a hammer on our toes
The smile will never leave our lips! Well,
The rain may fall
And clouds may fill the sky.
You won't hear us complain
And here's the reason why....

Chorus *Life's good when you work with wood.....*

Shout *LIFE'S GOOD!*

Scratch My Back

Verse 1

(Trades people) If you have got stick-ability, there is the possibility
You’ll be an apprentice here today.
So if you’re bright and keen and fit
And not afraid to work a bit,
Come with us and maybe earn some pay.

Chorus

(All) Scratch my back, scratch my back,
Scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours – OK?
Scratch my back, scratch my back.
I’ll scratch yours – we’re partners all the way!

Verse 2

(Children) If we have got stick-ability, there is the possibility
We will feel grown-up and learn a trade.
We’re ready to work hard, it’s true
And do the best we can for you!
’Specially if we know that we’ll be paid!

Chorus Scratch my back, scratch my back.....

Verse 3

(All) If they have got stick-ability there is the possibility
They will earn a crust and make some dough!
Their boss’s work-load will be less,
As long as they don’t make a mess!
Go on, why not let them have a go!

Chorus Scratch my back, scratch my back.....

Repeat chorus

The Lucky Ones

Verse 1

(Simeon)

Little girl, why are you all alone in this place?
Who are you? What is this sorry look on your face?
You are too small to work, you should be back at home
Where you'd be safe and sound, not out here on your own.

Chorus

(All)

*And we know that we are the lucky ones.
There are others without their fair share.
Who can they lean on when they need a friend?
Who'll show them somebody cares?*

Verse 2

(Sarah)

I am here seeking work, as my family is poor.
Yes, I'm small but I'll try really hard, that's for sure.
My father is ill, there's no money you see,
So I must find a job – I need you to help me.

Chorus

And we know that we are the lucky ones....

Verse 3

(All)

What will happen to Sarah? We all want to know.
Will she feel bitter winds or a warm, sunny glow?
Simeon must decide what the future will bring.
He must make up his mind. Will he do the right thing?

Chorus

And we know that we are the lucky ones....

Spick And Span

Verse 1 Caesar Augustus, the ruler of this land,
Has given an order that every single man
Must pay a tax
Back in the town where he was born.
It's safe to bet Bethlehem will get
Visitors in the thousands!
Get yourselves ready,
This is the calm before the storm!
So let's make this place.....

Chorus *Spick and span, spick and span!
We need to tidy up just as quickly as we can!
Spick and span, spick and span!
Tidy up as quickly as we can!*

Verse 2 Caesar Augustus, the ruler of this land,
Has given an order that every single man
Must pay a tax
Back in the town where he was born.
Just days from now (oh, holy cow!)
You won't know what has hit you!
Get yourselves ready,
This is the calm before the storm!
So let's make this place.....

Chorus *Spick and span, spick and span.....*

Middle 8 Clear the litter, sweep the floor,
Paint each window frame and door.
Trim the bushes, clean the well
And someone please sort out that awful smell!

Chorus *Spick and span, spick and span.....*

Repeat chorus

Side By Side

Verse 1

(Joseph) When I met Mary I soon fell in love
And asked her to marry me.
(All) Bunches of flowers he took to her house
And he knelt down on one knee.
(Mary) I'll be the wife of a carpenter,
A life that will suit me just fine.
(All) But there'll be sawdust all over the place,
So let's hope she doesn't mind!

Chorus *Who knows what is coming today or tomorrow?
Life can make us happy or fill us with sorrow.
The ups and the downs will happen, whatever.
Standing side by side they will face it together.*

Verse 2

(Gabriel) I came to Mary to tell her that she
Was going to have God's son.
(All) She had been chosen from many, and He
Decided she'd be the one.
(Mary) I was afraid, it was like a dream,
I worried about what you said.
(All) You would be mum to a king, and that's quite
A change from the life you led!

Chorus *Who knows what is coming today or tomorrow.....*

Verse 3

(Joseph) I need to go back to Bethlehem -
This letter, it tells me so.
(All) That's where you came from, you have to return,
The law says you have to go.
(Mary) I'll come with you, though I'm not too keen!
The journey will be such a drag!
(All) You have to leave right away, hurry up!
Get ready and pack your bag!

