Prompts for reflection: The coffee shop

Anne Stonehouse: Hello, I'm Anne Stonehouse. In the following vignette, children interact with each other and with an educator in an area of the room that is set up as a coffee shop. As you view the vignette, reflect on how it illustrates Mel's deep respect for young children. Think about how Mel's knowledge of each child contributes to the quality of the experience. What tells you that she has clear purposes in mind?

Mel: What do you feel like? Are you making it, or am I making it? You're going to make it? Do you know what? I think you've still got some fruit on your chin.

Cameron: A tea, a tea!

Mel: You might need to get a… A cup of tea as well? That was delish. Can I have some marshmallows in my hot chocolate, please?

Speaker 4: Tea?

Mel: Well how about you have it? Van made it for you.

Mel: Oh, thank you.

Mel: Food for me? I'm getting really full. I'm actually really, really full. My tummy's very full. I don't think I can eat anything more.

Mel: It's delicious. Cheers!

Mel: Very yum, thank you. I'm getting more. Cameron, do you want another one? Massie's got the kettle. No, he's going to get his own. I'll have more, thank you.

Mel: Oh, Rad wants some.

Mel: Oh my goodness.

Mel: I'm going to need to  have a bit more stomach room here for this. There's a lot going on.

Rad: Thank you!

Mel: Oh, that's so nice. You're welcome, Rad. Oh my gosh, we're going to have some food with our drinks. That's a lovely idea. Where should we sit, Van?

Cameron: More please, more please?

Mel: Oh, gee whiz, he needs more. I'd love a piece of fruit.

Brad: Here's a plate.

Mel: And a plate. Is that … what's the plate for?

Brad: Plates.

Mel: For the ...

Mel: Oh, thank you. I might actually have something from the plate.

Mel: Thank you.

Massie: More food? More food?

Mel: Thank you.

Massie: A fruit!

Mel: Oh my gosh, this is looking more like a picnic, I think, isn't it? Big-time.

Mel: Thank you.

Massie: More?

Mel: Oh, I'd love some more. Oh, you're so good at pouring. Thank you, Massie. I don't mind him using that plate. That's okay. Yep, you can use that one. But I'm okay if, Cameron, you want to use the plate for something. I don't know if I'd like this to be broken by your foot. Do you know what, guys? Now that the table's clear, I might actually put some play dough out for you. You can squish and roll.

Mel: In the home corner when they're pouring cups of teas and coffees, sometimes I can actually stand back and I can see them doing it for each other. I think doing it for each other is really good too, because it's bringing young children into social play that I think, you know, a few years ago, people saying, 'Oh look, they're very solitary, they're very egocentric.' But there's so much that they're learning for one another. They don't even realise sometimes that this is what they're doing. They're actually cooperating, and reading each other as