

Pinterest 101



Welcome to “Pinterest 101”, one of the training modules from Community Literacy of Ontario’s *Social Media Marketing* project. This project is designed to develop resources to help Ontario’s literacy agencies, and others, use social media for marketing.

[Click here](#) to access our resources.

What is Pinterest?

So, just what is [Pinterest](#)? [Wikipedia](#) provides an excellent definition: “*Pinterest is a pinboard-style photo-sharing website that allows users to create and manage theme-based image collections such as events, interests, and hobbies.*”

In Community Literacy of Ontario’s survey of the social media needs and interests of Ontario’s community literacy agencies, Pinterest was often identified as a technology that people were very interested in learning more about. We are happy to oblige!

Pinterest is an amazing resource for enjoyment, sharing, learning, and marketing. The saying “*a picture paints a thousand words*” is well-illustrated by Pinterest. People and organizations can create boards to post, organize and share photos and videos on an infinite variety of topics. They can also use Pinterest to showcase their work, causes, and passions. Interested stakeholders can pin and re-pin pictures, and follow boards, people, organizations, or causes of interest. Pinterest can be effectively used with people who prefer to learn visually.

Pinterest is both fun and easy to use. In fact, Pinterest is such a great tool, that we would venture to say that it borders on being addictive! You can learn more about this wonderful resource by watching this two-minute video called [What is Pinterest?](#)

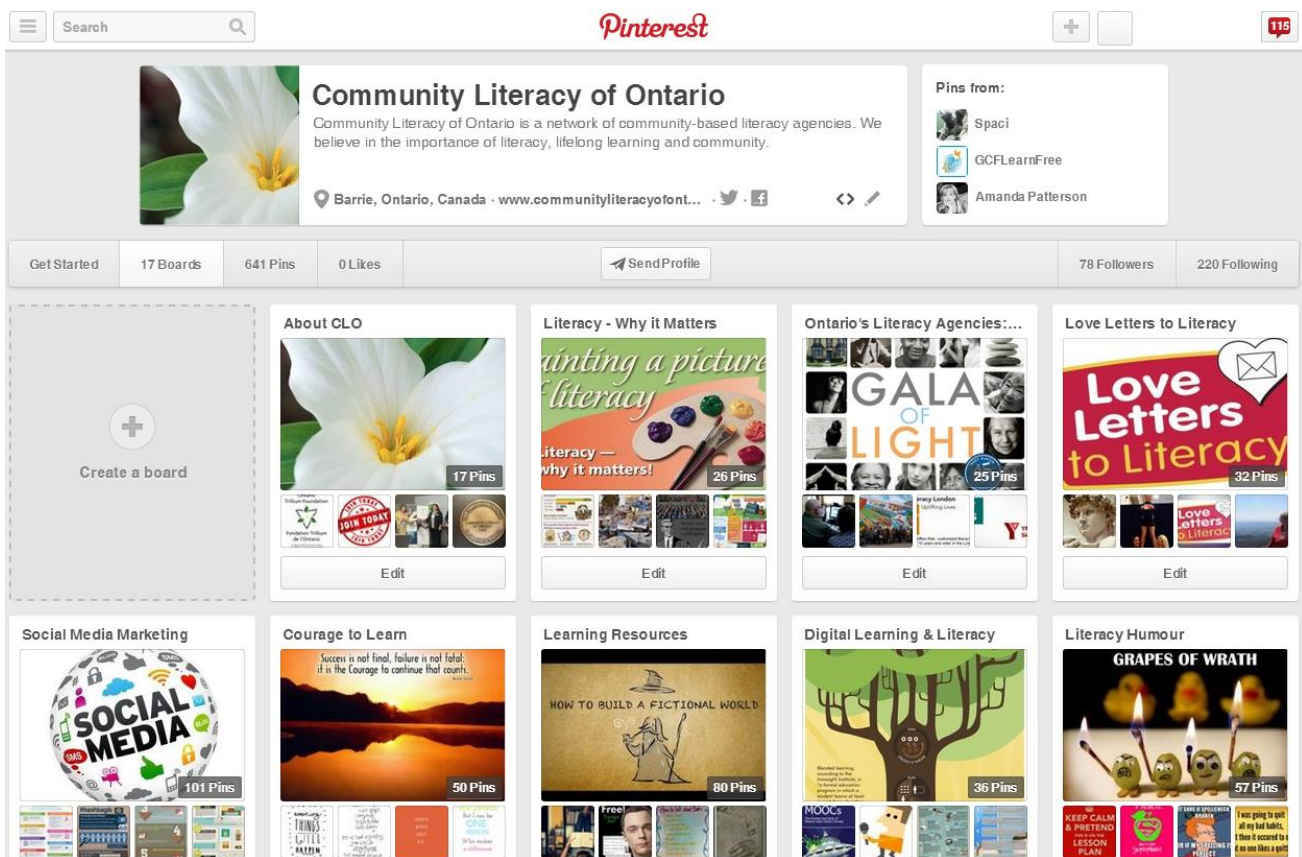


Pinterest 101



Literacy organizations can use Pinterest in a wide variety of ways, including to promote their services to adult learners, other service providers, their communities, donors and funders; to raise awareness of literacy; to showcase fundraising and community events; and much more besides.

To illustrate how Pinterest can be effectively used in literacy, Community Literacy of Ontario created its own Pinterest account. In this module, we will walk you through the creation of a Pinterest account using a step-by-step, highly visual process. You can find CLO's account at: www.pinterest.com/love4literacy/



Pinterest 101



How do I use Pinterest?

GCF LearnFree.org offers a great online resource called [Pinterest 101](#) that takes you through what Pinterest is, how it works, and how to create an account.

However, in order to walk you through it, Community Literacy of Ontario set up its own Pinterest account in order to demonstrate how to do it using a step-by-step process.

