



A Princess Tea

Introduction

Many little girls like to pretend to be princesses. They enjoy dressing up in pretty dresses and sparkly things and twirling around the room. It makes them feel special. Pretty. All too soon they grow up and no longer believe that they are princesses or could ever be a princess. They battle with insecurities and struggle to feel pretty or valuable.

A Princess Tea is a great ministry event planned for girls under 12 where they not only get to pretend to be a princess and dress up and enjoy an afternoon tea—all fun things for little girls—but are reminded that they really ARE princesses. That God calls them His princesses. More than just a fun afternoon for little girls and their moms and grandmoms, this event can build a foundation little girls can build on as they grow, learning lessons that will remind them of who they are and how they are uniquely special. When included in a women's ministries program that also plans events for teens and for adults, the tea makes it possible to impact the lives of women for Christ from the time they are little girls through their adult years.

It's a great community event. Invite your neighbors, family members, friends, school friends of the little girls in your church and/or just advertise in the local newspaper. It's a simple, fun event that little girls and their moms will enjoy attending.

The tea not only includes food, but also activities, crafts and stories called a "ball" before the tea.

The Basics

Step 1: Plan your event. Choose a date, time, and place.

You'll want to schedule at least three hours for your event, allowing one or two hours for set up beforehand and cleanup time afterward. Choose a location that's large enough to set up tables for the tea as well as with room for activities away from the tables—either in a separate room or in the same room away from the tables. A gym can work well with one part of the gym set up for the tea and one part set up for the activities. A fellowship hall can host the tea, while classrooms serve as rooms for the activities.

Step 2: Create your invitations and send out.

Create postcards, bulletin inserts, ads for the local newspapers, or invitation cards that you can hand or mail out. Include the date, location, time, RSVP and “for more information” contact phone number and email address. Wording for the invitation can be simple:

All of God's princesses, 12 years old and younger, are invited to bring their moms, grandmoms, or adult friend and join us for an afternoon tea with fun activities and stories that remind us that we are truly princesses.

As people register, send them a confirmation letter similar to the one in the Appendix, letting them know the time, place, what to wear, anything you'd like them to bring, etc.

Step 3: Organize your team.

You'll need:

- Meal staff to prepare, serve, and clean up from the tea itself
- Someone to greet and register people as they arrive
- One-two people to lead the welcome craft should you choose to plan a craft for girls to do as they arrive and wait the event to begin
- One person to keep track of time and keep the “ball” moving on schedule
- One-two people for each activity in your “ball”

This is a great activity to include teens in, pairing them with an adult to work together in the kitchen, crafts, and activities. Teens will enjoy dressing like a princess, too, and the little girls will enjoy having them involved.

Step 4: Plan the activities for your event.

This is where the fun begins—planning the tea. The goal of the afternoon is for little girls (and their moms) to walk away reminded that they are princesses of God, uniquely designed and wanted by Him. So plan fun activities that will repeat this thought over and over.

Sample Schedule

- 1:00-1:20 pm – Welcome and Activity
- 1:20-1:30 pm – Group Welcome and Instructions for The Ball
- 1:30-1:50 pm – Ball Stop One
- 1:50-1:55 pm – Switch
- 1:55-2:15 pm – Ball Stop Two
- 2:15-2:30 pm – Switch
- 2:30-2:50 pm – Ball Stop Three
- 2:50-2:55 pm – Switch
- 2:55-3:15 pm – Ball Stop Four
- 3:15-3:25 pm – Move Back to Tables for Tea and Blessing for Meal
- 3:25-4:00 pm – Tea

Ideas

When They Arrive (20 minutes)

