

This activity gives an introduction to the main features of document writing in SymWriter 2



It should take you no more than 20 minutes.

1

Launching the program with the toolbars you need

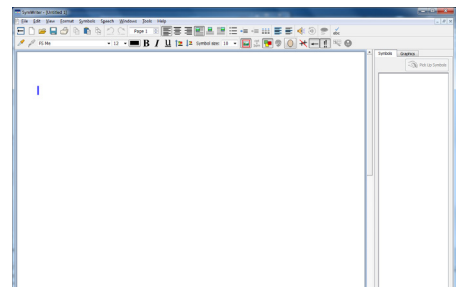
For this activity we want to use the Full Toolbars interface. At the Launcher screen, look at the icon displayed in the toolbars section.

If Full Toolbars is not displayed, click on the **Change** button to see all the toolbars available. Select **Full Toolbars**.

Click on **Write a document** to start writing.



When you open the writing screen you will see the toolbars at the top of the screen and on the right is a panel with the symbol browser and the graphics browser, either on two separate tabs, or one below the other.

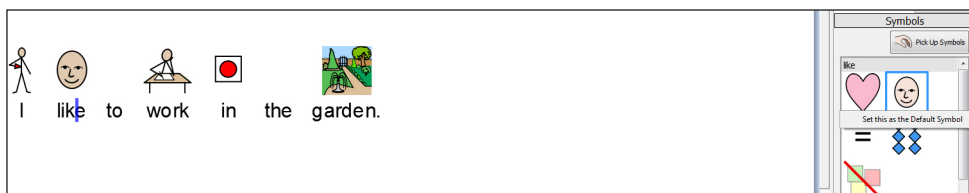


2

Choosing the symbol you want

Click in the document and type 'I like to work in the garden'.

Click on the word 'like'. You will see alternative symbols in the **Symbol Chooser** on the right. Click on the symbol you prefer which will change it in the document.

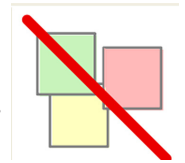


HINT: When typing a sentence, remember to press space after the last word to show the symbol.

3 Turning off symbols you don't want

If there are symbols showing that you don't want, for example on the little words, then you can hide the symbol selecting the **Symbol Off** icon.

Some little words, such as 'the' are turned off by default.

**4** Adding a picture to a word

Type 'I can see a squirrel in the garden.' On the right, you should see a double panel with symbols and graphics sections, or a tab marked **Graphics**. Scroll down the graphics panel to open the **Photos** folder.

Click on the picture 'Squirrel 1' and then move your mouse over the sentence. a copy of the picture will be attached to the mouse pointer. Grey squares appear as the mouse moves over the text. Release the mouse button when there is a small grey square over the word, where the current symbol is shown, Squirrel to change the symbol to the photo.

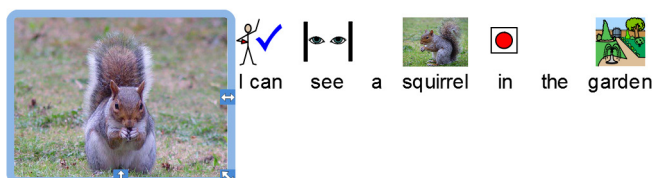


HINT: If you don't see two panels, go to the **View** menu and choose **Show Double Panel**.

5 Adding an illustration to a paragraph

Now pick up the picture Squirrel 2 from the **Graphics Browser**.

Drag the mouse over the text to the left until a larger grey square appears and click to place the photo to the left of the text.



HINT: You can access your own pictures from your 'My Pictures' folder directly from the buttons below the **Graphics** panel, or by navigating to your chosen location, such as USB stick.

6 Adding more lines to a paragraph

The picture is linked to the paragraph. If you want to add more lines of writing beside the illustration you can hold down **SHIFT** when you type the **Return** to add a **Soft Return**.



