

# Idiom by Lon Yan

## 冷嘲熱諷

*leng3 chao2 re4 feng3*

Polytechnic University mechanical engineering student Nate Tang Tsz-chung has realized his dream of making an electric race car – the first one designed and built in Hong Kong. It will take part in a student formula-style competition in the mainland next month.

Tang managed to pull together a team of 70 fellow students to complete the project in two years, and secured sponsorship of HK\$1 million to pay for the costs.

The car's major components are made of carbon fiber. Powered by five sets of batteries and a twin-motor system, it can reach a top speed of 130 km/h. Clearly, building it was no mean feat. Apart from technical and financial hurdles, Tang had to deal with people's negativity.

Naysayers (唱反調者) said he didn't have

the expertise, manpower, or the money to succeed, and kept telling him to just quit it. Some of these comments were of the “冷嘲熱諷” (*leng3 chao2 re4 feng3*) kind.

“冷” (*leng3*) is “cold,” “chilly,” “frosty,” “嘲” (*chao2*) “to ridicule,” “to deride,” “to mock,” “熱” (*re4*) “hot,” “heat,” and “諷” (*feng3*) “to mock,” “satirize.” Literally, “冷嘲熱諷” (*leng3 chao2 re4 feng3*) is “frosty ridiculing and scorching mocking.”

“嘲諷” (*chao2 feng3*) means “to sneer at,” “to taunt,” “taunts,” “to ridicule”. The cold and hot references just add to the effect. So the idiom just means “to ridicule,” “to mock,” “to sneer at.”

Great ideas often suffer “冷嘲熱諷” (*leng3 chao2 re4 feng3*) before they achieve success. That is just the reality of life.

### Terms containing the character “冷” (*leng3*) include:

冷酷 (*leng3 ku4*) – cold-blooded; cruel; unfeeling

冷淡 (*leng3 dan4*) – cold; indifferent; stand-offish; to treat coldly

冷靜 (*leng3 jing4*) – calm; level-headed

冷氣機 (*leng3 qi4 ji1*) – an air conditioner