

READING COMPREHENSION IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM



*What do we mean; what do we think we know;
and what are the challenges?*

READING COMPREHENSION: WHAT DO WE MEAN?

- ✘ In the 1800s the act of reading (comprehension) was defined as:
 - + Expressive, articulate oral renditions of text including memorization and recitation
 - + This definition of reading was in place until 1917 when Edward L. Thorndike reported his experiment, *“Reading as Reasoning: A study of Mistakes in Paragraph Reading.”*



READING COMPREHENSION: *WHAT DO WE MEAN?*

- ✦ In 1944, Frederick B. Davis conducted a factor analytic study in which he discovered that reading comprehension could be conceived of as a collection of discrete measurable skills. This finding influenced the definition of reading comprehension for many decades.



READING COMPREHENSION: WHAT DO WE MEAN?

- ✦ In 1944, Davis found the following skills associated with reading comprehension:
 - + Word meaning knowledge (vocabulary)
 - + Ability to select the appropriate word meaning for a word in context (words with multiple meanings)
 - + Ability to follow the organization of a passage (text structure)
 - + Ability to select the main idea
 - + Ability to answer questions directly answered in the passage (right there)
 - + Ability to answer questions where the words in the passage are not a direct answer to the question (think and search)
 - + Ability to make inferences
 - + Ability to recognize literary devices in text (metaphors, similes, foreshadowing, etc.)
 - + Ability to determine a writer's purpose, point of view, etc. (Critical reading)



READING COMPREHENSION: *WHAT DO WE MEAN?*

- ✘ The definition of reading comprehension as a set of identifiable skills led to the testing and teaching of specific comprehension skills until the mid-1970s such as:
 - + Getting the Main Idea
 - + Following Directions
 - + Making Predictions
 - + Noting the Details
 - + Determining the Sequence
 - + Making Inferences
 - + Answering Questions at Different Levels of Thinking



