RPG hot takes

Tips and Tricks

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Agenda

- Not just tips and tricks
- Also ‘do not do this’ content
- Maybe some IDE tricks here and there
- Very opinionated

Linter

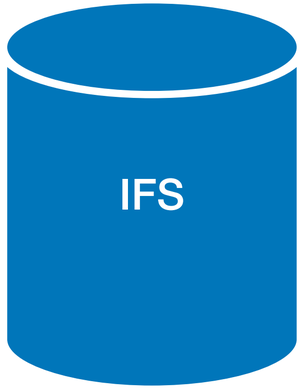
Lint, or a linter, is a static code analysis tool used to flag programming errors, bugs, stylistic errors and suspicious constructs.

Wikipedia: Lint (software)

Tools

RPGLE
language tools
Config files

LIBRARY/VSCODE/RPGLINT.JSON



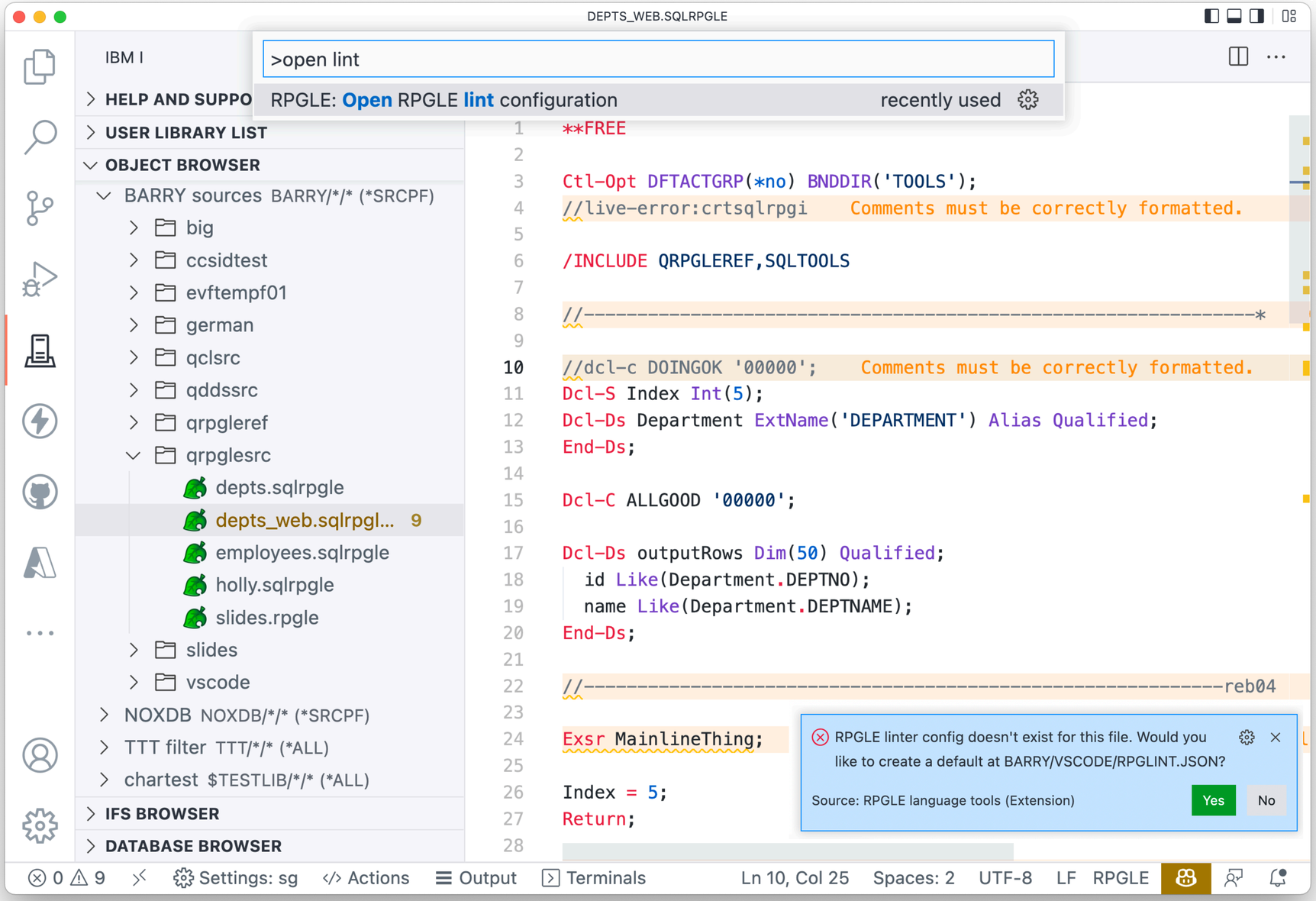
~/.vscode/rpglint.json

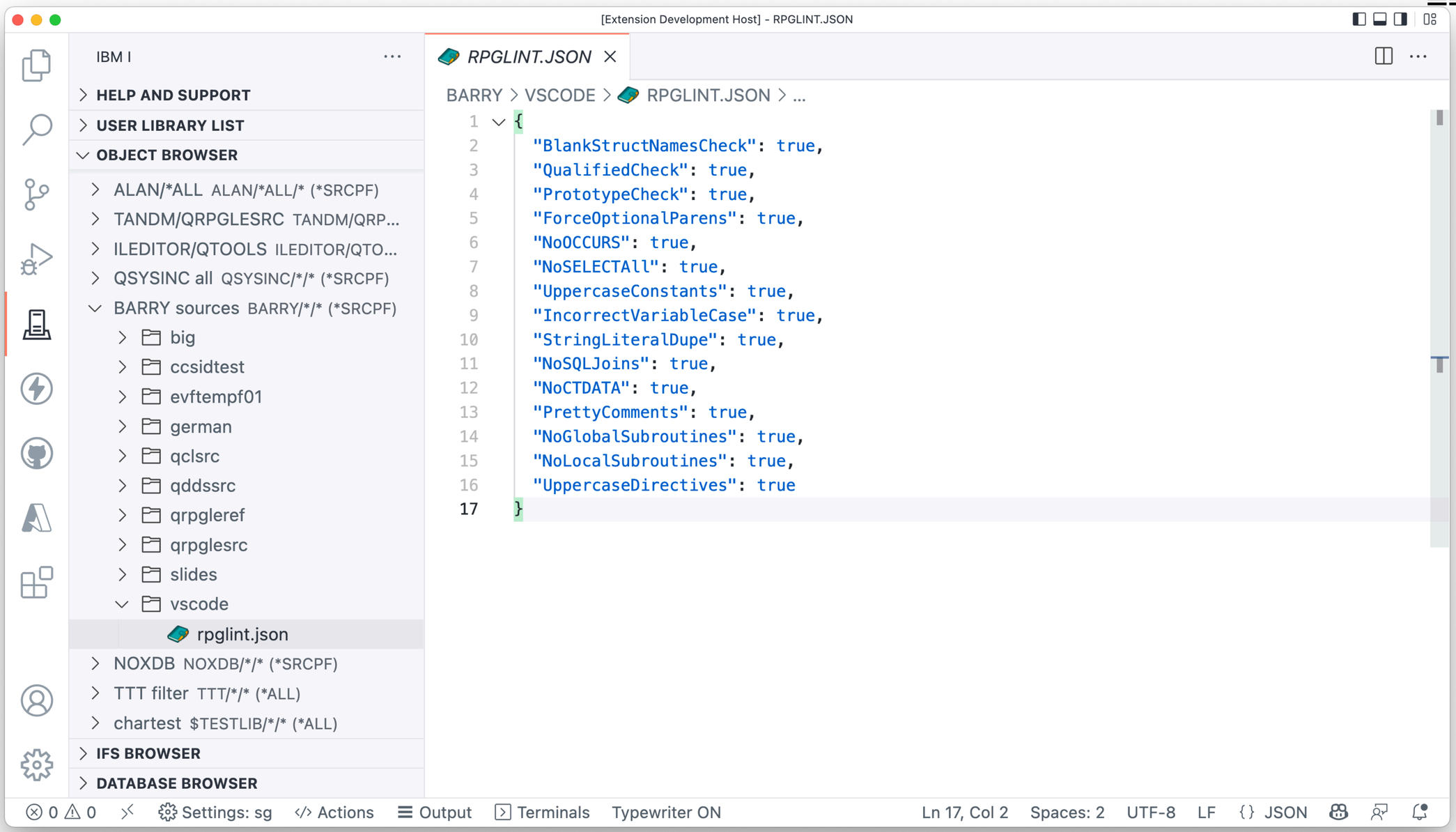
~/.vscode/rpglint.json