Step 1: Create Your Pinterest Account

- Start by going to Pinterest's homepage at www.pinterest.com/.
- Pinterest will give you two choices for setting up your account: signing up with Facebook or signing up with email:



Save all the stuff you love (recipes! articles! travel ideas!) right here on Pinterest.



- You can sign up to Pinterest using either your Facebook account or your email. We chose to sign up with email.
- We clicked the "Sign up with email" button, and the following screen appeared:



Sign up with Email ×

First Name Last Name

Email Address

Password

Canada ▼

☐ Female ☐ Male

☒ Let Pinterest personalize your experience based on other sites you visit · [Learn more](#)

Are you a business? [Click Here](#)

By creating an account, I accept Pinterest's [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).

Cancel Sign up



Pinterest 101



- If you are setting up your Pinterest account as an individual user, you would set up your account by filling in the personal information on the preceding page.
- However, as a nonprofit organization, CLO chose to set up its account as a business account, so we clicked the “Are you a business?” button. This screen appeared:

The screenshot shows the Pinterest 'Create Business Account' page. At the top is the Pinterest logo. Below it, the title 'Create Business Account' is on the left, and a link 'Already have an account? Convert' is on the right. The form is divided into several sections. The first section contains a 'Business Type' dropdown menu with the text 'Choose a business type...' and a note 'Can be changed later'. The second section is for 'Contact Name', with separate input fields for 'First Name' and 'Last Name', and a note 'Person managing your account'. The third section is for 'Email Address' with a single input field. The fourth section is for 'Password' with a single input field and a note '6 characters minimum'. The fifth section is titled 'PROFILE INFO (shown publicly)'. It contains a 'Business Name' input field with a note 'How you will appear on Pinterest'. Below that is the 'Username' section, which shows a preview 'http://pinterest.com/' followed by an input field for the username. The sixth section is for the 'Profile Image', featuring a large placeholder box with the text 'Place Your Logo Here' and an 'Upload Image' button. The seventh section is 'About', with a text area for 'Enter a description for your profile'. The final section is 'Website', with an input field for 'Enter your website address' and an example 'ex: http://yourwebsite.com'.

- Fill in the above information as requested.



Pinterest 101



Here are a few tips we can share about setting up your account:

- Under “Business Type”, we selected “Institution/Nonprofit”.
- Under “Contact Name” and “Email Address”, we used the name and email address of the person who is normally responsible for CLO’s social media accounts. This should be a trusted and reliable individual who is involved with your organization on a long-term basis and who exercises good judgement and will adhere to your organization’s social media policy.
- To see CLO’s social media policy, just click here:
www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/about-us/social-media-policy/.
- For your Pinterest user name, pick a name that reflects your organization and mission. We selected “Love4Literacy” (or www.pinterest.com/love4literacy/) which expresses our mission, but also mirrors our Twitter name for consistency. You will need to find a unique name; one not already in use by another organization.
- Under “About”, you have 200 characters to write a brief summary of your organization and its mission. You can edit this description whenever you choose.
- Here is what we wrote:



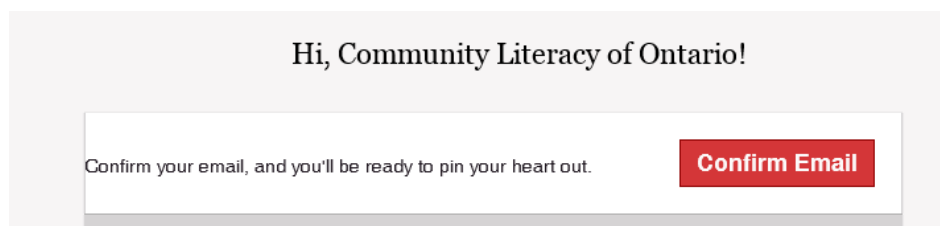
Community Literacy of Ontario

Community Literacy of Ontario is a network of community-based literacy agencies. We believe in the importance of literacy, lifelong learning and community.

Barrie, Ontario, Canada · [www.communityliteracyofont...](http://www.communityliteracyofontario.ca) · ·



- You will then be asked to verify your email.

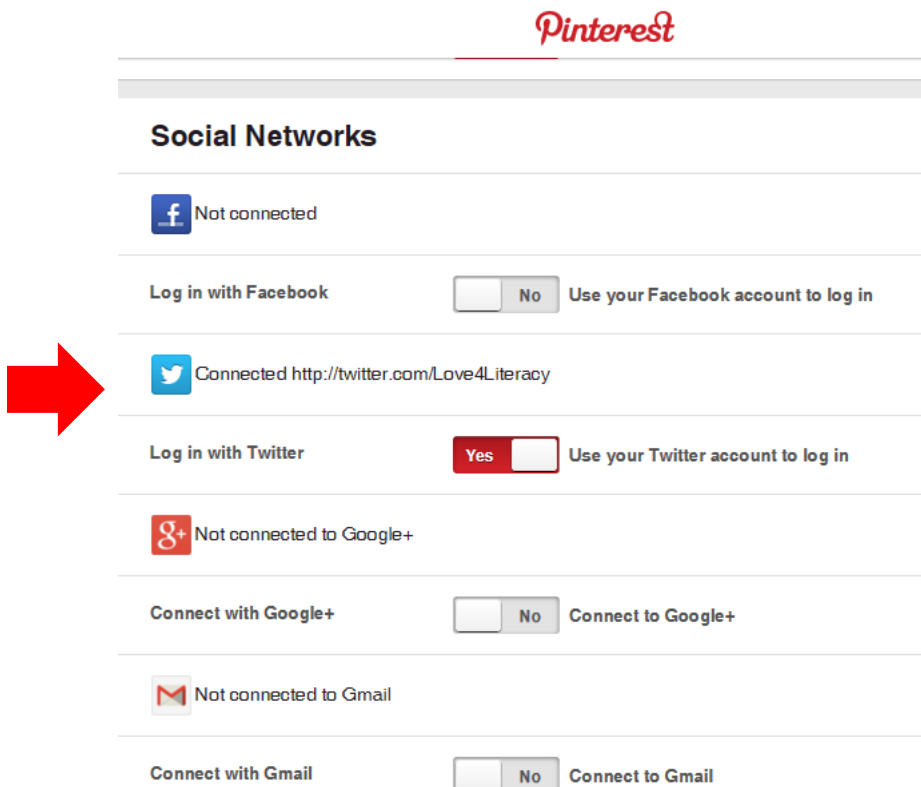


Setting up your Pinterest account is as simple as that! As suggested by Pinterest, we were now ready to “*pin our hearts out*”!




