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AELW 930 class (advanced-intermediate writing for English Language Learners)

Before the election, my students read and discussed this article:

<https://www.splcenter.org/20160413/trump-effect-impact-presidential-campaign-our-nations-schools>

After the election, my students read and discussed this article:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/what-should-we-tell-the-children_us_5822aa90e4b0334571e0a30b

The day after the election, I wrote the words "I feel..." on the board, and my students did a free write for about 30 minutes. Then, they were invited to share their reflections with the class. Most students chose to stand up and read their responses to the class. A few students asked me to read for them. Their responses are below. (Note: I made minor spelling and punctuation edits.) Some students later submitted their responses (with their names) to the *Excalibur* student newspaper.

1. I feel like I am unwanted. My family and I have asylum from Ethiopia. We came to the US because we needed a safe place to live. I feel really negative about Donald Trump's presidency. From this I can learn that many Americans don't want us to live in their country. How could they vote because of his logo "Make America Great Again"? What is behind his logo? America already is great. How is he going to make America great again? Does he want us to be slaves again? I don't understand his policies, but I can see many Americans understand his policy and voted for him because they are against immigrants. I used to love America as my motherland, but since I heard this news, I doubt if Americans want us like before. I doubt if America will protect people who are suffering from war, hunger, and natural disasters like before.
2. I feel unsafe, sad, and bad. I just want to wake up and find that it's only a nightmare. I just wonder how some Americans support a guy who doesn't respect women, who doesn't respect religions, who is disrespectful toward people, who talks like a child.... According to what Trump said, I feel like immigrant Muslims will get bullied in the United States. Waking up this morning I read a story about a Muslim student who was attacked when she was going to her car. She said a man grabbed her hijab and tried to pull her backward. She said that she choked but did not have major injuries. After that, she went to pick up her sister and went home. She expressed her feelings of fear and insecurity.
3. I feel quite unsafe even though I have a green card. I got a master's degree in law in my country. I have a lot of knowledge about politics. I am 100 percent sure that if Trump does not change his political program, the United States will lose its rank as the most powerful country in the world. I am living here alone and all my family is in my home country. I won the DV lottery, so I came here with legal papers. However, I am scared about the negative impact of his election on the United States status. No country in the world can exist or be developed without immigrants. In the US, immigrants do some category of jobs because citizens will never do

it. For example, working in car washes and restaurants. Donald Trump has to change his mindset.

4. I think that the American election has shown to the world the line that most countries are taking now, for example England, my country, and others. The world does not want to change. It seems we are stepping back every time we have the chance of progress in our hands. By progress I mean civil rights, human rights, social rights. Every time we try to move forward as humans, as individuals, we get pulled back by those who are afraid of change. It seems that we are going back to colonial times now. The country is divided again like during the Civil War. It is a shame to see this. Since the 1960s, people have been fighting for civil rights and human rights and this is a big upset not only to America but to humanity. The idea of races has always been the main factor of inequality everywhere. "Minorities" are always unrepresented and bullied not only by the common people but also by governments. I think we need to start fighting for every individual for they are humans, not a made-up race, which as scientists know does not exist. It was made to segregate people. Color of skin is only superficial.
5. I am worried about what will happen now that Donald Trump is the President-elect of the United States. I feel sad because of what he said during the presidential campaign; his insults towards us the immigrants, the way he abuses women, his hatred for Muslims, the Mexicans, the illegal residents. Now that he is president, what will happen to all these people? What is our fate as immigrants, who have come to the United States to achieve our dreams, our goals? What will happen to us who came to the US to seek refuge because of the war in our countries, the high rate of unemployment, no education? What about those who support their families back home with no documents in the US? What will be their fate? What is my hope as a black immigrant and a Muslim?
6. Right now I am feeling like some part of my body was bitten by a wild animal. It's so painful with no treatment. There is nothing I can do about it. I feel so insecure. I spent two sleepless nights thinking about, what if he does the plans he promised to do? America is a place where people from different countries immigrate to make their dream come true. I am from that category of people. I am not here to cause damage or to commit crime. I am here to get a better education and work opportunity as are many people from my country. I feel so embarrassed, and I feel like I am not important. I heard one time that the president-elect said about immigrants, "What are they going to lose?" I may not say the full sentence he said but it was so heartbreaking to hear that... I know a lot of people who had a high standard of living in their own country but moved here to get the best opportunity America offers. That's what makes America great. That's what makes people leave their warm family and move to America. I really do not know what's going to happen next but I still have faith in America to maintain its greatness by diversity.
7. To begin with, it still does not seem real to me that he won. I still can't believe he is really about to become President of the biggest country in the world. As an immigrant, black, and Muslim woman, I feel very upset, disappointed, and ashamed of this country. I feel like even though this country is frustrated about the economy, they should not vote for him for the things he said. It just shows how much people really agree with those things he said. It also shows that no matter