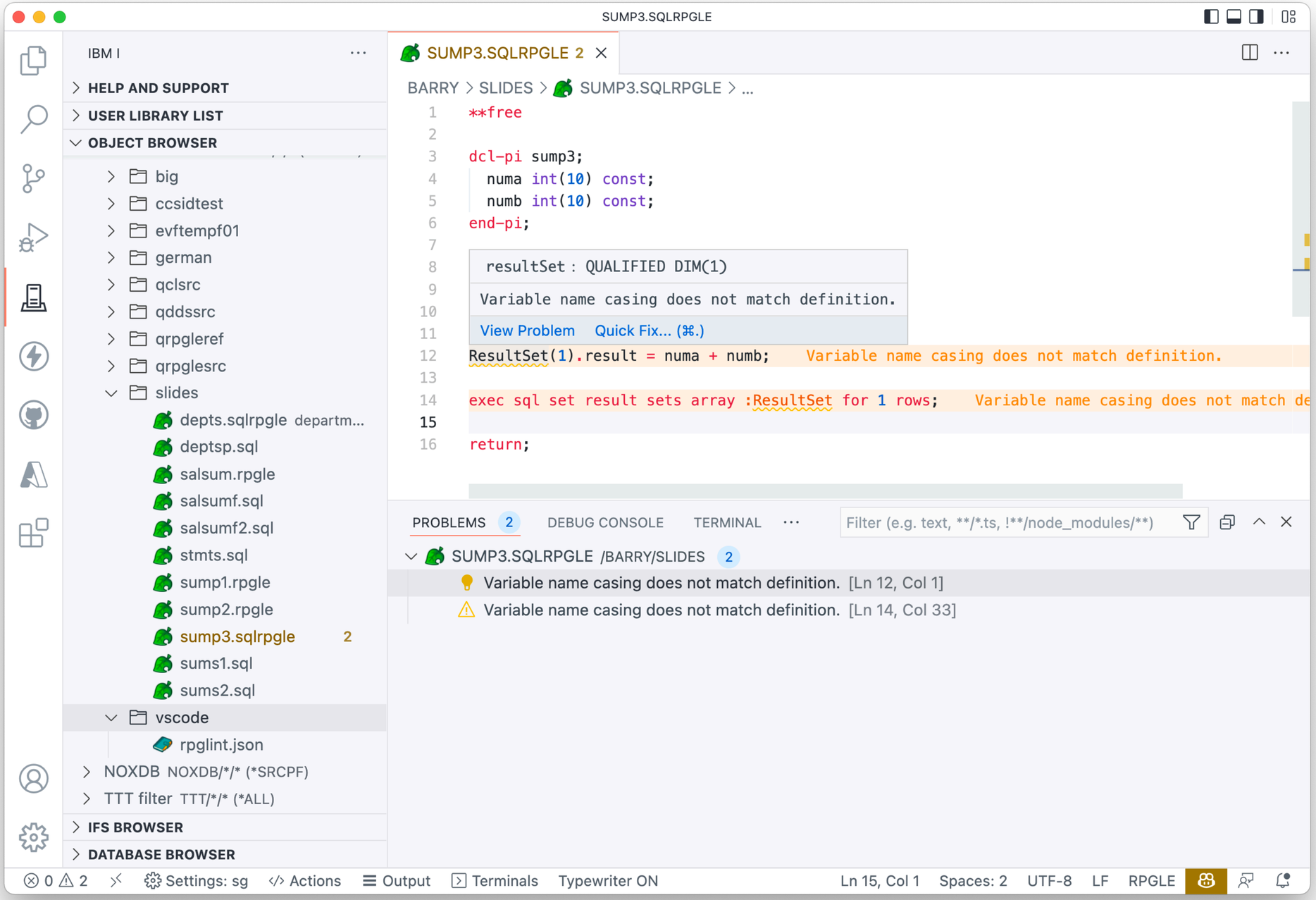
RPGLE language tools

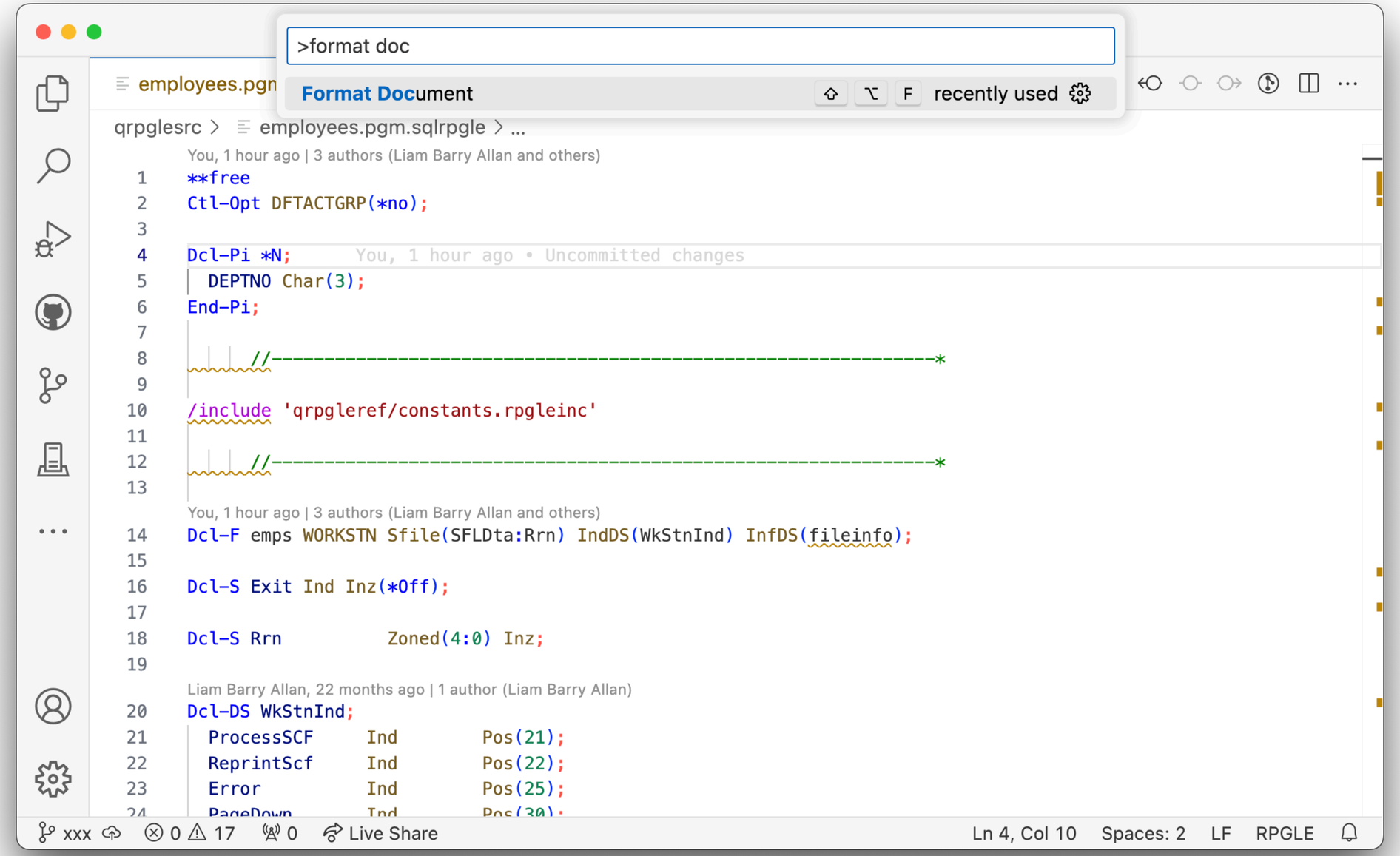
Config setup

Command Palette (F1)









Hot takes

Generally people agree

Okay this is stupid

It is totally off the rails

Wrong structs are valid in parameters

- In general, RPG thinks that data structures are also character strings
- Allowed to pass any data structure or any string to a parameter defined with LIKEDS

```
dcl-pr check_order ind;
   order_info likeds(order_t);
   customer_info likeds(customer_t) const;
end-pr;

ok = check_order (customer : order);      // Bug!
ok = check_order (order : customer.name); // Bug!
```