Step 2: Determine Your Account Settings

- Within your Pinterest account, go to “Settings”.
- Select the appropriate account settings for your organization.
- Select the appropriate privacy settings (for example, your desired search privacy, search history, email notifications, etc.).
- Under “Settings”, you can decide whether you will link your Pinterest account with your organization’s social networks (see the diagram below).
- We decided to link our Pinterest account with our Twitter account, since that helped us to find existing connections and to allow us to simultaneously post to Pinterest and Twitter when desired.
- You can choose to link your other social media accounts to Pinterest either during the set-up phase or any time afterwards.




Pinterest


Social Networks

 Not connected


Log in with Facebook ☐ No Use your Facebook account to log in

 Connected <http://twitter.com/Love4Literacy>

Log in with Twitter ☒ Yes Use your Twitter account to log in

 Not connected to Google+

Connect with Google+ ☐ No Connect to Google+

 Not connected to Gmail

Connect with Gmail ☐ No Connect to Gmail

To learn more about Pinterest’s Profile and Privacy Settings, view this [resource](#) from GCF LearnFree. It is geared towards a personal Pinterest account, but it provides a helpful overview of issues to consider for Pinterest privacy settings.

Pinterest 101

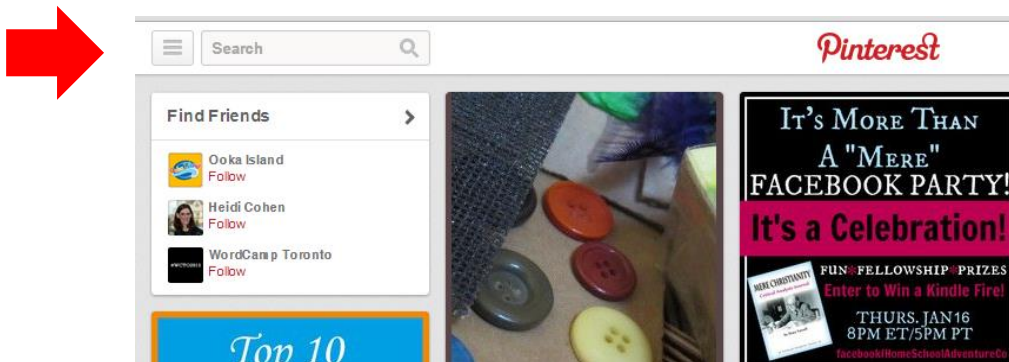


Step 3: Follow Boards of Interest

Next you will want to start following other boards of interest on Pinterest. There are many ways to find great boards and we will share a few of our favourite ways to get you started.

Use the Search Function

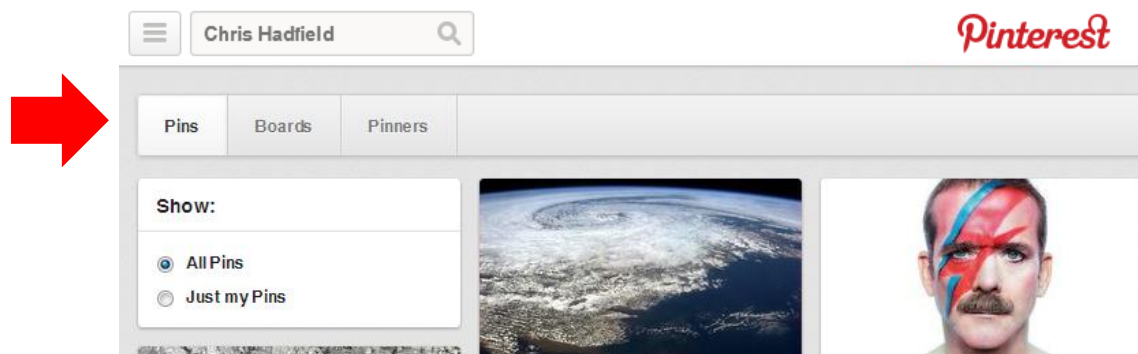
A great way to find boards of interest is by using the search function of Pinterest.



You can use Pinterest's search function to look for any topic you choose. Just type in your topic of interest and begin your search.

