



WELCOME PACKET: ADOPTION STORY

At Life History Books, we're thrilled to embark on the Adoption Story-writing process with you. We promise to respect the cherished memories you share with us and look forward to getting to know your family better as we create a beautiful book. In this Welcome Packet, you'll find all the information you need to get started as you prepare to tell your story.



At the end of this document you will find a list of questions we aim to cover during the interviews. It may help to jot down your ideas as you begin to think about what you would like to include in your book.

We will only talk about subjects of your choosing, and we may veer away from the list as the interview progresses and topics come up that deserve more questioning.

If there are topics we haven't touched on in the question list, there will be plenty of time to focus on your specific interests. Similarly, if the interviewer asks a question you'd rather not answer, simply say, "Pass."

Please don't be nervous about the interview process, it's really just a relaxed, fun opportunity to talk about your child coming into your life.

Each book is fully customizable. The cover, the font within the book, any colors that crop up within the book – absolutely everything is personalized to your tastes, preferences, and individual style. This is your book, and it will be entitled as you wish and it will only include what you would like to cover.

However, some clients prefer to pass those choices onto us. If you would rather we handle color/font specifics, please email Corina@LifeHistoryBooks.com or call 424.253.5429 and we will design a scheme just for you. **In this case, fill in the blanks on page 2 of the Welcome Packet, then skip to the list of Questions to Review on page 6.**

1. PHOTOS

If You Do Not Have Photos & Memorabilia to Include

If you do not have access to photographs and other memorabilia, that is perfectly fine, and your book will be gorgeous without them. As a replacement, we will pull out quotes and place them in frames. We will also use borders and other graphics to make the pages lovely and colorful.

You may want to hand write a short, personal note or favorite quote or poem, which can be included digitally in the book. It appears just as a photo, but adds a lovely personal touch.

If you would like any recipes included, please have hard copies ready on the day of your interview or email them to your personal historian.

If You Have Photos & Memorabilia to Include

If you are including photographs and mementos, please collect them. We can include absolutely anything that can be scanned in. Think about the captions (words explaining each photo). You can write in whatever style you like, and include whatever information you prefer. Here are some samples of caption styles:

Jane Doe, Age 4, Virginia
Jane at 4 years old, Virginia, 2005
Our baby girl, Jane, Virginia, circa 2005. We always played around that tree!

Please mark the back of each photo with a number and write captions that correspond to each photo's number on a separate sheet of paper. If you would like to include any other mementos, please write captions for them, as well, clearly referring to the object you are describing. We have included birth certificates, poems and newspaper clippings. You may want to hand write a short, personal note, which can be included digitally in the book. It appears just as a photo, but adds a lovely personal touch.

If you would like any recipes included, please have hard copies ready on the day of your interview or email them to your personal historian.

2. DEDICATION

Just inside the book there can be a dedication page for you to leave a message to your loved ones. When you decide on your dedication, please write it here (it may be changed later, if you so desire):

3. TITLE

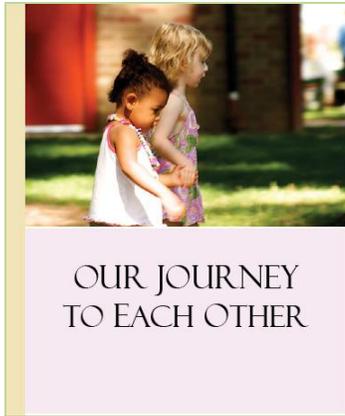
A title incorporating your name may be printed along the book's external binding. Some examples: "Our Journey To Each Other," "Adoption Story: John Doe," "John Doe: Our Family Story" or simply your child's name (ie "John Doe"). Write your title here (it may be changed later, if you so desire):

4. COVER

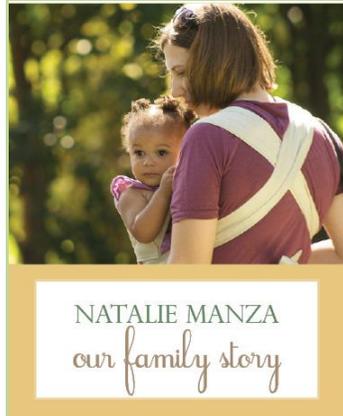
We're happy to design a cover from scratch, but if you like any sample covers, please indicate which numbers appeal to you. Of course, your own photos will be used and all fonts/colors/titles are customized to suit your preferences, so just pick a general style that you like. We customize two sample covers and let you choose your favorite.

