

A Museum You Can Touch

B1 | Adults / Teens | Reading + Vocabulary + Discussion | 50-60 minutes

BEFORE YOU READ

Talk with a partner. When you visit a museum, do you prefer to look quietly or take part in activities? What helps you remember something new?

1. Match the words (1-6) with the definitions (A-F).

- | | | |
|------------|-------|--|
| 1. display | _____ | A. a copy that looks like the original object |
| 2. replica | _____ | B. easily broken or damaged |
| 3. handle | _____ | C. interest and involve someone |
| 4. fragile | _____ | D. show something for people to look at |
| 5. curator | _____ | E. a person who chooses and cares for museum objects |
| 6. engage | _____ | F. touch and hold something |

2. Read the article. The bold words are the vocabulary from Activity 1.

1. Many museums have one clear rule: look, but do not touch. The rule protects old paintings, tools and clothes that may be **fragile**. Yet one small museum in a former factory has chosen a different approach. Its visitors are invited to open drawers, turn handles and **handle** many of the objects on **display**.

2. The museum tells the story of everyday work a hundred years ago. Instead of reading only labels, visitors can lift a heavy iron, use a hand-operated machine and sit at an old school desk. Original objects remain behind glass when necessary, but the museum provides a **replica** whenever visitors need a closer experience.

3. The idea came from the museum's **curator**, who noticed that children often asked the same question: 'What did it feel like to use this?' She believed that a physical experience could make history easier to understand. Teachers agreed. They said students remembered the objects for longer when they had used them rather than simply seen photographs.

4. There are practical limits. Interactive objects wear out more quickly, and staff must watch visitors carefully. Some adults also worry that too many activities can make a museum feel like a playground. The curator accepts this risk, but says every activity must have a clear connection to the story the museum wants to tell.

5. The museum is not trying to replace quiet looking. It offers another way to **engage** with the past. Visitors can still stand in front of an original painting or read a detailed label. But they can also feel the weight of an old tool and imagine the person who used it every day.

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UNDERSTAND, DISCUSS AND WRITE

3. Comprehension. Answer in complete sentences. Use the article to help you.

1. Why do most museums tell visitors not to touch objects?

2. How does this museum let visitors have a closer experience safely?

3. What question did children often ask the curator?

4. What concern do some adults have about interactive museums?

5. What balance does the museum try to create?

4. Discuss. Talk in small groups. Give reasons and examples.

- What object from daily life would you put in a museum?
- Do people learn better by doing, seeing or reading?
- Should museums be free for students?
- What rules would you make for an interactive museum?

5. Homework: Write an opinion paragraph.

Write 120-150 words proposing one interactive activity for a museum in your area. Describe the object or topic, explain what visitors would do, and give one rule to keep the activity safe.

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ANSWER KEY AND TEACHING NOTE

Vocabulary matching

1. display - D
2. replica - A
3. handle - F
4. fragile - B
5. curator - E
6. engage - C

Comprehension answers

1. Why do most museums tell visitors not to touch objects?

They do this to protect old and fragile objects from damage.

2. How does this museum let visitors have a closer experience safely?

It provides replicas and interactive objects while keeping necessary originals behind glass.

3. What question did children often ask the curator?

They asked what it felt like to use the objects.

4. What concern do some adults have about interactive museums?

They worry that too many activities could make a museum feel like a playground.

5. What balance does the museum try to create?

It tries to combine quiet looking and detailed information with physical, interactive experiences.

Teaching note

Compare vocabulary answers before reading. Help learners plan a museum activity: an object, what visitors do and a safety rule. Accept accurate comprehension paraphrases and supported personal responses.