Court Report Guidelines

1) Above all your court report must be factual. Do not include opinions or judgements, only facts that can be supported by evidence.
2) Your advisor will provide a template with the correct spacing, font and headings. Do not change the format.
3) The date format should be consistent throughout your report.
4) When you first reference a person, include their relation to the child and their full name including title.
   The children were removed from their mother, Ms. Jenny Smith.
   Subsequent references can refer to Ms. Smith, unless you have multiple persons with the same name.
5) The history section should be in chronological order beginning with the removal and ending with the child's current placement.
6) Children should be referred to using their first names only.
7) The CPS Permanency Plan will contain the Department's current plan and their concurrent plan. This can be found in the CPS court report. The second sentence will include the expected dismissal date. This can be found in the CPS court report or CPS Hearing Schedule.
8) Do not use abbreviations or contractions.
9) You may use an acronym, but the first occurrence must be spelled out unless it is an acronym that everyone is very familiar with like GAL.
   The Therapeutic Training Foster Home (TTFH) …
10) Confidential information including names of foster parents, addresses, school names etc… should not be included in your report.
11) Do not use first person pronouns when referring to yourself. Always refer to yourself as the GAL.
12) Any concerns noted in the report should be addressed by a recommendation.
13) Recommendations should be concise and to the point. It should be clear in the report what concern you are addressing.

    The Guardian Ad Litem respectfully recommends Susan receive weekly therapy to address her trauma.

14) The report is a collaboration with your advisor, It will also be reviewed/revised by the program director.
15) For subsequent reports make sure you pull up the latest version of the previous report in optima. This will ensure any changes made are included.