However, you need to be careful to search under a category that suits your needs. There are three search categories: *Pins*, *Boards* and *Pinner*s. For example, if you were searching Pinterest for the Canadian astronaut, Chris Hadfield, then:

- **Pins** would include any *individual Pins about* Chris Hadfield
- **Boards** would include Pinboards that have been *named* "Chris Hadfield"
- **Pinner**s would be *individual people (or organizations) called* Chris Hadfield



Pinterest 101



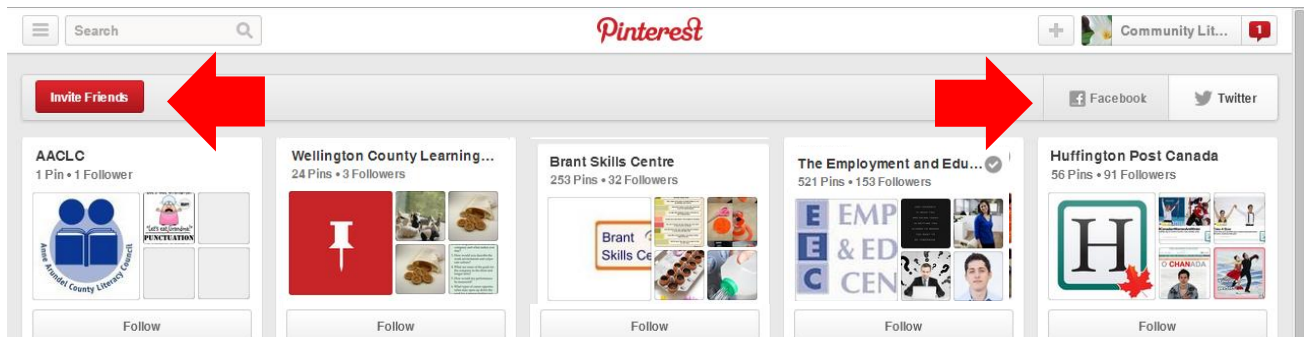
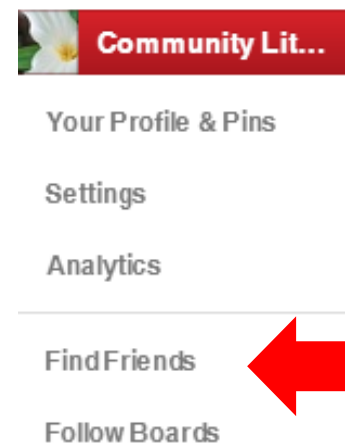
We started by searching Pinterest using the term “Education”. There were thousands of Pins with classroom ideas, teaching resources and strategies, educational infographics, inspirational quotations and much more. We further refined our search by entering the terms “adult basic education”, “online teaching”, and “inspirational quotes” and found many excellent boards to follow.

In April 2014, Pinterest introduced an enhanced way to search called “Guided Search”. Watch this video called “[Introducing Guided Search](#)” to learn all about it.

Find Your Friends

To get started, click under Pinterest’s “*Find Friends*” feature.

If you have linked your Pinterest account to your other social media accounts, then your Twitter or Facebook friends who are also on Pinterest will automatically appear under “Invite Friends”. Merely click “Follow” to easily link with your pre-existing social networks.



If you have not linked to your social media accounts (or if you do not use other types of social media), then search for your friends (individual and organizational) under the search feature mentioned above using the category of “Pinner” (since Pinner refers to the individual or organization who has created a Pinterest account).

And please be sure to follow the Pinterest account of [Community Literacy of Ontario](#) – we will definitely follow you back!

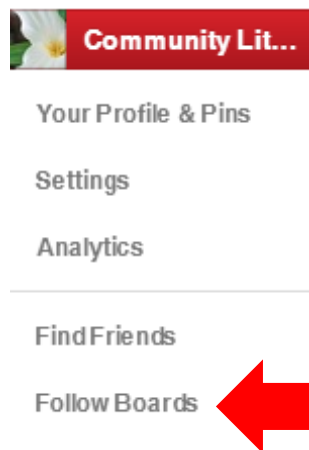


Pinterest 101

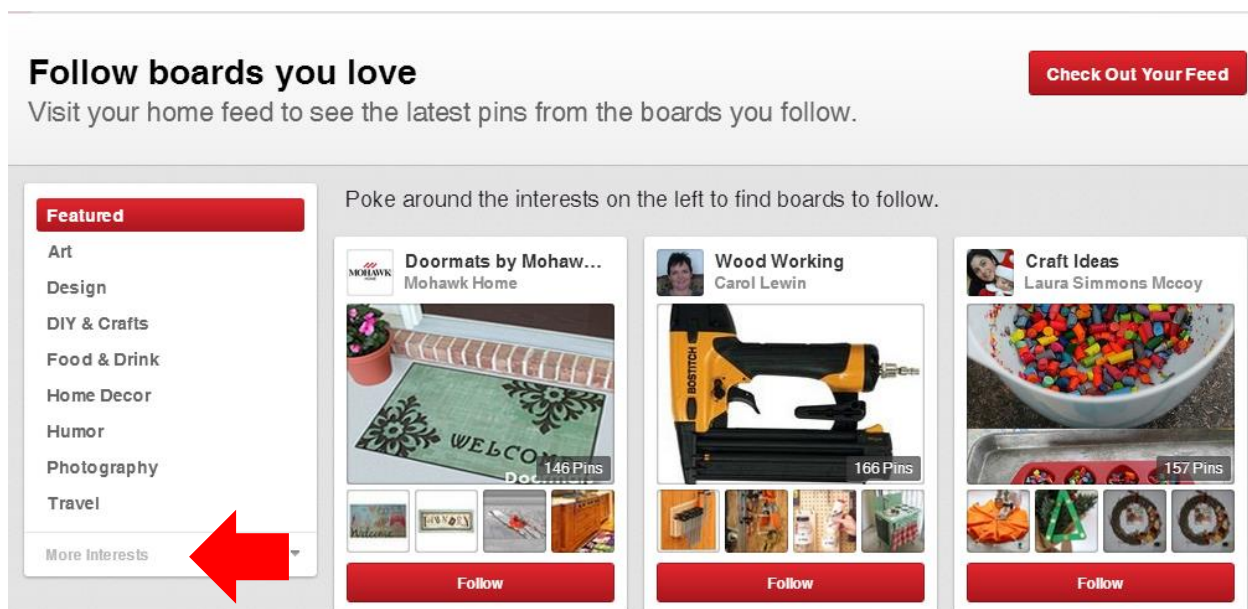


Let Pinterest Make Some Suggestions!

