

**Sample Paper 17****Score for Sentence Fluency \_\_\_\_\_****Hold the Garlic, Please!**

Attention! Attention all home cooks and restaurant chefs! Is it really necessary to include garlic in *everything*? I realize this is America, of course—home of the Food Network where celebrity chefs hold court, dazzling average Americans with the power and magic of garlic. Everyone has the right to eat garlic at every meal if they wish, and most people do. But what about the rights of non-garlic-lovers like me?

Garlic is served to me (uninvited) in everything from grilling spice rubs to mashed potatoes to Caesar salad. It's even in ice cream! What's more, those of us who prefer not to indulge must breathe in secondhand garlic when we talk to those who have indulged. Mouthwash does not help. Brushing is a temporary fix. Strong breath mints offer a thin disguise. As soon as you consume it, garlic consumes you, oozing from every pore and vaporizing to form a protective yet invisible cloud that only other garlic lovers can penetrate without harm.

I'll be honest. For several years, I've been working to change my tastes. After all, since garlic is so popular, I might as well learn to like it, right? A person can only go against the tide for so long. Well, sorry garlic fans, but I don't think it's going to happen. Many years and countless breath fixes later, I am no closer to enjoying garlic-flavored chips, noodles, green beans, or friends. Still, I don't suppose garlic

freaks want to give up the pleasures of the clove either. (You can smell it simmering in butter on the stove right now, can't you? I knew it.) So how about a compromise? It's all I ask. Omit garlic from a *few* things: grilled chicken, chocolate, scrambled eggs, yogurt, oatmeal, popcorn, chewing gum. And while you're at it, explore the wonders of *other* spices, such as rosemary, thyme, dill, basil, and sage. Give your garlic-numbed taste buds (along with your human buds) the thrill of a new taste experience. Hey, what was that? Did you hear those gasps? That was the people around you, breathing garlic-free air for the first time. Aaaaahhhh.