

Dartmouth College

- Accepted College Essay -

"How I Use the Orbital Polisher"

Every Sunday morning until the weather drops below freezing and my parents do not let me use the hose, I wash my car. This may seem like an ordinary job to some, but to me washing a car requires a distinctive technique.

No matter how tired I am, every Sunday morning I wake up, brush my teeth, put on my blue sweatpants and red sweatshirt, grab the keys to the car, and head out into the driveway. Not even the puppy follows me outside; he likes to sleep till eleven o'clock on Sundays. I pull the car out into the driveway and position it just right so that the morning sun is blocked by the thick leaves and branches of the tall maple, and so I can easily walk around the back end.

I then attach the longest hose I can find in the basement of my house to the water spigot, and fill my large gray bucket with just enough soap that when agitated by the pressure from the hose the mixture I am left with is half a bucket of water and half of foam. I let the multicolored sponges soak for two or three minutes. Each sponge is used for a specific task: the yellow for the car body, the red for the wheels and tires, and the orange for cleaning the squashed bugs off the bumper. When the sponges are properly saturated I use the hose to soak the car and begin washing. Contrary to what my parents believe, there is a specific order of washing that must be kept in order to achieve the best quality wash. First, I wash the roof, then the hood, trunk, and only afterwards do I scrub the doors, bumpers, and finally the wheels. In this order the soapy water flows off the top of the car and loosens the dirt on the lower parts, which are then easier to wash.

After everything is washed and rinsed I dry the car off using a white towel to make sure I have not missed any dirty spots which would rub off onto the bleached towel. At this point, the sun is already higher in the sky, so I move the car forward to escape direct rays which warm the paint.

When the car is completely dry I begin to apply the wax again, starting from the roof and working down towards the bottom of the car. The wax dries in two minutes, which gives me just enough time to wax the car if my arm is working at close to the speed of sound. Normally, it takes me a bit longer than that to wax the whole car, so I finish with the waxing in closer to fifteen minutes. I use the orbital polisher to polish the hood, roof, and trunk, while the rest I do by hand, as the polisher does not do a good enough job on curved surfaces. After polishing, I buff the whole car by hand until the paint sparkles, the wheels shine, and the tires look wet.

I vacuum the interior, and clean all the map pockets which accumulate fascinating rubbish throughout the week. I rub lotion into the dashboard to protect it from the sun and I wash the windows where my puppy has mashed his wet nose while riding on the seat. I keep this precision and order every Sunday.

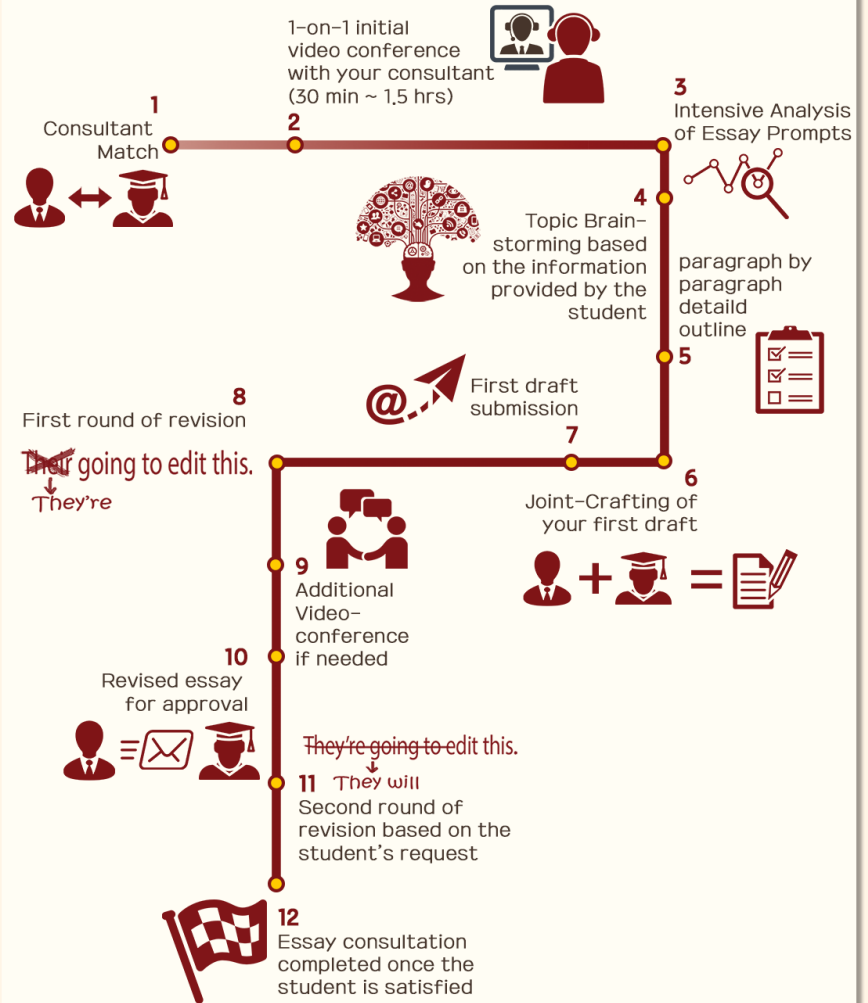
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