

Copy and complete the following table, finding examples from the poem that relate to these themes and adding your thoughts about how the language illustrates each theme.

| ▼ THEME                               | ▼ EXAMPLE                                   | ▼ COMMENT  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Racism                                |   |  |
| Oppression                            |   |  |
| Pride in oneself and one's background | 'Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave' | The speaker sees her background as a source of pride rather than as a disadvantage. The word 'gifts' shows everything she inherited in a positive light. |
| Feminism                              |   |  |
| Beauty                                |   |  |
| Independence                          |   |  |

### EXPLORING LANGUAGE

Look carefully at the quotations in the following table and identify the technique that they demonstrate. Then copy and complete the table, explaining the effect of each example and adding other examples of your own.

| ▼ TECHNIQUE       | EXAMPLE                        | ▼ EFFECT  |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|---|
|                   | 'like dust'                    |   |
| Colloquial speech | 'Don't you take it awful hard' | The poet uses colloquial American language to highlight her sense of amusement at the lack of confidence her oppressors feel when they are directly challenged. |
|                   | 'history's shame'              |   |
|                   | 'I rise / I rise / I rise'     |   |
|                   |                                |   |
|                   |                                |   |
|                   |                                |   |

### KEY POINT

Practising your ability to recognise writer's techniques will enhance your ability to assess how the writer is working and therefore sharpen your critical skills.