Chorus *Who knows what is coming today or tomorrow.....*

Repeat *The ups and the downs will happen, whatever.
Standing side by side they will face it together.*

Stars Over Bethlehem

Chorus *Stars over Bethlehem twinkle on high,
Dotted around in the evening sky.
This town’s so pretty, it’s hard to believe
Any of us ever wanted to leave.*

Verse 1 Look up above at this magical scene!
Pin-points of silver, with darkness between.
See how they sparkle and flicker and glow,
As the earth watches from here, far below.

Chorus *Stars over Bethlehem.....*

Verse 2 One of the stars stands out more than the rest,
Bigger and brighter, so clearly the best.
Shimmering gently, it lights up the night,
Beaming, as if to show heaven’s delight.

Chorus *Stars over Bethlehem.....*

I've Broken My Box

Verse 1

(All)

Wise men come to see the king,
Presents each for Him they bring.
Special wooden boxes hold
Frankincense and myrrh and gold.
But, something awful happened not so very far from here...

Chorus

(Wise Man 1) *I've broken my box!*

(All) *He's broken his box!*

He snapped off the lid and it no longer locks!

Oh what can he do? He hasn't a clue!

He can't meet the son of God with a broken box!

Verse 2

(All)

Over plains and desert sands,
Distant countries, foreign lands.
They have travelled far and wide,
One bright star their only guide.
But, something awful happened not so very far from here...

Chorus *I've broken my box....*

Verse 3

(Wise Men)

Years we've waited patiently,
Now it's happened, finally.
Our hearts are filled with joy,
We're soon to meet this baby boy!
But, something awful happened not so very far from here...

Chorus *I've broken my box....*

Repeat Chorus

Fill Your Hearts

Chorus *Fill your hearts and raise your voices,
Join with us in song.
Sing out loud, give Him the glory.
It's a brand new start for everyone.*

Verse 1 Asleep on a manger of hay,
A new king born on this day.
Beneath a star shining bright,
A miracle's happening tonight....

Chorus *Fill your hearts.....*

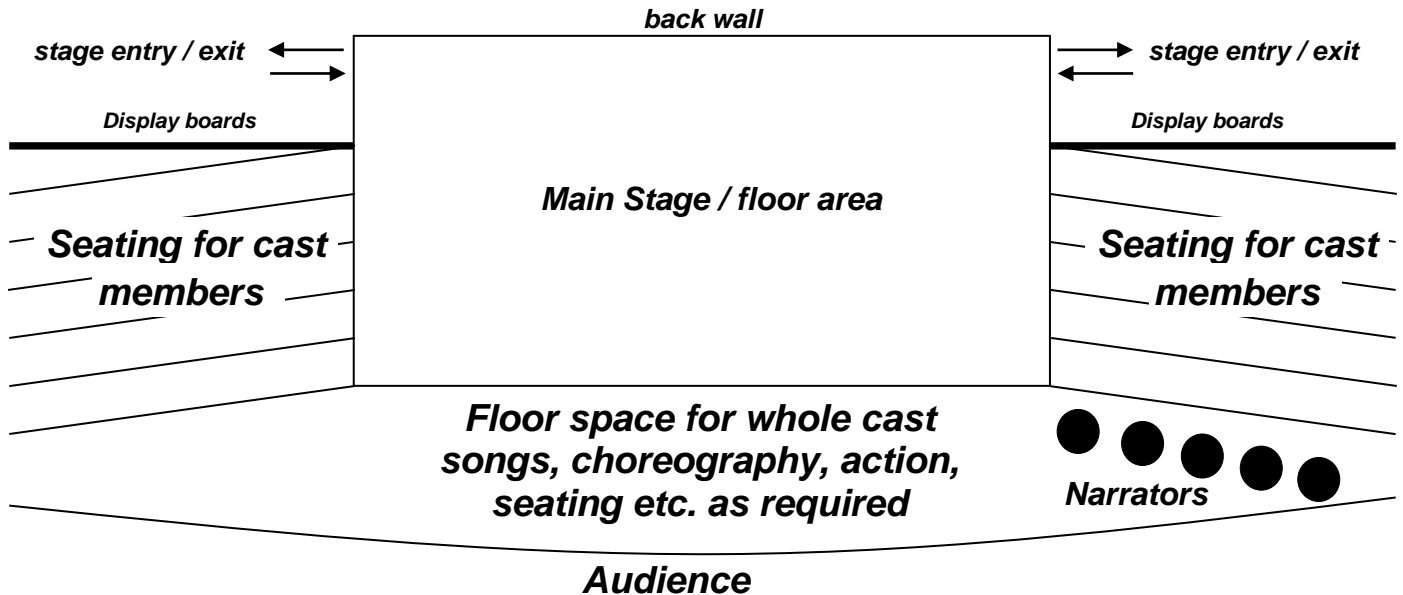
Verse 2 A gift of peace and of love
Is given from heaven above.
Beneath a star shining bright,
A miracle's happening tonight....

