

# Idiom by Lon Yan

## 不惜代價

*bu4 xi1 dai4 jia4*

Latest information provided by the Education Bureau online revealed that some kindergartens were charging thousands of dollars in annual miscellaneous fees, with one as high as HK\$7,230.

These fees were listed to be for text books, music materials and exercise books, as well as refreshments, which the schools explained were for parties to celebrate birthdays and festivals.

Together with regular school fees, the costs of sending a child to kindergarten must be a heavy burden for many families. Yet, parents seem quite willing to pay up, even if they have to cut back on other expenses.

Clearly, when it comes to the education of their children, parents are usually “不惜

代價” (*bu4 xi1 dai4 jia4*) to get the best they could.

“不” (*bu4*) is “no,” “not,” “惜” (*xi1*) “to spare,” “to grudge (勉強給),” “to stint (吝惜),” “不惜” (*bu4 xi1*) is “to spare nothing,” “not to hesitate to,” “not to stint,” and “代價” (*dai4 jia4*) “price,” “cost,” expense.” Literally, “不惜代價” (*bu4 xi1 dai4 jia4*) is “not to spare the price.”

“不惜代價” (*bu4 xi1 dai4 jia4*) means “at all costs,” “at any cost.”

When people are “不惜代價” (*bu4 xi1 dai4 jia4*), the goal they are trying to achieve must be of utmost importance to them, like the welfare of their children.

But “不惜代價” (*bu4 xi1 dai4 jia4*) doesn't necessarily relate to positive actions. People consumed by hatred would “不惜代價” (*bu4 xi1 dai4 jia4*) to seek revenge.

### Terms containing the character “價” (*jia4*) include:

價值 (*jia4 zhi2*) – value; worth

價目 (*jia4 mu4*) – price

無價 (*wu2 jia4*) – priceless; invaluable

天價 (*tian1 jia4*) – sky-high price; extremely expensive