Use OPTIONS(*EXACT) on parameters

- The compiler will only allow you to pass a data structure defined with the same LIKEDS
- The compile fails because the parameters don't meet the OPTIONS(*EXACT) requirements

```
dcl-pr check_order ind;
   order_info likeds(order_t) options(*exact);
   customer_info likeds(customer_t) const options(*exact);
end-pr;

ok = check_order (customer : order);       // Compile error
ok = check_order (order : customer.name);  // Compile error
```

Mixed cased procedures

- By default, RPGLE procedures are uppercase
- Call stack will reflect casing
- Mixed is prettier and simple to use

```
5  QUOCMD     QSYS                    /03B3
    PGMSTK     BMORRIS                         _QRNP_PEP_PGMSTK
    PGMSTK     BMORRIS       6                 HANDLEORDER
    PGMSTK     BMORRIS       10                CHECKCUSTSTATUS
    PGMSTK     BMORRIS       14                GETCUSTID
```

```
5  QUOCMD     QSYS                    /03B3
    PGMSTK     BMORRIS                         _QRNP_PEP_PGMSTK
    PGMSTK     BMORRIS       6                 handleOrder
    PGMSTK     BMORRIS       10                checkCustStatus
    PGMSTK     BMORRIS       14                getCustId
```

Mixed case procedures

If you add or change EXTPROC:

- Recompile everything that uses the prototype
- Fix your CL to have the mixed-case name:
  `CALLPRC 'handleOrder'`
- Fix your binder source to have the mixed-case
  `EXPORT(“handleOrder”)`

```
dcl-proc handleOrder;
   dcl-pi *n extproc(*dclcase) end-pi;
   return;
end-proc;
```

Always with INLR

- So used to using *INLR
- Tells the cycle to end
- Can also use RETURN

```
**free

dcl-s thetext char(52);

thetext = 'Hello world';

dsply thetext;

*inlr = *on;
```

How about.. no more LR?

- Header to define what procedure is the entry point
- Allows for cleaning and grouped code
- Program PI defined inside of procedure
- Removes the need to set LR

```
**free

ctl-opt main(sayHello);

dcl-proc sayHello;
  dcl-s thetext char(52);

  thetext = 'Hello world';

  dsply thetext;
end-proc;
```

Trims are ugly and slow

- If you have a lot of %TRIM in your code
  - Consider using varying-length strings instead
- %TRIM starts at the end of the field and works backward until it finds a non-blank character
- Varying-length fields know how much data they have, so it's not usually necessary to trim the data

```
**free
dcl-pi *n;
  lib char(10) const;
  file char(10) const;
end-pi;

dcl-s cmd char(100);

cmd = 'DSPPFM ' + %trim(lib) + '/' + %trim(file)
    + ' OUTPUT(*PRINT)';
callp(e) QCMDEXC (cmd : %len(%trim(cmd)));

if %error();
  report ('File ' + %trim(file) + 'does not exist '
         + 'in library ' + %trim(lib) + '.');
endif;
```

Trim minimally

- Minimal trims
- VARCHAR type

```
**free
dcl-pi *n;
  libParm char(10) const;
  fileParm char(10) const;
end-pi;

dcl-s lib varchar(10);
dcl-s file varchar(10);
dcl-s cmd varchar(100);

lib = %trim(libParm);
file = %trim(fileParm);

cmd = 'DSPPFM ' + lib + '/' + file + ' OUTPUT(*PRINT)';
callp(e) QCMDEXC (cmd : %len(cmd));

if %error();
  report ('File ' + file + 'does not exist '
         + 'in library ' + lib + '.');
endif;
```

No manual trim at all?