- Have someone at the door welcoming each princess as she arrives, directing her to find a table and/or go to a welcome activity.
 - If you have a man in your church who can play a trumpet, have him at the door, dressed as a royal greeter who trumpets the arrival of a princess and calls out her name, “Welcome, Princess Kaleigh, and her mother, Princess Melissa.”
 - Have a welcome activity for girls and their moms to do as they arrive, while waiting for the event to begin. A fun activity would be to create a tiara. Purchase cardboard tiaras at Orientaltrading.com or your local craft store and have gems, stickers, glitter paint (girls love anything sparkly—the glitter tubes will disappear faster than the regular tubes of paints! The tubes of craft paints will work easier than paints and brushes. You will have to let the tiaras dry a bit if using paints or glue), paint, markers, etc. Have moms make a tiara, too, and encourage them to participate in all activities. (You may need to remind them throughout the afternoon that moms are encouraged to participate with their daughters. This goes for grandmoms and youth leaders, too.)

The Ball

Once everyone has arrived, the fun begins. You'll want to plan several activities, allowing 20 minutes for each activity for this portion of the tea. Calling it "The Ball" adds to the fun and princess-likeness. Divide your group into four groups, each group will go to a different Ball stop and then rotate through them, so that all four groups will go through all four stops. If your group is large, divide them into eight groups, but don't plan eight different stops. Plan four different stops and have two of each. So if you have a picture-taking stop, have two picture taking spots so that two groups are doing the same thing at the same time but in different locations. If your group is small, you can just have one group and go through the Ball stops together.

The hostess for each stop will read a story (book ideas listed in the Resources section at the end) and then lead an activity. Some of the stories are longer, so she may want to paraphrase the story in order to keep it short, while keeping the main thought, leaving time for an activity. Or you can plan only three stops and lengthen the time at each stop.

Ideas for Ball Stops

- Read *Gigi, God's Little Princess* by Sheila Walsh. For the activity, take pictures of each princess and her mom/grandmom together. You may want to have a castle or other fun backdrop to pose them in front of. If you have someone who can process the pictures quickly, you can print them at the tea (while people are eating) and hand them out as people leave or mail them to each princess with a follow up letter (follow up letter sample in the appendix). Just make sure as the pictures are taken, someone writes down the names of the girls in the picture and their address to ensure that you get the right pictures to the right person.
- Read *Gigi, God's Little Princess: The Purple Ponies* by Sheila Walsh. For the activity, have a large foam board and markers. Have each person (remember to encourage moms to participate) draw a stick figure of themselves and something that they are good at.
- Read *Gigi, God's Little Princess: The Pink Ballerina* by Sheila Walsh. For the activity, you could play musical chairs. Or have kazoos for each person and "play" a song they all know, like "Jesus Loves Me." Oriental Trading has "Jesus Loves Me" kazoos for \$3.00 per dozen.
- Read *Gigi, God's Little Princess: The Royal Tea Party* by Sheila Walsh. For the activity, have sugar cookies cutout in princess designs (like crowns) and cookie icing tubes. Have girls decorate two cookies—one for them to eat and one for them to share with a friend to tell her that she's a princess. Have baggies to put the cookies for friends in.
- Read *Do Princesses Wear Hiking Boots?* by Carmela LaVigna Coyle, Mike Gordon and Carl Gordon. For the activity, play the princess shoe game. Basically

hot potato with a fancy high-heeled shoe. Or hiking boot to go with the story. Play music and when the music stops, whoever has the shoe is out.

- Read *Do Princesses Really Kiss Frogs?* by Carmela LaVigna Coyle and Mike Gordon. For the activity, play Kiss the Frog. Like pin the tail on the donkey. Draw a frog on a big poster board. Get stickers of kisses (easy to find at Valentine's.) You'll need a blind fold.

- Read *Do Princesses Scrape Their Knees?* by Carmela LaVigna Coyle and Mike Gordon. For the activity, do something fun for the girls to try (remind moms/grandmoms to do it, too.) It might be a bubble blowing contest—have a hula hoop or something for the girls to attempt to blow bubbles through and small bottles of bubbles.

- Read *Do Princesses Have Best Friends Forever?* by Carmela LaVigna Coyle, Mike Gordon and Carl Gordon. For the activity, you could create picture frames, decorated with princess stickers or “gems” for the pictures you're taking.

