

Digital Dictation Campaign in Russian Libraries in the Time of a Pandemic

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From March 28th to April 11th, 2020, the National Educational Campaign: “Digital Dictation” was conducted in Russia. It is the largest digital literacy testing organized by the Regional Public Centre for Internet Technologies, the Microsoft Corporation, and the All-Russia People’s Front Public Movement.

Digital literacy is one of the most important skills a modern person can have, which has an impact on all spheres of our life: personal, professional, and social. Our financial and information security largely depends on it.

The [Digital Dictation](#) is an online testing designed matching different age groups: children (7-13 years old), teens (14-17 years old) and adults (18 years and older), and divided into 4 content blocks:

- Basics of digital consumption (various devices and knowledge of basic programs and applications)
- Digital competencies (work with the Internet, social networks, online stores and other online services)
- Digital security, including protection of personal data and devices
- New technologies (artificial intelligence, blockchain, Internet of Things)

This year, libraries around the country joined the campaign for the first time. The Russian State Library for Young Adults (RSLYA) has become its informational partner and coordinator of its implementation in the public libraries in the whole country.

Building society with a high level of digital literacy is one of the priority tasks the state is facing today, and libraries as information and intellectual centers can play an important role in this process. So far, 115 libraries from 38 regions of Russia have taken part in the campaign. Initially, the organizers of the campaign have offered the libraries various forms of participation as offline locations and sample scenarios for holding events on them. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the country and in the world, libraries have not been able to become offline locations, but have actively joined the information campaign by posting materials about the Digital Dictation on their electronic resources and social networks. Besides, 42 libraries have conducted closed corporate testing for their staff members.

At the beginning of the Digital Dictation Campaign, the RSLYA offered its users an online lecture called [“You Are Predicted. Soft Power of Artificial Intelligence”](#) by the independent expert on the AI, journalist and blogger Igor Shnurenko who spoke about this popular and exciting technology of today.

As campaign coordinators, we are convinced that participating in it has allowed libraries to demonstrate their potential as an intellectual and information center, interested in developing digital literacy of their community and having the necessary resources for this.

We also think the current, challenging situation, when almost all libraries around the globe are closed due to the COVID19, is a good chance for libraries and librarians to show their digital knowledge and

competencies, providing online services, improving digital content, opening databases and electronic resources, actively interacting on social networks with their users left in forced isolation.