



Acute Training Solutions

Fact vs. Opinion

Consider each of the statements below. For each one decide whether it is a fact or an opinion.

Have a go at rewriting each statement that contains an opinion in a way that makes the difference between fact and opinion clear.

Being unemployed is depressing Jane.
Alan said his mother smacked him.
On the last contact visit the living room was not safe for the children.
The clothing in which Mrs Smith had dressed the baby was not appropriate.
Foster Care is not appropriate for Ian
Jenny is a happy child.

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Fact vs. Opinion - Answers

Being unemployed is depressing Jane. - OPINION

Possible rewrite:

Jane appears depressed. She is... list her symptoms... (e.g. tearful, tired, listless). This change in Jane has been noticeable since she lost her job and I think unemployment may be the main reason that she feels the way she does.

Alan said his mother smacked him.

Possible rewrite:

However, it is important to know who Alan said this to. If he reported to the foster carer that his mother smacked him, one would expect a more detailed explanation to follow this statement, including what Alan said in his own words and what action the foster carers took when he reported this to them.

On the last contact visit the living room was not safe for the children. - OPINION

Possible rewrite:

When I took the children for their last contact visit I did not think that it was safe to leave them in the living room. There were dirty syringes and other sharp objects within their reach. I therefore took the children home and phoned their social worker.

The clothing in which Mrs Smith had dressed the baby was not appropriate. - OPINION

Possible rewrite:

I did not think that the clothing Mrs Smith had dressed the baby in was appropriate because it was a cold November morning and the baby was dressed in only a tee - shirt and short, to be taken out in her pram with only a thin blanket to cover her.

Foster Care is not appropriate for Ian - OPINION

Possible rewrite:

I do not think that foster care is appropriate for Ian. This is his sixth placement in five weeks and all his previous placements with foster carers have broken down. Ian has told me that he feels that he is being disloyal to his mother by living in a family and he would like to be placed in a residential home. Although I have talked at length with him about this he remains consistent in his view and his behaviour appears to be directed at ending the placement.

Jenny is a happy child. - OPINION

Possible rewrite:

This statement is written as if it is a fact. However it is clearly an opinion. What is meant by the phrase very contented? Would we all understand it in the same way and would we all agree on the difference between a contented and very contented child?
It would be more helpful to give description of Jenny's behaviour and appearance.