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Museums in the Modern World Museums have changed. They are no longer places for the privileged few or for bored vacationers to visit on rainy days. Action and democracy are words used in descriptions of museums now. At a science museum in Ontario , Canada , you can feel your hair stand on end as harmless electricity passes through your body. At the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City , you can look at 17th century instruments while listening to their music. At the Modern Museum in Sweden , you can put on costumes provided by the Stockholm Opera. As these examples show , museums are reaching out to new audiences , particularly the young , the poor , and the less educated members of the population. As a result , attendance is increasing. More and more , museums directors are realizing that people learn best when they can somehow become part of what they are seeing. In many science museums , for example , there are no guided tours. The visitor is encouraged to touch , listen , operate , and experiment so as to discover scientific principles for himself. He can have the experience of operating a spaceship or a computer. He can experiment with glass blowing and paper making. The purpose is not only to provide fun but also to help people feel at home in the world of science. The theory is that people who do not understand science will probably fear it , and those who fear science will not use it to

best advantage. Many museums now provide educational services and children's departments. In addition to the usual displays, they also offer film showings and dance programs. Instead of being places that one "should" visit, they are places to enjoy. One cause of all these changes is the increase in wealth and leisure time. Another cause is the rising percentage of young people in the population. Many of these young people are college students or college graduates. They are better educated than their parents. They see things in a new and different way. They are not content to stand and look at works of art; they want art they can participate in. The same is true of science and history. In the US, certain groups who formerly were too poor to care about anything beyond the basic needs of daily life are now becoming curious about the world around them. The young people in these groups, like young people in general, have benefited from a better education than their parents received. All these groups, and the rest of the population as well, have been influenced by television, which has taught them about other places and other times. The effect of all this has been to change existing museums and to encourage the building of new ones. In the US and Canada alone, there are now more than 6,000 museums, almost twice as many as there were 25 years ago. About half of them are devoted to history, and the rest are evenly divided between the arts and sciences. The number of visitors, according to the American Association of museums, has risen to more than 700 million a year. In fact, the crowds of visitors at some museums are creating a major problem. Admission to museums has always been

either free or very inexpensive , but now some museums are charging entrance fees for the first time or raising their prices. Even when raised , however , entrance fees are generally too low to support a museum , with its usually large building and its highly trained staff. 1. Paragraph 2_____. 2. Paragraph 3_____. 3. Paragraph 4_____. 4. Paragraph 5_____. A Causes of changes B Increasing number of museums and visitors C Museums getting closer to more spectators D Movies shown in museums E New notions about the management of museums F Places to visit 5. Now museums are no longer restricted to the privileged few , but_____. 6. With the development of society , people , especially the young people , _____. 7. To meet the needs of society , more museums_____. 8. Two major problems for museums are that they have too many visitors and they _____. A have higher demands of museums B are open to more people with different social background C to lengthen their opening hours D charge too little for admission E have been built and open to public

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