STEPS FOR CONSTRUCTING A BEST-FIT LINE USING THE AREA METHOD.

1. Begin by plotting all your data on graph paper.

2. Examine the data and determine the visual trend of data. Does it look like a line? A blob? Does x increase as y increases? Try to visualize approximately where the trend should be.

3. Draw a shape that encloses all of the data, (try to make it smooth and relatively even).

4. Draw a line that divides the area that encloses the data into two even sized areas. In other words, bisect the area with a line that goes from one edge of the plot to the other.

5. Congratulations! You have just constructed a best fit line through the data!

6. Evaluate whether it looks like it should – is that what the line you visualized in part 2 looked like?

Note that it is not necessary for the line to pass through ANY of the points on the plot, it is only important that your line bisect (cut in half) the area that encloses the data points. Now you can use the line to predict behavior. Or, you can examine the other method and try it out.