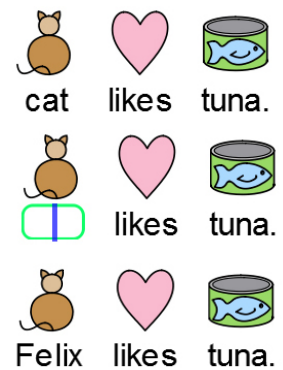
7 Re-text a symbol

As well as changing the image for a word, you can re-text the word for a symbol.

Type 'cat likes tuna.'

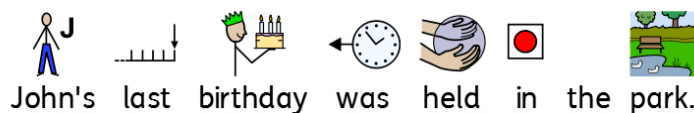
Click on the word 'cat' and click on the Cat-Sam button on the toolbar, or press the **F11** key. This will remove the text for the symbol.

Type the new text 'Felix'. Then press **OK** on the green bar that now shows at the top of the page under the toolbar.



8 Good symbolising

Type 'John's last birthday was held in the park.'



The usual default symbol for 'last' implied final. It wasn't his final birthday, it was the previous one. The word 'held' is not really necessary, nor are 'was' and 'the'. ('The' is normally set to be off by default.) The resulting version is both clearer to see and communicates more effectively.



9 Qualifiers

SymWriter can include grammatical markers to indicate tenses, plurals and comparatives. Type 'We saw the biggest apples.'



Qualifier buttons

Depending on how the preferences have been set in your program you will see the qualifiers. On the toolbar are three buttons from which you can turn the qualifiers on or off for currently selected words. It is generally good practice to only use qualifiers when necessary for the meaning.

10 Writing in text mode

In a new paragraph change to **Text mode** by clicking on the **Symbol mode** button. When you start to type this will change to the Text mode button to show you are now in text mode.



Symbol mode

In Text mode you will still see the symbol choices in the Symbol Chooser but no symbols in the document. This can be very useful for writers who need a bit of visual help but don't want to write in symbols.



Text mode

You can still add the symbol for any particular word from the symbol browser. It can be a very useful way of supporting information with just the essential key symbols.



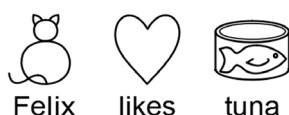
Condensation often appears on windows.

11 Colour or black and white symbols

You can change selected symbols from colour to line drawings by clicking on the colour icon. Click again to change it back.



Colour on/off



Felix likes tuna

12 Changing the colours in a symbol

You can change the colours in a selected symbol by clicking on the palette icon.

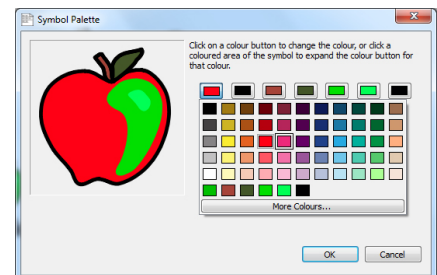
Click in the apples symbol in your earlier sentence, and then on the **Colour palette** button.

Choose the colour you want to change either from the squares or from the image in the dialog box. Choose suitable colours to change it from a green to red apple.

Click **OK** when you are finished.



Colour palette

**13** The Format Painter

You can highlight any section of text to change the properties such as font, colour and size and the symbol size.

Copy the style of the text at any point by clicking on the **Format Picker** tool.

Select the text where you want to copy that style by clicking in a word, or dragging over a selection of text, and then click on the **Format Painter** tool to apply the new style.



Format Picker



Format Painter

14 Copying from SymWriter to other programs

You can copy any highlighted paragraph(s) using the **Copy as Image** button (or by pressing **CTRL+ALT+C**). This will copy the selected content to the Windows clipboard which you can then paste into other programs that accept images, by using **Paste** (or **CTRL+V**).



Copy as image



These techniques will allow you to make many symbol supported documents in SymWriter 2. There are many more help sheets and videos on-line at www.widgit.com/symwriter



The on-screen writing Grids in SymWriter 2 Environments opens the opportunity for supporting the writing process. Look at the example Environments included with the program to see some of the different types of things you can make.