Letting Pinterest suggest some potential boards for you to follow is another way to find boards of interest. To get started, just click on “*Follow Boards*” from your Pinterest home page.



The “*Follow boards you love*” screen will appear.



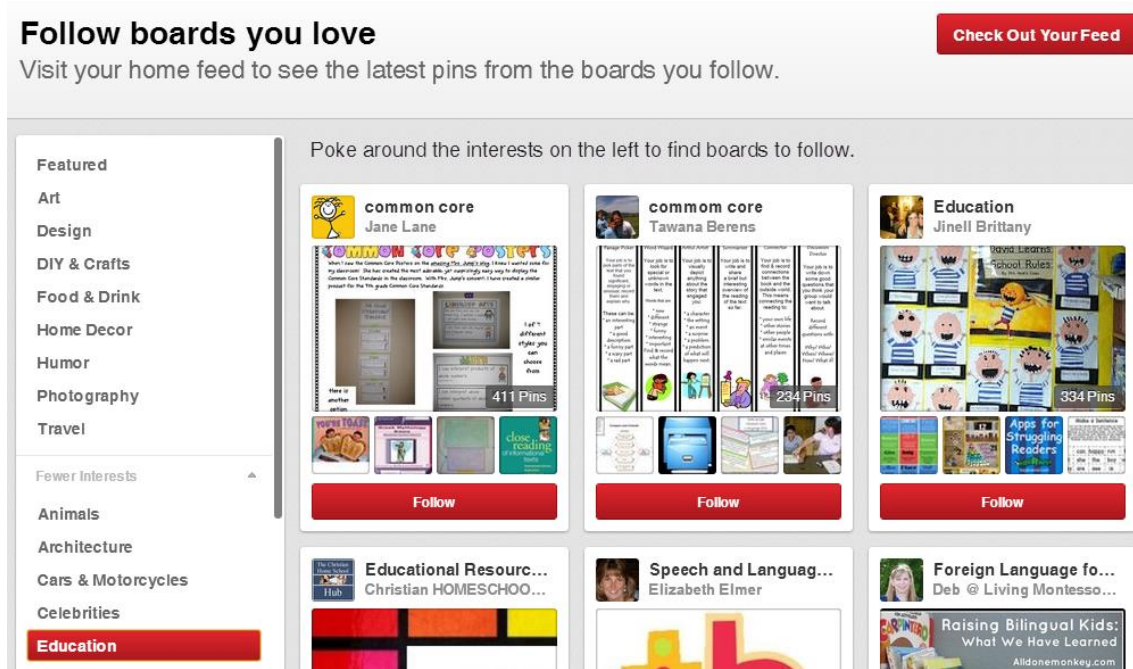
Few topics related to literacy appeared under the initial screen of “*Follow boards you love*”, so we clicked “*More Interests*”.



Pinterest 101



Under the “*More Interests*” tab, several interesting topics appeared, such as “*Education*”.



We scrolled through Pinterest’s “*Education*” category and found several interesting boards to follow. Following a board is as simple as clicking the red “**Follow**” button! Should you change your mind at a later date, you can unfollow any board you choose, just by clicking “**Unfollow**”.