First choice is Cover # _____

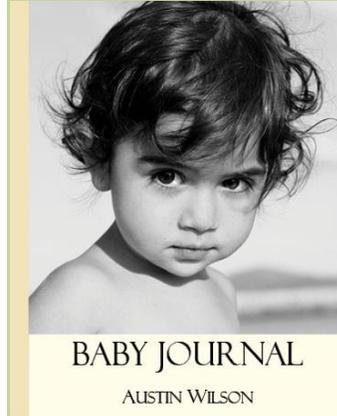
Second choice is Cover # _____



Cover #1



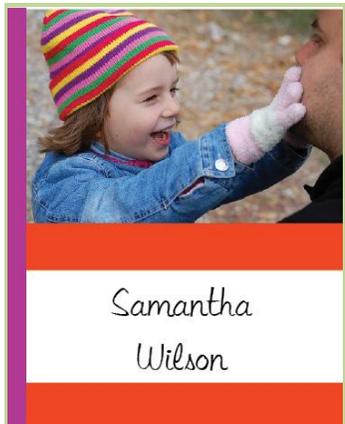
Cover #2



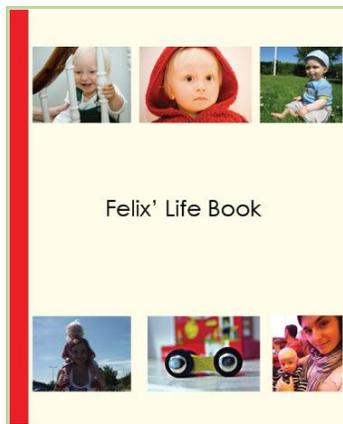
Cover #3



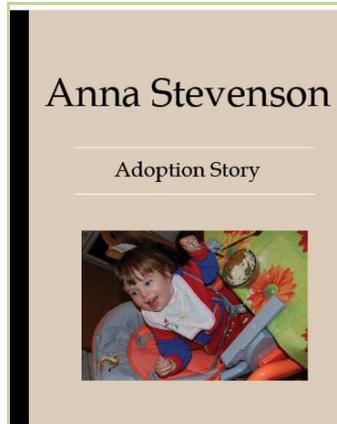
Cover #4



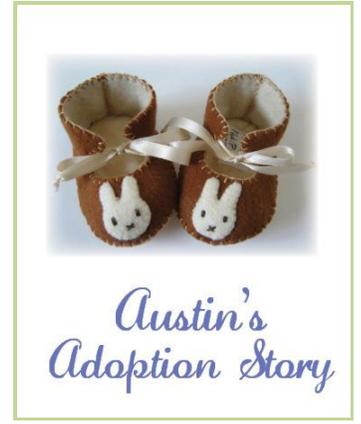
Cover #5



Cover #6



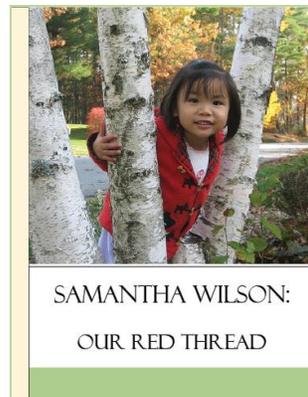
Cover #7



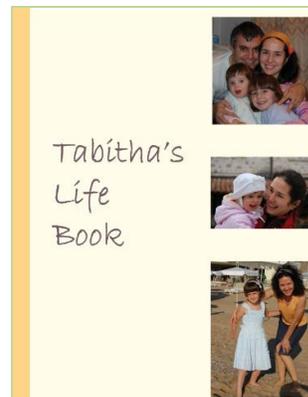
Cover #8



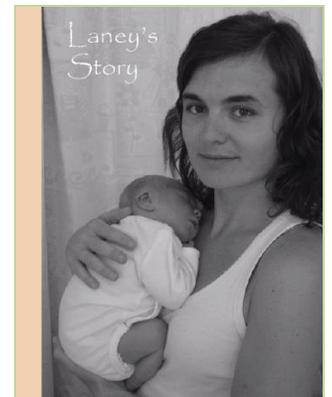
Cover #9



Cover #10



Cover #11



Cover #12

5. FONTS

You can select up to three fonts for different uses. One will be used for your name, on the first page. Another will be the body text, which should be extremely easy for you to read, as it is the most prevalent. You can choose another font for captions. We can also use an italics version of the fonts you see below for captions... that looks very nice.

This font is called Adine Kienberg. 1234567890

This font is called Architect. 1234567890

This font is called Arial.

This font is called Book Antiqua. 1234567890

This font is called Century Gothic. 1234567890

This font is called Cooper. 1234567890

This font is called Courier New. 1234567890

This font is called Curlz. 1234567890

This font is called Cursif. 1234567890

This font is called Edwardian Script. 1234567890

This font is called Eraser Dust. 1234567890

THIS FONT IS CALLED FELIX TITLING. 1234567890

This font is called Franklin Gothic Heavy. 1234567890

This font is called Garamond. 1234567890

This font is called Kristen ITC. 1234567890

This font is called Monotype Corsiva. 1234567890

This font is called Papyrus. 1234567890

FONT FOR YOUR CHILD'S NAME (ON THE FIRST PAGE)

Name Font _____

FONT FOR BODY TEXT (THIS SHOULD BE EASY TO READ)

Body Text Font _____

FONT FOR CAPTIONS

Caption Font _____

6. COLORS

There will be opportunities to include color throughout the book. Use color codes below (i.e. P9, B17).

Colors you like: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____

Colors you dislike: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____



7. PHOTO RETOUCHING

We can Photoshop your personal photos to appear dramatically different. Would you like us to do so?

