Making Traditional Projects Adoption Friendly

As teachers, it is our duty to make all students feel included in the classroom community. Our school insists that teachers revise previous projects to make them more accessible for adopted students.

1. ***Bring a baby picture to school:*** Many adopted children do not have pictures of themselves as infants or even at other younger ages.  Instead, students can have the option of bringing a baby picture or another fun picture such as one from a recent vacation or doing a favorite hobby.
2. ***Family tree assignments:*** The traditional family tree does not have room for both the birth and adoptive family.  Instead use a rooted family tree, in which students can put the birth family in the roots, themselves in the trunk, and the adoptive family in the branches.  A diagram of concentric circles also works in which students are the center circle and each outer circle is dedicated to the birth family, previous foster families, and the adoptive family.
3. ***Autobiographies:*** Many adopted children either don't know about their early life or have horrid memories if they were abused or in an orphanage.  Instead, students could write about their life in general, their life in the past year, or a certain story from when they were younger.
4. ***Cultural heritage assignments:*** Many adopted children don't know their cultural heritage.  Instead, ask all students to investigate a culture that interests them.
5. ***Student of the week:*** Instead of asking students to share details from their early life, students instead should share vague facts such as hobbies, favorite color, etc. ([Mitchell, 2007](http://www.adoptionpolicy.org/Adoption_Awareness_Schools.pdf)).

References

[Mitchell, C. (2007). Adoption awareness in school assignments: A guide for parents and educators. Retrieved from http://www.adoptionpolicy.org/Adoption\_Awareness\_Schools.pdf.](http://www.adoptionpolicy.org/Adoption_Awareness_Schools.pdf)