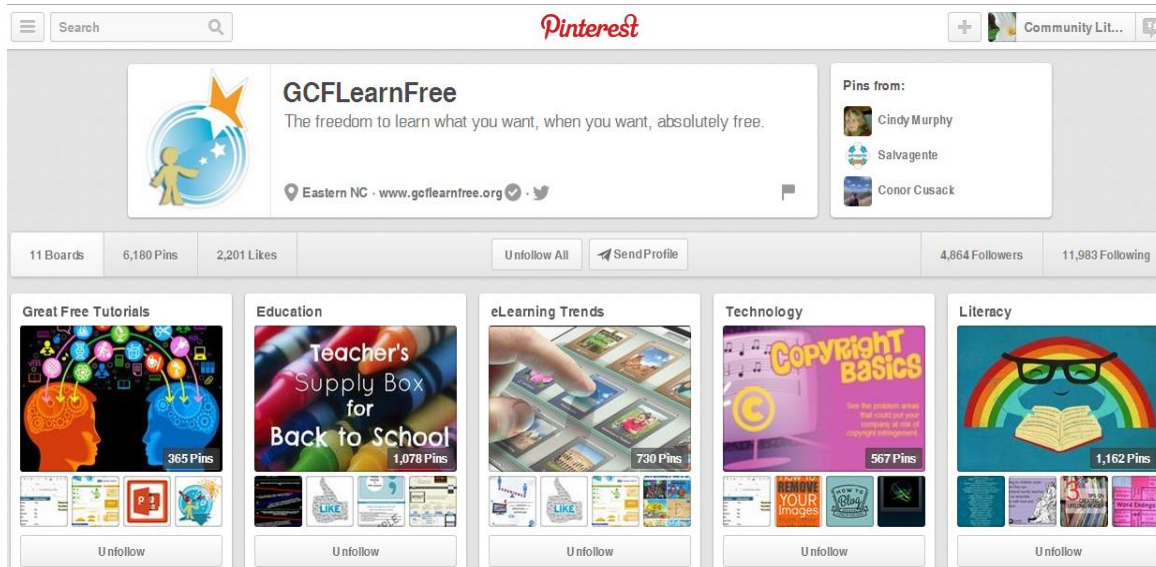


Pinterest 101



Learn from Others

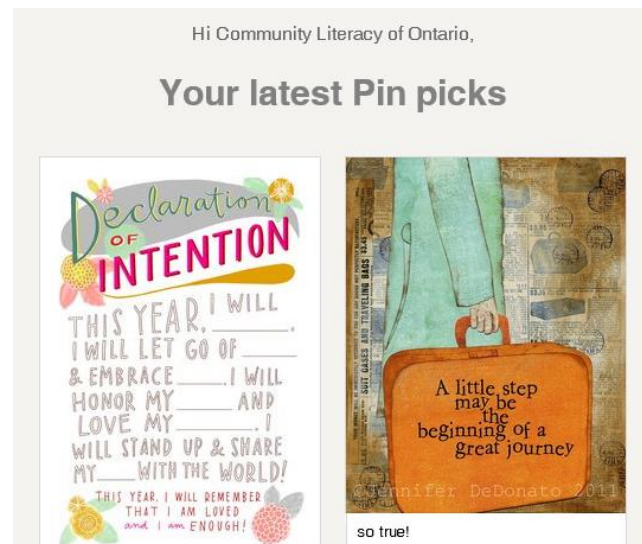
As you find boards and Pinners with pictures you value, click on who they are following for ideas. For example, CLO admires the work of [GCF LearnFree](#) so we visited their site, clicked under “Following”, and found several great boards to follow.



Let Pinterest Show You the Way

As you follow boards and add Pins, Pinterest will suggest similar Pins and boards for you to follow, based on your interests.

As well, Pinterest will send you a weekly email with their suggestions for new boards you might like to follow, based on the types of boards you are already following. If you don't want to receive these suggestions from Pinterest, you can easily unsubscribe from these emails.

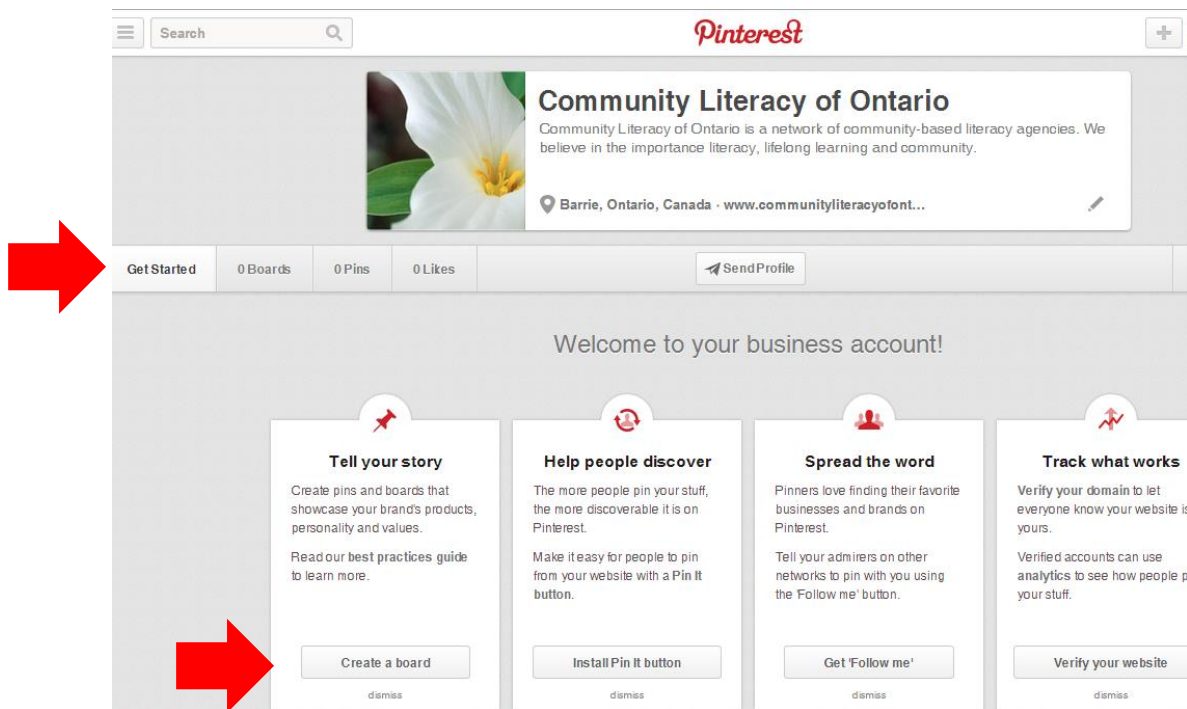


Pinterest 101



Step 4: Create Some Boards

Next you can have fun creating boards for your Pinterest account! To create your first board, click on the “Get Started” button. The following screen will appear. Click on “Create a board”.



Next, the “Create a Board” screen will appear. Simply fill out all of the required information and click “Create Board”. Be sure to choose a clear and concise name for your board and write a helpful and engaging description of the content.

Create a Board

Name*

ex: For the Home

Description

Add a short description to your board

Category

Choose a category

Add a map?

