The Midwife and her donkey Steve are relaxing at home. The Midwife is busy with her knitting and Steve is nodding off.

NARRATOR Once there was a very busy, very important midwife. She was the best midwife from Nazareth to Bethlehem and had delivered all sorts of important babies and some who were not so important, but they had one thing in common: they all needed her.

MIDWIFE All babies need me.

NARRATOR One evening she was busy knitting, when suddenly…

A text alert from a mobile phone is heard (use a few notes on a xylophone to indicate this).

MIDWIFE Oh bother! Where did I leave my mobile?

STEVE (Rolling his eyes) Here it is.

NARRATOR Donkeys were good at finding things… especially this donkey.

MIDWIFE Thank you Steve. Where would I be without you?

NARRATOR The Midwife had a text message. She began to read it and as she did her excitement grew. There was a special baby due to be born in Bethlehem that very night; a king no less.

MIDWIFE Saddle-up Steve, we have to hurry. We don’t want to miss the birth of a king.

STEVE Where to, Boss?

MIDWIFE To Bethlehem Palace, quick on the double. There’s a baby who needs me. (She packs up her midwife’s bag)

NARRATOR Steve the donkey stopped. He scratched his head. He didn’t think there was a palace in Bethlehem. He had certainly never heard of one.

STEVE Are you sure that’s where we should be looking, Boss?

MIDWIFE Of course. Kings are born in palaces. Everybody knows that. Where else would we look for a king?

NARRATOR Steve the donkey wasn’t convinced.

STEVE But nobody ever listens to a donkey!
The Midwife and Steve hurry off stage. Roman soldier census-takers enter and form lines at both sides of the stage, clipboards visible. The townspeople come on stage pushing and shoving. Steve and the Midwife carry on with their journey in front of the stage, coming back on stage as the narrator starts to speak.

**NARRATOR**

Quick as a flash they hurried out into the night and before they knew it they had arrived in Bethlehem, but what a lot of people! The Emperor, Caesar Augustus, had ordered a census to be taken throughout the Roman Empire and everyone had had to travel to their own town to be registered.

**Song 1. WHAT A COMMOTION!**

This is sung by the townspeople and census-takers; Steve and the Midwife watch at the side of the stage. At the end of the song the townspeople form rough queues in front of the census-takers. The Midwife and Steve move amongst the crowd.

**NARRATOR**

The Midwife and Steve were squeezed and squashed, hustled and bustled, shoved and squished. They couldn’t see a palace anywhere.

**MIDWIFE**

Excuse me, sirs.

**CENSUS-TAKER 1**

We are census-takers.

**CENSUS-TAKER 2**

We are very busy.

**CENSUS-TAKER 3**

And very important.

**CENSUS-TAKER 1**

We hope you’re not going to waste our time.

**CENSUS-TAKER 2**

You’re not tourists are you?

**CENSUS-TAKER 3**

Are you here for the census?

**MIDWIFE**

The what? No. Please could you direct us to Bethlehem Palace?

**CENSUS-TAKER 1**

A palace? Here?

**CENSUS-TAKER 2**

I told you they were tourists.

**CENSUS-TAKER 3**

We are far too important for this silly nonsense. We have vital work to do for Caesar.

Play CD Track 7 as the census-takers lead their ‘queues’ off the stage. The Midwife taps people on the shoulder to ask about the palace, but they all shake their heads and hastily move on their way.

**NARRATOR**

The Midwife and Steve continued to search for the palace, but everyone in Bethlehem was so busy that nobody would stop to help them. The Midwife was getting worried. She didn’t want to miss the birth of a king and she knew that he needed her there. Finally they decided to knock on a door.