



# EVER HEAR OF EBENEZER BASSETT?

## Supplemental Guide

### Background Reading

- The Haitian Revolution set the stage for Bassett's actions as U.S. Envoy. Read more about the successful rebellion [here](#) and [here](#).
- The role of U.S. leadership at American embassies has changed over time. This [webpage](#) gives a quick overview of what Ambassadors do today.
- The Caribbean has consistently been an important region for U.S. diplomacy in the Western Hemisphere—read more [here](#).
- President Grant's decision to appoint Bassett was one of many actions he took to aid Reconstruction. [Here](#) is an overview of more.

### Discussion Questions

- Could Bassett more broadly be considered a 'trendsetter' in the realm of human rights? Why or why not?
- What is the historical significance of Ebenezer Bassett's tenure as the first African-American diplomat? Why might it be significant that he was posted in Haiti specifically?
- What about Bassett made him so influential as an American diplomat, even back in the 1870s?

## Who's Who

Connecticut native Ebenezer Bassett was America's first Black diplomat and became U.S. Envoy to Haiti in 1869, after being appointed by Ulysses S. Grant during the Reconstruction era.

Diplomat Christopher Teal, the featured guest on the podcast, became Bassett's de facto biographer after noticing Bassett's picture on the wall of the U.S. Embassy in the Dominican Republic. He has since written a book and produced a film about Bassett.



### Diving Deeper

- The U.S. Foreign Service—or the worldwide group of diplomats tasked with representing the United States abroad—is composed of many types of jobs. Read about them [here](#).
- This [webpage](#) covers what diversity and inclusion look like in the U.S. Foreign Service today.
- Frederick Douglass was also a key component of diplomacy in the late 19th century. Read more about his career [here](#).
- Curious about modern U.S.-Haiti relations? Linked [here](#) is the most recent fact sheet from the State Department.