- Read *I'd Be Your Princess* by Kathryn O'Brien. For the activity, have the girls decorate their own castles. You can draw a castle template and make copies on card stock so that they're sturdy or purchase the “Create Your Own Giant Castle” from Orientaltrading.com.

You may decide to come up with your own stories and activities. Or consider using stories of “princesses” from the Bible (like Esther, Ruth, etc.) and tell their stories with an activity to reinforce the story in some way.

Step 5: Purchase or borrow supplies for your tea.

You may already have some great places to find these inexpensively, but two great websites for getting princess items inexpensively are orientaltrading.com and partycity.com. Both have supplies that do not use Disney princesses, making your tea less commercial and more about being God's princess instead of a Disney princess.

Oriental Trading has castle kits for \$8.50 each that make great centerpieces. They are heavy cardboard and snap together. They also have “Carriage Treat Boxes” that are incredibly cute for \$5.00 per dozen. They “park” wonderfully at the castles. They also have a “Design Your Own Giant Castle” kit that allows kids to color and design a castle (you could make a template and cut out and create your own if you have the time) costing \$10.50 for a dozen. A great activity for a ball stop that talks about heaven or living with God one day—God preparing us a home.

You may want to order party favors for each girl—like a princess scepter. These are fairly inexpensive and fun. Tiaras or tiaras/crowns to make are another great gift. Party City has paper supplies of princess items or just pick up solid color plates, napkins and cups in pinks and purples.

Instead of paper cups, you may want to use teacups and teapots for an extra elegance. A piece of tape on the bottom of a saucer with the name of the person the

tea cup and saucer were borrowed from written (on the tape) in permanent marker will aide in returning the cups after the event is over. If using teapots, you may want to make sure an adult at each table does the serving. You'll also need to prepare plenty of hot water ahead of time, fill pots, and have people to refill them as needed.

There are simple and inexpensive ways to decorate that will create a fun and beautiful setting for your little girls. Simply purchasing balloons in pink, purple, and white, filling them with helium and creating a balloon centerpiece for each table (with one balloon per chair so each attendee can take a balloon home at the end) adds an elegance and extra spark to the room.

You can include a small "scroll" at each place setting as a party favor. Write a note about being a princess. A sample scroll letter is included in the Appendix. Directions for a "castle" made from an appliance box are included in the appendix.

Step 6: Plan your food.

You can serve a variety of herbal teas, plus lemonade, juice and/or water for those who don't want hot tea. Keep food simple. Finger foods are fun, simple and kid-friendly. Ideas for food include:

- Finger sandwiches which can be made more fun by cutting them into shapes with cookie cutters. Sandwich filling ideas:
 - o Peanut butter and jelly
 - o Cucumber with a little mayo or cream cheese
 - o Humus and tabouli
 - o Grated green pepper and cheddar cheese mixed together into a spread
- Mini bagel pizzas
- Fresh cut veggies:
 - o Peanut butter on celery
 - o Radish flowers
 - o Grape tomatoes
 - o Carrot sticks
 - o Pepper sticks—use red, yellow, or orange for color
- Fruit salad in a small cup
- Cookies
- Small cream puffs or mini éclairs—can be bought in the frozen food section and simply taken out of the freezer to thaw just before the meal is served
- Slices of cake made prettier with a strawberry and a drizzle of chocolate or strawberry syrup

Step 7: Your event finally arrives! Bathe your event in prayer.

Before you set up the event, take a few moments to pray for the event. Prayer walk the facility and pray for each aspect of the event. Pray for those who attend afterwards, that they will remember the lessons learned, that every girl is a princess.

Step 8: Follow up.

Follow up from the event by sending a note and, if you choose to do it, a picture of the princess from the tea. A sample follow up note is included in the appendix. You can create a database from those in attendance. If you asked for birthdays, you could send a birthday card and again, remind them that they are God's princesses. Then when they reach their teens, invite them to your teen events.