- The hard way - always remember to code %TRIM

```
dcl-pr getFileInfo;
  file varchar(101) const;
end-pr;
getFileInfo (%trim(filename));
```

- The easy way - let OPTIONS(*TRIM) handle trimming

```
dcl-pr getFileInfo;
  file varchar(101) const options(*trim);
end-pr;
getFileInfo (filename);
```

Help out the newbies, be explicit (QUALIFIED)

- Newcomers need help
- Implicit references are annoying

```
read ordRec;
dow not %eof(ord92);
  ok = checkInventory (city : item_id : quantity);
  read ordRec;
enddo;
```

```
read ord92.ordRec order; // File DS's are qualified
dow not %eof(ord92);
  ok = checkInventory (
    cust.city :
    order.item_id :
    order.quantity
  );
  read ord92.ordRec order;
enddo;
```

Qualify it all

- Qualify from record formats
- Qualify entire file definitions

```
dcl-f orders;
dcl-ds orderDs likerec(orderRec);

read orderRec orderDs; // read into the DS
```

```
dcl-f orders qualified;
dcl-ds orderDs likerec(orderRec);

read orders.orderRec orderDs; // read into the DS
```

Lovely, pretty names

- Long name
  - SQL name
- Short name
  - System name

```
CREATE OR REPLACE TABLE DEPARTMENT (
  department_id FOR DEPTNO CHAR(3) NOT NULL,
  deptartment_name FOR DEPTNAME VARCHAR(36) NOT NULL,
  manager_number FOR MGRNO CHAR(6) NOT NULL,
  parent_department FOR ADMRDEPT CHAR(3) NOT NULL,
  LOCATION CHAR(16) NOT NULL,
  PRIMARY KEY (DEPTNO)
);
```

Lovely, pretty names… in RPGLE

- Without ALIAS, ugly short names
  - Harder for newbies too!
- Using ALIAS
  - Better readability
  - Easier for your pals

```
**free
dcl-f orders;
// ...
if ordqty > 0;
  placeOrder(ordId : cstId : ordqty
             : splcty : cstcty); // "splcty" ???
endif;
```

```
**free
dcl-f orders alias;
// ...
if order_quantity > 0;
  placeOrder(order_id : customer_id : order_quantity
             : supplier_city : customer_city);
endif;
```

New data-structure definition

```
dcl-ds emp_t qualified template;
  name varchar(25);
  salary packed(7 : 2);
  is_manager ind;
end-ds;

dcl-ds dept qualified;
  num_emps int(10);
  emps likeds(emp_t) dim(30);
end-ds;
```

```
dcl-ds dept qualified;
  num_emps int(10);
  dcl-ds emps dim(30);
    name varchar(25);
    salary packed(7 : 2);
    is_manager ind;
  end-ds;
end-ds;
```

Exit handler

- Put the cleanup tasks in the ON-EXIT section of the procedure.
- The ON-EXIT section is always run, no matter how the procedure ends.

```
**free
dcl-proc myproc;
  // …

  p = %alloc(1000);
  // …

  if not %found;
    return;
  endif;
  // …

on-exit;
  dealloc p;
end-proc;
```

No local prototype

- Prototype not needed for local procedures
- Only needed for EXTPGM or EXTPROC

```
dcl-pr PRTTXT extpgm;
  output char(52);
end-pr;

// dcl-pr writeOut;
//   output char(52);
// end-pr;

dcl-proc writeOut;
  dcl-pi *n;
    output char(52);
  end-pi;

  PRTTXT(output);
end-proc;
```

Love your constants

- Re-used strings are ugly
- Make it much easier to refactor by using constants

```
dcl-pi *n;
  textIn chat(32);
end-pi;

dcl-s mytext char(52);

mytext = textIn;

if (mytext = *blank);
  mytext = 'HI2';
endif;

select;
  when (mytext = 'HI1');
    dsply 'Hello world';
  when (mytext = 'HI2');
    dsply 'Goodbye world';
  other;
    dsply 'Hello world';
endsl;
```

Love your constants

- Re-used strings are ugly
- Make it much easier to refactor by using constants
- A good IDE makes constants easy

```
17   select;
18     when (my   HI1_TEXT : 'HELLO WORLD'
19       dsply HI1_TEXT;
20     when (mytext = HI2);
21       dsply HI2_TEXT;
22     other;
23       dsply HI1_TEXT;
24   endsl;
```

```
// IDs
dcl-c HI1 'HI1';
dcl-c HI2 'HI2';

// Messages
dcl-c HI1_TEXT 'Hello world';
dcl-c HI2_TEXT 'Goodbye world';

//...

if (mytext = *blank);
  mytext = HI2;
endif;

select;
  when (mytext = HI1);
    dsply HI1_TEXT;
  when (mytext = HI2);
    dsply HI2_TEXT;
  other;
    dsply HI1_TEXT;
endsl;
```

