Invisible Bike Race

a game for 3 or more players

Internationally renowned celebrity Invisible Bike Cat is holding an Invisible Bike Race through San Francisco neighborhoods. Each racing team will map out an Invisible Bike trip following Invisible Bike Cat’s instructions. Whichever team gets to the most neighborhoods by the end of the game wins.

This game grew out of research for the Visualizing Mental Maps of San Francisco Project. All the neighborhood descriptions used in the game are based on interviews with San Francisco residents. For more information about the project, visit: http://groups.ischool.berkeley.edu/mentalmaps/

For more information about lolcats like Invisible Bike Cat, visit: http://dashes.com/anil/2007/04/cats-can-has-gr.html

Materials: Communique cards, Neighborhood List, Invisible Bike Helmet, Challenge Tokens (Included). Post-it notes or note paper, larger sheets of paper for drawing maps, markers or pens, and a one-minute timer (Not included.)
Invisible Bike Race ..............................................................

Basically.

• Everybody divides into racing teams.
• Communiques from Invisible Bike Cat are lined up at the beginning of the game and overturned in order.
• When a Communique is overturned:
  – Pick a neighborhood you think fits the Communique description and draw it on your team map.
  – Start the timer.
  – Think of a connection between the neighborhood you just drew and another neighborhood. Write it on a Trip Ticket (or, um, a post-it note).
  – Think of a connection between that neighborhood and another neighborhood and write it on a Trip Ticket. Make as many connections as you can before the time runs out.
  – Teams take turns revealing their Trip Tickets.
  – If a team challenges a Trip Ticket, everyone votes on whether to accept the Ticket. Anything that isn't successfully challenged gets drawn on your team map.
• On to the next Communique.

What, you want rules?
**INVISIBLE BIKE RACE RULEZ!**

1. **Teams.**
   Players divide into racing teams (1 to 4 players per team), and choose a racing sponsor to name their team after. For example: Team Flavor Cat, Team Rihanna, Team Walt Whitman.
   You need a minimum of three racing teams to play.

2. **Set-up.**
   Each team gets three challenge tokens, some post-it notes, one large sheet of blank paper for drawing a map, and markers.
   Put the Neighborhood List someplace where everyone can see it. Only neighborhoods on the List can be used. [Feel free to change the List before the game starts, if you feel like having a Big Debate.]
   Present the Invisible Bike Helmet to the team with the highest combined age.
   Shuffle the Communiques and place the top ten cards in a line face down on the table.

3. **Start.**
   The trip begins at the Invisible Bike Cat mural at Quincy and Pine, near the Mark Hopkins Hotel.
   Each team draws this location on their map. If you don't know where the mural is, you can draw it wherever you want it to be.
   Note that:
   - An Invisible Bike is not an ordinary bike. It can get to a place just by having the Idea of a place.
   - Invisible Bike Cat doesn't know how to read an Official Map, and all of his own maps are drawn by paw.
   **Your map does not have to be exact or perfectly drawn.**

4. **Draw a neighborhood.**
   Overturn the first Communique. The Communique tells everyone what kind of neighborhood Invisible Bike Cat wants you to map. A few cards say “COMMAND” at the top. Just follow the instructions on those.
   Otherwise, pick a neighborhood that you think fits Invisible Bike Cat's description and draw it on your map.

5. **Race ahead.**
   Start the timer. Teams have one minute to make as many Trip Tickets as they can on post-it notes. A Trip Ticket shows:
   - Starting Neighborhood
   - Connection
   - Ending Neighborhood
   Use Trip Tickets to map out a path from the neighborhood you just drew to as many other neighborhoods as you can.
   For example, if you just drew the Excelsior, you might make Trip Tickets that say:
   - Start: Excelsior, Connection: El Farolito taquería in both neighborhoods, End: Mission
   - Start: Mission, Connection: Outdoor movies in both neighborhoods, End: Western Addition

6. **Connection.**
   Remember that Invisible Bikes can travel on Ideas. A connection between neighborhoods can be a story, an image, a physical similarity, a path, a store, a certain kind of person or cat that hangs out in both neighborhoods – anything that connects two locations in a person's mind.
   You don't have to write a long connection on a Trip Ticket, just a reference word or two.
   Teams place their Trip Tickets face down on the table before time is up.
7. Take a Turn.

Teams take turns revealing their Trip Tickets and explaining their connections.

The team with the Invisible Bike Helmet takes the first turn, and turn taking proceeds clockwise.

After all turns have been taken, the team with the Invisible Bike Helmet passes it to the team on their left, and the next Communique is overturned.

8. Challenge.

A Trip Ticket can be challenged by other teams on the grounds that it is unfounded. Challenges must be issued before the next team takes its turn.

A Trip Ticket is unfounded if the connection between neighborhoods isn’t justifiable. Keep in mind though that connections can be highly individual. A personal story linking two neighborhoods is probably not unfounded.

A team can challenge a Trip Ticket by giving one of their tokens to the team they want to challenge. Regardless of the outcome, the challenged team keeps the token.

9. Vote.

The challenger explains why they think the Trip Ticket is unfounded. The challenged team can make a counter argument.

All the teams put a challenge token on the table with “Accept” face up if they accept the Trip Ticket, or with “Reject” face up if they don’t.

All the votes are revealed at the same time.

If there are more “Accept” votes, or if there is a tie, the Trip Ticket is accepted. Any token with a “Reject” vote in this case is given to the challenged team.

If there are more “Reject” votes, the Trip Ticket is rejected.

Tickets that follow a rejected Ticket in a path cannot be used.

10. Map a Neighborhood.

Draw all your accepted neighborhoods and connections on your map.

For a neighborhood to count, both the neighborhood and the connection must be shown on the map in some way. A team can draw a key to connections in one corner of a map, for example, or draw connections as labeled arrows, or just stick the Trip Ticket post-it notes on their maps.

11. Win!

The game ends when all Communiques on the table have been played. The team that mapped the most neighborhoods wins. In the event of a tie, everybody wins! Or ties can be settled by drawing additional Communiques from the pile and playing until one team pulls ahead.

Even if you don't win, you probably made an Interesting Map. If you take pictures, we would love to see them. Please send pictures to: sfmentalmaps@gmail.com.


Invisible Drinking Game. Clear liquids suggested.

Prize Closet. Players bring prizes from the dollar store and/or useless craft items. Everyone gets a prize when all teams pick the same neighborhood on the first try, or players get prizes for interesting connections or drawings, or as consolation for lost neighborhoods, etc.