No

Secret

No

Learn more

Cancel

Create Board



Pinterest 101

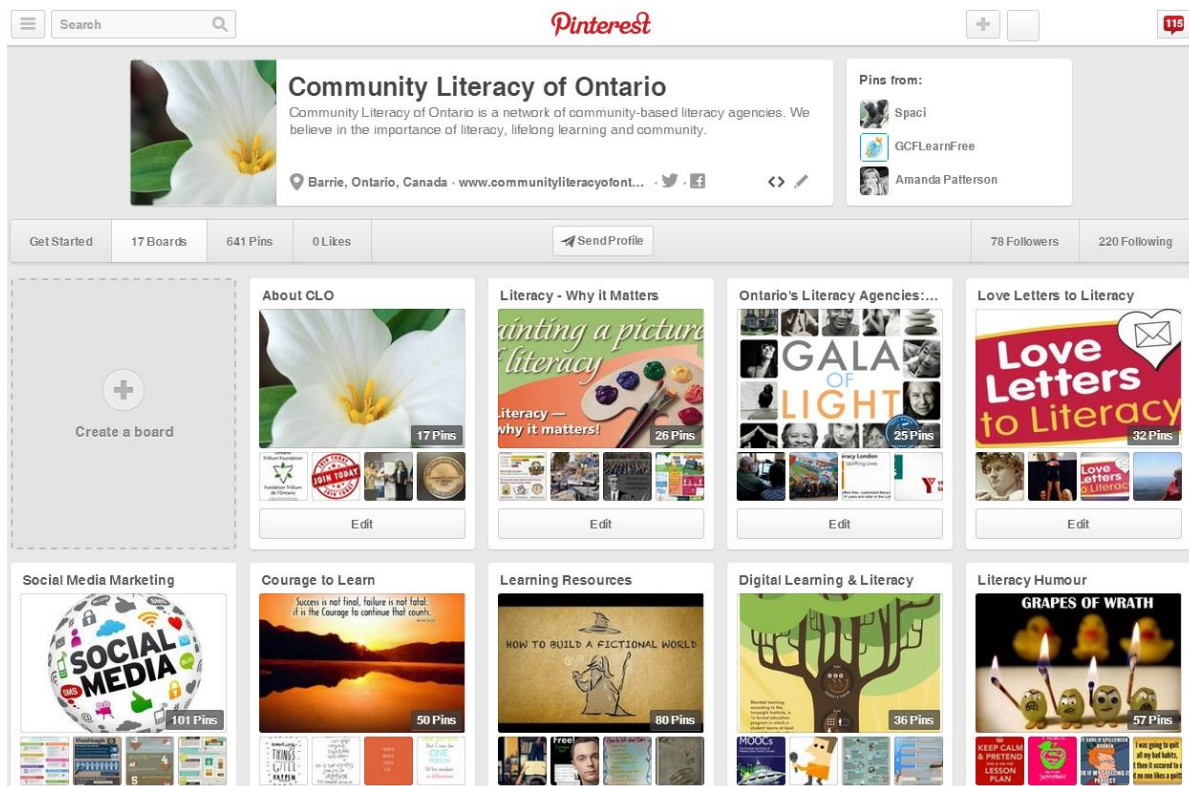


It was tempting to randomly create interesting boards from all of the wonderful pictures and resources available on Pinterest. However, we chose, instead, to develop CLO's goals for using Pinterest. You could also link your goals to your organization's communications, marketing, and social media strategies (if available). Be sure to keep in mind that you can easily add new boards and Pins, delete or rename boards, and delete, rename or move Pins to other boards.

In the end, our goals for CLO's Pinterest account are to:

1. Promote CLO
2. Promote community-based literacy programs
3. Promote adult literacy and learning
4. Share learning resources
5. Promote our "Love Letters to Literacy" campaign
6. Share resources from CLO's "Social Media Marketing" project
7. Promote our Amazon Kindle e-books
8. Share some literacy humour

Based on these goals, here are some of the boards we created for Community Literacy of Ontario:



Pinterest 101



Each board will need a name and a description. Here is the name and description of our “Love Letters to Literacy” board:

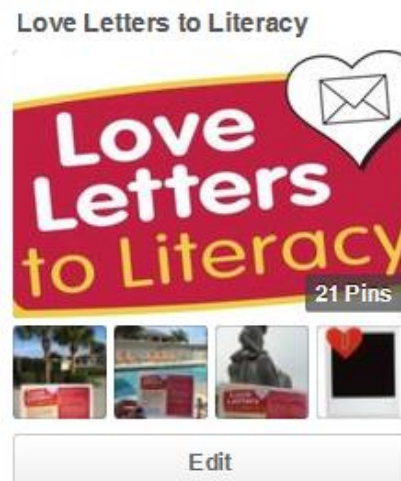


Each of your boards will have a board cover (the picture people will see when they look at your board). Bright and engaging images are ideal as covers, since they are more likely to quickly engage people in your board. Here’s is the cover for CLO’s Love Letters to Literacy board.

Pinterest automatically selects the first picture you post as your board cover. However, you can easily select any picture to serve as your cover. Merely move the mouse over your board and click on the “change cover” option that automatically appears. Scroll through the various pictures within your board and select your favourite one as the cover.

You can add and delete boards at any time. For example, as we added Pins to our “*Learning Resources*” board, we found that we needed to create a new board which we called “*Job Search Resources*”.

Watch this valuable 2-minute [video](#) from VideoJug to learn how to make a board on Pinterest. This video will walk you through all of the steps to creating awesome boards yourself.



