AN OUTLINE BIOGRAPHY OF MATSUO BASHŌ

1644-1666. Youth.
- Bashō grows up in a country village as a low ranking samurai under Tōdō Yoshitada (two years older than Bashō and his haikai friend)

1666-1680. The beginnings of Bashō as a poet.
- 1666-1672. Bashō is probably in Kyoto. He gains fame as a poet.
- 1672-1680. Bashō lives in Edo (Tokyo). He gains more fame as a poet and teacher.

1680-1684. Becoming a serious writer.
- Bashō moves outside the city into the first “Bashō” hut.
- He is very lonely, he studies Chinese poetry, and takes up Zen meditation.
- In the winter of 1682 his hut burns and a few months later learns his mother died

1684-1692. The mature poet-wayfarer.
- 1684-1685. His first journey around Japan, leading to Journal of Bleached Bones by the Road.
- 1685-1687. Bashō returns to Edo and lives a quiet life in a new Bashō hut, relaxed and even cheerful.
  - 1687-1688. Bashō makes three trips:
    - to Kashima (autumn 1687), which results in Kashima Journal;
    - a long trip west ending up in Kyoto (winter 1687-8), which results in Knapsack Notebook;
    - and a short trip to Sarashina (midsummer 1688), which results in Sarashina Journal.
- 1689-1690. He takes his longest trip to the “Deep North” of Japan, ending near Kyoto.
- 1690-1692. Bashō visits various places near Kyoto. He stays at various places including Unreal Hut and House of Fallen Persimmons. He writes The Narrow Road to the Deep North and various important haibun.
  - 1692: Bashō returns to Edo and lives in a third Bashō Hut.

1693-1694. Final years.
- His tranquility is disturbed by his fame as a poet master.
- An invalid nephew comes to stay with him (he dies in 1683).
- The nun Jutei comes to live with him, bringing children (she dies in 1684).
- He develops the aesthetic ideal of lightness.
- He begins his last journey, and dies in Osaka.