_____ No, I want my photos in their natural state.



_____ Yes, retouch my photos to appear black & white.



_____ Yes, retouch my photos to appear sepia.



_____ Yes, retouch my photos to appear pastel.



QUESTIONS TO REVIEW BEFORE THE FIRST INTERVIEW

Remember, the following questions are meant only as a guide to get you thinking about the stories you wish to tell. You are neither confined to these questions alone, nor should you worry if some of the answers may have slipped your mind, or if that part of your story is not what you wish to focus on. After all, it's your Life History Book!

As you speak to Kari, our personal historian who focuses on Adoption Story Life History Books, she will ask some or all of the following questions, but there is NO pressure to answer this entire list of questions. You may wish to focus on the adoption process – the technicalities, the hurdles, the incredible joy at the end. You may want to reminisce about great memories you have as a family. Or you may want to talk about your ethics, your personal experiences and your priorities as a parent. If you'd like a bit of everything, that's completely your choice.

If you'd like a family tree of any sort included, please sketch it out on one or two sheets of paper. We will scan in your sketch and turn it into a lovely family tree graphic.

We offer many options that you may not be interested in, so just skip anything that doesn't apply to you.

You may tell your story in a freestyle manner, or let us prompt you with specific questions. Following please find our typical list of questions:

Preparing for the Adoption

Why did you choose domestic or international adoption? Why did you choose to adopt from this country?

Would you like to talk about why you opted for adoption? What surrounds that choice?

If there is a family history of adoption, would you like to talk about that?

What was the process like? How long did it take? What had to be done? What were your thoughts and feelings during the whole process? Was it ever frustrating?

What was the wait like? What kinds of questions did you ask yourself?

How did you spread the news that you were adopting? How did you spread the news after the adoption occurred?

What kinds of things did you do to prepare for the adoption?

If you saw a picture of your child before actually meeting, do you remember when you first saw that picture? What was that like, knowing your child and not being able to get to him/her?

