

Direct address is a technique that dominates this poem. The poem is both personal and political in nature and it intends that the audience will listen and respond to the speaker's rhetoric. Both the speaker and the audience who is addressed are clearly defined by the language used.

Copy and complete the following table with examples that define the characteristics of speaker and audience.

▼ SPEAKER	
▼ EXAMPLE	▼ CHARACTERISTIC EXPLAINED
'Does my sexiness upset you?'	The speaker is someone who has confidence in her femininity.

▼ AUDIENCE	
▼ EXAMPLE	▼ CHARACTERISTIC EXPLAINED
'You may write me down in history / With your bitter, twisted lies'	The audience is accused of being manipulative and dishonest, legitimising racial oppression through the way in which history is written.

ACTIVITY 1

A02

SKILLS

CRITICAL THINKING, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION

▼ USING STRUCTURE

Angelou uses structure to effectively convey the idea that both the speaker and her people will continue to rise in spite of discrimination and oppression.

First, write down the rhyme scheme of the poem. Do you think that Angelou's choice of rhyme scheme is important? Does the rhyme scheme change at any point? What is the effect of this change?

▼ RHYME SCHEME	▼ COMMENT