Chorus *Fill your hearts.....*

Repeat Chorus

STAGING AND PRODUCTION SUGGESTIONS

The Apprentice has been written to be adaptable to most school hall set-ups, whether you have a stage or not. Below is just one representation of a possible staging layout.



- **Scenery** – The back wall behind the main stage could display a biblical town scene, with white flat-roofed houses and wooden stables and barns. This can be repeated on the display boards behind the two seating areas either side of the stage.
- **Furniture** – An old wooden table would serve as an ideal work bench. Alternatively use a normal classroom table, the legs of which can be wrapped in corrugated card on which a grain-effect has been printed or painted. A similar covering on the table top could also be made. Logs or small tree stumps on the floor would give a more authentic ‘workshop’ look. A wooden or cardboard box can be decorated to represent the manger, with four wooden legs attached at the bottom. Bales of straw will add to the stable setting for the nativity tableau.
- **Props (listed by scene)** – **Scene 1:** A selection of carpentry tools, eg. saws, hammers, chisels etc - probably best to use toy ones! A suitcase. Signs/placards (these could be cardboard squares on sticks) reading ‘HIRING’, with pictures to represent the trade of the person holding one, eg. a loaf of bread for the bakers, a loom for the weavers, a brick for the builders etc. A cloth bag containing a penknife and small wooden carvings or ornaments – these can be really wooden figures of perhaps animals or abstract shapes borrowed from home, or clay models made by the children and painted brown. **Scene 2:** Various lengths and shapes of timber and

carpentry tools. A scroll. **Scene 3:** Two suitcases. **Scene 5:** The same bag of carvings from scene 1. A broken manger – see notes in ‘Furniture’ above. A shepherd’s crook – for this you’ll need a stout stick at the end of which is a curved ‘head’, which can simply be made from stiff card and stuck on with blu-tack or similar. Sarah will need a more ornate head ready in her bag to replace the ‘broken’ one. Three ornate wooden boxes, either like mini treasure chests or plain, cuboid boxes that you can decorate. They need to have lids, one of which is easily detachable and re-attachable.

- **Costume** – For most characters, recycle those traditional nativity outfits to which we’re all accustomed, using tea-towels, white sheets, old curtains, tinsel etc! Groups of characters (ie. trades people, innkeepers, shepherds, visitors etc.) should all wear a colour to differentiate their group from another. Different coloured aprons will help differentiate the groups of trades people. A simple belted tunic would be fine for Sarah, possibly in a pastel colour. She’ll also need an apron for when she’s a carpenter. Simeon will also need a tunic, with an apron to be taken off when he ‘retires’. He will also need a grey beard to show his age. The Roman soldiers could wear breast plates over white t-shirts, and shin guards. A grey pleated PE skirt makes an ideal ‘kilt’, and helmets made from card with red plumes will add to their authenticity.
- **Use of Space** – Large groups will be involved in the performance of most of 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. A seating area for resting performers could be allocated either 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.
- **Audience seating** – The audience could be in one block facing the stage, or maybe in two blocks separated by an aisle wide enough for perhaps the entrance of some characters from the back, or to allow some of the drama and choreography to be performed on the floor.

Of course, should you have any questions, or if you want further advice about putting on this musical, please email us and we’ll be happy to give you all the information you need.