Take care of your structs

- RPG considers a data structure to be also a character string.
- You can assign one data structure to another using EVAL.
- This is fine as long as they
  - have identical subfields, AND
  - don't have any null-capable subfields

```
dcl-ds ds1;
  subfa char(60);
  subfb int(10);
end-ds;

dcl-ds ds2;
  subfa char(30);
  subfb int(10);
end-ds;

eval ds1 = ds2;
```

Take care of your structs

- Rather than using EVAL, use EVAL-CORR ("corresponding").
- EVAL-CORR assigns subfield by subfield.
- Subfields that have the same name and compatible data types are assigned.
- Null indicators are also assigned for null-capable subfields.
- Other subfields are ignored.

```
dcl-ds ds1;
  subfa char(60);
  subfb int(10);
  subfc packed(10:5);
end-ds;

dcl-ds ds2;
  subfa char(30);
  subfb int(10);
end-ds;

eval-corr ds1 = ds2;
```

Talk to the world

- New, faster, UDTFs for sending HTTP requests
- No more Java
- Easy to use

```
**free

Dcl-Ds request Qualified;
  URL    Varchar(64);
  Header Varchar(1024);
  Body   Varchar(2048);
End-Ds;

request.Header
  =  '{'
  + '"header": "Content-Type,application/json",'
  + '}';

request.Body = json_AsText(pBody);

EXEC SQL
  SET :Response =
  QSYS2.HTTP_POST(
    :request.URL,
    :request.Body,
    :request.Header
  );
```

Talk to the world in many ways

HTTP_DELETE
HTTP_DELETE_VERBOSE

HTTP_GET
HTTP_GET_VERBOSE

HTTP_PUT
HTTP_PUT_VERBOSE

HTTP_POST
HTTP_POST_VERBOSE

Use any UDTF or scalar function

- Embedded SQL lets you run any SQL
- Including grabbing result sets
- So many UDTFs and scalar functions

```
**free

Dcl-S VarcharField Varchar(256);

VarcharField = 'Hello world!';

EXEC SQL SET :VarcharField = QSYS2.BASE64_ENCODE(:VarcharField);
EXEC SQL SET :VarcharField = QSYS2.BASE64_DECODE(:VarcharField);
```

No execute immediate, ever

- Terrible readability
- Broken if a single quote is actually used
- Open to SQL injection attack
  - Esp. with LIKE

```
Dcl-S personName Varchar(60);
Dcl-S deleteStatement Varchar(200);

deleteStatement
  = 'delete from users where '
  + 'user_fullname = ''' + personName + '''';

EXEC SQL EXECUTE IMMEDIATE :deleteStatement;
```

Be more explicit (no more SELECT *)

- Improved readability
- Easier for developers
  - Esp. new ones
- Removes possible bugs

```
// Static
Dcl-Ds users extfile('users');

// Not static
EXEC SQL
  SELECT * INTO :users
  FROM users
  WHERE ID = 1;
```

Don’t write ugly code

- Don’t write joins in your RPGLE
- Can easily get complex
  - This is basic

```
dcl-s empno char(6);
dcl-s firstName char(20);
dcl-s workdept char(8);
dcl-s deptName char(30);

EXEC SQL
  select
    e.empno, e.firstnme, e.workdept, d.deptname
  into
    :empno, :firstName, :workdept, :deptName
  from sample.employee as e
  left join sample.department as d
    on e.workdept = d.deptno
  where empno = '00100'
```

Use a view

```
create or replace view empDepartments as
  select
    e.empno, e.firstnme, e.workdept, d.deptname
  from sample.employee as e
  left join sample.department as d
    on e.workdept = d.deptno;
```

```
dcl-s empno char(6);
dcl-s firstName char(20);
dcl-s workdept char(8);
dcl-s deptName char(30);

EXEC SQL
  select
    e.empno, e.firstnme, e.workdept, d.deptname
  into
    :empno, :firstName, :workdept, :deptName
  from empDepartments
  where empno = '00100';
```

Any more?

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