Were there obstacles to getting to your child?

How did you get matched with your child?

Did you travel and if so, what was that like?

Why did you choose to have an open or closed adoption?

Family Life

What is your child's name? When and where was he/she born? How did you pick the name?

If you adopted domestically, were you at the hospital when your child was born?

What are some early experiences with your child that you remember fondly?

Talk about the first time you met or the first time you held your child.

What are some of the sweet/funny memories from the early days as a family?

If your child was adopted older, what was the personality like? What was the language situation?

What was your child's personality like when you first became a family?

Were there distinct ways your child interacted with you as a family in the early days? How did your child react to meeting his/her new family?

What are some memorable experiences you've had as a family?

What are your favorite characteristics in your child?

If you have other children, what are some memories you have of them that you'd like to share?

If you have other children, were they a part of making the decision to adopt? How did they react to having a new sibling?

Do you have any nice memories with your child and your extended family?

Did people come to visit right away or were there parties related to the adoption?

Are there any adoption organizations you are or were involved with that you'd like to discuss?

How would you describe your child's personality? How did each change as he/she got older?

Do you have any nicknames for your child? How did they come about?

Do you have any sayings or songs that you say/sing often?

What are your hopes for your child's future?

About You

Was raising children as you expected it to be? What surprised you most about being a parent?

Are there any vacations you've gone on that you remember fondly?

If you are raising your child with a spouse/partner, how would you describe him/her as a parent? How do your parenting styles differ?

How are holidays traditionally celebrated in your family? What holidays are the most important? Are there special family traditions, customs, songs, foods?

What family heirlooms or keepsakes and mementos do you possess? Why are they valuable to you? What is their history? How were they handed down? Are there any memories or stories connected with them?

What special food-based traditions does your family have? Do you like to cook or are you passionate about food? If you have any favorite recipes, give them to your personal historian to be included in your book.

What were some of the benchmark events of your adult life?

What places have been most important to you and why? What stories and memories come to mind?

Do you like to travel? Do you have any favorite destinations or vacation spots?

What kinds of special recognition have you received at work, or for a hobby or particular interest?

Are you active in any religious organizations or community groups?

If you are in a romantic relationship, what was the early relationship like? If you're married, was there a proposal? What did you find surprising about marriage? What did you enjoy, what did you find difficult? Any advice?

Do you have political opinions you'd like to share – are there any leaders or figureheads you have admired and why?

How have historical events affected your family and community? For example, what were some of your experiences during World War II, Vietnam, the Civil Rights Movement, JFK being shot, September 11?

If you had a professional career, did your job generally play a large part in your life?

Did you stay in touch with friends from when you were younger, or generally make new friends as time passed? Would you like to talk about any friends or family members you've been especially close to?

What pets have you had, and what role have pets played in your life? Do you have any pet-related memories?

Do you like sports? If so, what kind, and which teams? What role does sport play in your life?

Do you think who you are, at your core, has changed much in the last 10 years? Have your values changed much? Your interests? What are your priorities now?

What is your favorite place in the entire world? It could be your bedroom, the woods, or some nook in a foreign land, whatever comes to mind.

Have you had any role models or mentors? What involvement have they had in your life?

As you've gotten older, what are some of the things you wish you knew, appreciated or understood when you were younger?

You've seen the world change so much. What are some of the biggest changes you've seen in the world? Do you think the world is better today, or are you reminiscent of the past?

If you could live one day over again, without changing anything, what would it be?

Okay, the big question: if you had to pass on some advice to the next generation, what would you say are the two most important lessons you've learned in life?

YOU ARE READY TO BEGIN!

You are now completely ready to begin your interviews. If you are already working with a personal historian, please schedule your first interview.

To get started with Life History Books, or if you have any questions, feel free to contact Kari Fillmore, our personal historian specializing in Adoption Story Life History Books, via Kari@LifeHistoryBooks.com or on 303.552.6129. Alternately, contact Life History Books' founder, Corina Kellam, via Corina@LifeHistoryBooks.com or on 424.253.5429.