

Communicate SymWriter: R2 Environments

R2.1 Documents and Environments

The purpose of the grids is to assist writing into the document. The writing window, together with any other grids and objects to assist writing, is called the environment.

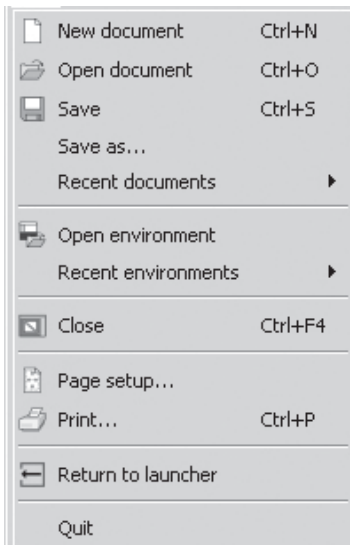
In Reference sheet R1 Making a grid you have seen how to make a simple grid for writing. That grid, and the empty document with it comprise the simplest environment.

To use an environment, it needs to be opened in **write-mode**. The document that is created from the environment in write-mode is saved separately from its environment. Thus an environment may be used many times for different students to write, and a previously saved document may be re-opened after the environment has been loaded.

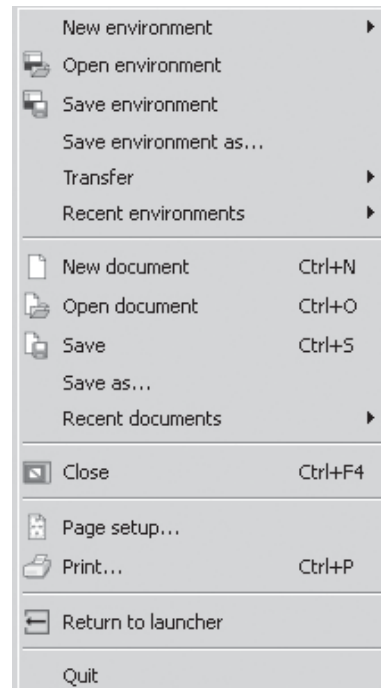
The toolbars that are seen with the environment will be determined by the user interface currently selected. (See Reference sheet R6 Preferences and toolbars)

Environments are created, edited and saved from **design-mode** (The environment designer). They may not be edited or saved in **write-mode**. (See p2).

File menu in write-mode.



File menu in design-mode.



R2.2 Saving and Opening environments

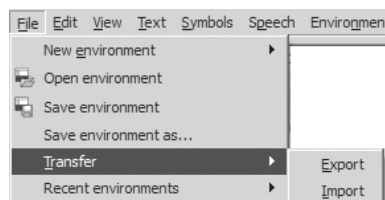
When an environment is saved, all of the stages and their components are saved, together with the current writing document. The font and graphic details that are set for this document are saved with the environment.

Save the environment using the **Save environment** icon or **Save environment** from the **File** menu.



If you have tested your environment (See R1.13 Testing a grid) you may have some text and symbols in the document. You will need to delete this before saving the environment, unless you want it to appear every time that environment is opened in write-mode. You can use **CTRL+A** to select all and then press the **Delete** key.

Environments are saved in a shared area so they are accessible to all users of that computer. They may be exported to, or imported from, other machines on a network or to storage media, such as a USB memory, using the **Transfer** from the **File** menu when in the **Environment designer**.



Note:

Teachers need write-access to the All-users 'Shared Documents' area in order to create and edit the various files and settings of the program.

R2.3 Templates

Within the area where Environments are saved, is a Templates folder. This contains some example grids. You can open these environments in either the designer or write-mode. However when you save the environment it will go to the **Save As** dialog. This prevents you from easily overwriting the template. You will have to deliberately go back to the Templates folder to over-copy the original.

You can also save your own files as templates into the templates folder. This is useful if you have created some writing frameworks for other teachers to modify to meet individual needs.

R2.4 Editing an environment from write-mode

You may be working in write-mode when you realise that you need to make a change to an environment that you are using. You can change into design-mode using the red **Edit** button on the teachers toolbar or from the **Tools** menu select **Switch to designer**. You will need to confirm this (as a measure to prevent students inadvertently switching modes).



You can make your changes and **Save** or **Save As** with an alternative name. To return to write-mode, click on the green **Play** button, or select **Exit design mode** from the **Tools** menu.