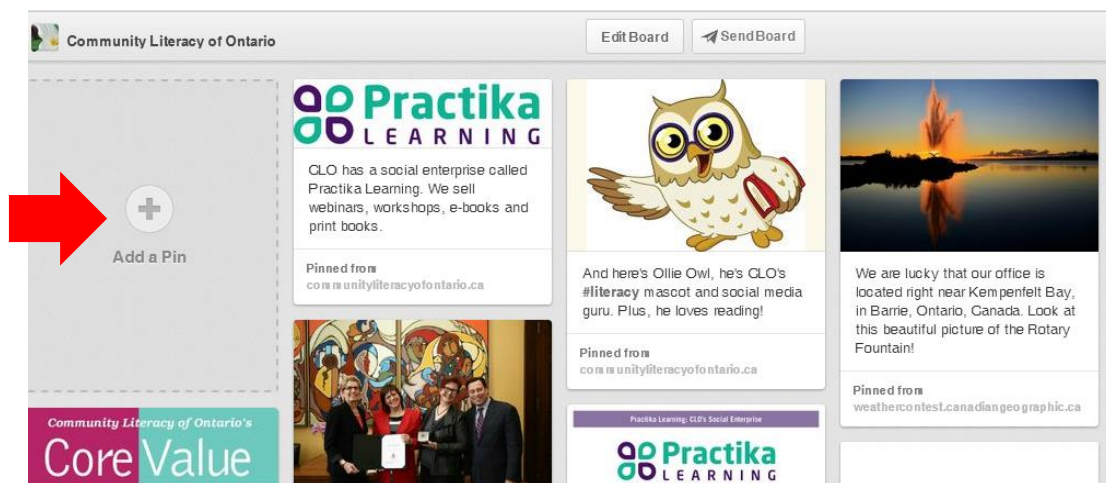
Pinterest 101



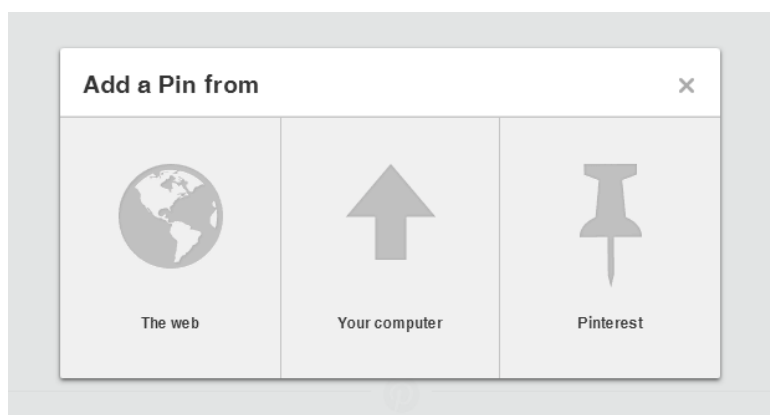
Step 5: Add Some Pins

Once you have developed some boards (and remember, more boards can be added at any time, or existing boards can be deleted or renamed) you can start adding Pins. Pins can be pictures or videos. You can pin your own images, and you can easily add images created by others that you find on the web or on Pinterest. Pins can be deleted or moved to different boards at any time. You can also edit or change the description of your Pins at any time. Pins can be posted to multiple boards if desired.

To get started, click on the board where you would like to add a new Pin. Click on “Add a Pin”.



The following screen will appear. You can easily add Pins from the web, your computer, or directly from Pinterest by following the simple system prompts from Pinterest.



Pinterest 101



If you are uploading a pin from your own computer, be sure to write a clear description of it. In this example, CLO is adding a Pin to its “Literacy – Why It Matters” board. Under “Source”, we made sure to include our website as well.

Board	Literacy - Why it Matters	
Description	Here are 20 economic and social reasons why #literacy matters	
Source	http://www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/	

You can view the Pins from people you follow and add Pins from their boards. Anytime you find a Pin that you would like to add to your own board, just click the red “Pin it” button. It really is that easy!

Pinterest will then ask you to pick one of your boards to pin the image to. You can use the description written by the original Pinner, or you can develop your own.



	Pick a board	
	Board	Learning Resources
	Description	
	Place	
<input type="checkbox"/> Post to Twitter		
		<input type="button" value="Close"/> <input type="button" value="Pin it"/>



Pinterest 101



Try to only use good quality images and ensure that each Pin has a clear, grammatically correct description that suits your organization's needs and reflects well on your professionalism. Don't use vague descriptions like "nice picture" but rather write a more helpful description such as "useful resource for teaching math".

Some people include Hashtags in the description, since they are searchable in Pinterest. Hashags (the symbol # in front of a word) are a way to quickly make a topic easier to find. Hashtags are widely used on Twitter and you can learn more about them in [CLO's Twitter 101](#) module. For more information on Hashtags for Pinterest read "[Tips for Using Hashtags on Pinterest](#)".

As you begin pinning, based on your selections, Pinterest will suggest other Pins, boards and Pinners where you can find images of interest. To add variety and lead you to new sources, check your weekly email from Pinterest for their suggested list of new "Pin picks" that you might like to follow, based on the types of boards and Pins you have already chosen.

In our experience, beautiful pictures, infographics, meaningful quotes and practical videos seem to be extremely popular images on Pinterest. However, most importantly, pin images that reflect your organization's values, mission and goals. And, it is more than okay to have a bit of fun besides!



Happy pinning!



Resources to Learn More about Pinterest

- [How to Get Your Nonprofit Started on Pinterest](#) (via NP Tech for Good)
 - With all the buzz about Pinterest, this comprehensive “how to” tutorial will have your nonprofit up and pinning away in no time, thanks to the sound advice from early adopters such as the National Wildlife Federation, Amnesty International, and Water.org, among others.
- [10 Pinterest Best Practices for Nonprofits](#) (via NP Tech for Good)
 - Non Profit Tech for Good’s article encourages you to apply 10 Pinterest best practices to help increase engagement using images rather than text to communicate.
- [Must-follow Nonprofits on Pinterest](#) (via NP Tech for Good)
 - Showcases 11 nonprofits that were successful early adopters of Pinterest.
- [10 Strategies for Non-Profits on Pinterest](#) (via Mashable)
 - Shares helpful tips from nonprofits who are already effectively using Pinterest.
- [Why I Love Pinterest and Non-profits Should Too](#) (via Social Velocity)
 - Explains the power of Pinterest and why nonprofits are a natural fit with this type of social media.
- [12 Ways to Use Pinterest for Your Non-profit](#) (via John Haydon)
 - Shares ideas on how to use Pinterest, and how to create effective boards and Pins. It also showcases several nonprofits who are particularly effective on Pinterest.
- [The Pinterest for Business Guide](#) (via Pinterest)
 - Download this excellent guide for tips, tricks and best practices on using Pinterest as a business or nonprofit organization.
- [Pinterest 101 Tutorial](#) (via GCF Learn Free)
 - Takes you through what Pinterest is, how it works, its popularity, how to create an account, and how to use it “on the go” with mobile devices.

Pinterest 101



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- **Pinterest:** www.pinterest.com/love4literacy/
- **Instagram:** [love4literacy](#)

