STEPS FOR CONSTRUCTING A BEST-FIT LINE USING THE DIVIDING 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 line that divides the data points in two equal groups (even numbers of points on either side).

4. Place an x (or a dot) at the center of the clusters of data on either side of the line you drew in part 3.

5. Draw a line that connects the two x-marks (or points) that you drew in part 4.

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

7. Evaluate whether it looks like it should – is that what your visualized line 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.