Appendix

Confirmation Letter

Greetings, Princesses!

We are glad that you have accepted the invitation to attend our Princess Tea on
DATE: _____, LOCATION: _____.

We invite you to dress in your princess attire should you so desire, but know that every princess is unique and has their own style, so please dress in your favorite colors and/or clothes. Dresses are not required.

The afternoon tea will include light refreshments, crafts, stories, and fun. Please feel free to bring your camera in order to capture the memories of this special afternoon. Every group of princesses will be photographed and later sent those pictures.

If you have any questions, contact : _____.

Scroll Letter Sample



You are a real princess—not a pretend princess. God has chosen you to be His princess.

God loves you so very much, and He wants to talk to you every day through His Word, the Bible.

Someday, you will meet God in heaven, but until then, never forget that you are His special princess. He has created you just the way He wanted you to be. You don't need a crown to be His princess. He has given you things only you can do, a smile only you can smile, and He will use you to help others learn that they are princesses, too.

You will always be a princess, no matter how big you grow. And God will always love you and take care of you.

Follow-up Letter

Dear Princess,

You are precious to Me in every way. I think about you all the time. Nothing is more important to Me than you. I want you to tuck this in your heart: No matter how big you grow or where you go, you'll always be My princess and I'll always be your God. I will always love you, no matter what you do and I will never leave you.

You are very beautiful to me. I love the way I created you. When you look into the mirror, remember that I carefully chose the color of your eyes and the highlights of your hair. I designed the shape of your nose and your happy smile. There is no one in the world just like you.

I gave you a very special gift. It's something you can do very, very well. I planned it just for you. Your friends will have different gifts. That's okay. Remember you do not have to be just like them. I planned you to be you. And I love you!

-Your Father in Heaven

Castle Instructions

Here's what you need:

- Sturdy ¼" foam core or heavy cardboard—a refrigerator or appliance box works well for this, too
- Vinyl wall background
- One roll of transparent tape
- Heavy duty packing tape
- Jute cording or thin rope cut in 36" lengths
- Heavy-duty scissors
- Decorations

Here's how you do it:

1. Cut 4 panels to the desired height and width. These will form the walls of the castle.
2. Create "battlements" by cutting out several notches at the top of each panel. Adult supervision is recommended for this step.
3. Trace the door opening on one of the wall panels. An arch or square-shaped door can be used — it's up to you!
4. Cut out a large "drawbridge" opening in the center of one of the wall panels. Keep the inner panel to use as the bridge.
5. Cover the walls with our vinyl wall background and add a rope for the drawbridge.
6. Connect the 4 wall panels together with heavy-duty packing tape applied at each corner.
7. Attach the bridge/door panel to the cutout wall panel with the jute cording or thin rope.
8. To finish the look, cut out a coat of arms from a foam sheet, decorate with a pennant banner then just add your imagination!

Resources

Great books to use at the tea:

- *Gigi, God's Little Princess* by Sheila Walsh
- *Gigi, God's Little Princess: The Purple Ponies* by Sheila Walsh
- *Gigi, God's Little Princess: The Pink Ballerina* by Sheila Walsh
- *Gigi, God's Little Princess: The Royal Tea Party* by Sheila Walsh
- *Do Princesses Wear Hiking Boots?* by Carmela LaVigna Coyle, Mike Gordon and Carl Gordon
- *Do Princesses Really Kiss Frogs?* by Carmela LaVigna Coyle and Mike Gordon
- *Do Princesses Scrape Their Knees?* by Carmela LaVigna Coyle and Mike Gordon
- *Do Princesses Have Best Friends Forever?* by Carmela LaVigna Coyle, Mike Gordon and Carl Gordon
- *His Little Princess: Love Letters from Your King* by Sheri Rose Shepherd and Lisa Marie Browning
- *I'd Be Your Princess* by Kathryn O'Brien

Great places to order princess supplies:

- Amazon.com
- Partycity.com
- Orientaltrading.com