how capable a woman is, she will always get knocked down by a man, even in the United States.

Secondly, as soon as I knew he won, I felt terrified of this country and what is about to happen the next four years. For instance, I saw on the Internet that so many immigrants, black people, gay/trans people, and Muslims are already getting treated badly the day after the election. It makes me worried if many family and I will have to face the same issues and who are we supposed to talk to since the president himself gave these people the power? I'm also scared police officers won't help black people like myself because we saw so many young black lives lost at the hands of police officers. All in all, I feel terrified and all I can do is pray for everyone and hope for the best.

8. I feel scared, angry, and disappointed about what happened in the United States this election. I cannot and will never understand that 58 million people voted for a man who first doesn't respect women, second doesn't respect a religion, and third doesn't care about society. They probably have their own reasons, but one thing I know is that if he does all he said before the election, it will touch everyone in society not the people he stated. We immigrants thought America was a country of diverse cultures, that it was the country of freedom, that it was the greatest country in the world. For me, all these opinions or facts for some people are false. He is the president of the United States, which means for me the greatest man in the world. I cannot understand how the greatest man in the world can say stuff like that, and there are still people who will vote for him. But what is done is done. He is the president of the US now. We will see what will happen in the future. A democratic lawyer who works with my dad told me the day after the election that it's not just one man who manages the United States. So we have to keep hope.
9. I do not feel secure; I feel like everything can change suddenly. I am trying to understand those people who voted for Trump. Are they really racist, or did they vote for him because they did not like Hillary? I always see the United States as a leader. If everyone comes to this country, it's because the US has some values that attract people. And we know that immigrants built this country, so how is it possible that some Americans agreed to build a wall or even want to expel undocumented immigrants?
10. I feel terrified, sad, tired, angry, worried, confused, devastated, offended, and provoked by the current president-elect of the United States of America. I feel so anxious about him being the president-elect for Americans. How can Trump supporters be so blind to the truth and fooled by Trump's promises of making America great again?
11. I came to the United States for a better education and for a better future. I did not leave my own country because I was thrown out. In my own country there are over 80 different languages and cultures. All races were equally tolerated. This is how a country should be, accepting differences and living peacefully without discrimination... I feel like I have nowhere to go. My own country is not in good condition right now, so I feel insecure.

12. There is nothing that makes me more depressed, anxious, and angry than hearing Trump's voice. As a Muslim, an immigrant, and a woman, I feel myself like I failed being an American. I hate the day I left my country. I am from an undemocratic country and I thought America was the most democratic country in the world, but now my attitude is changed. Why do Americans hate all Muslims? Islam means peace. We immigrants are here because of many reasons. Maybe to look for education, to reunite with family, to seek a secure democratic country. For me, after I heard the results of the election, I feel like this country already lost its multiculturalism.
13. Donald Trump is the president of the United States. I feel disgusted and disappointed. The 2016 election really gave people hope that our country was improving. For example, Obama was the first black man to become president of the United States and people were really excited that after that a woman would become president of the United States. Instead the bigot Trump got elected. Nothing hurt more than seeing people's dreams crashing down, especially the kids. My entire family is really worried and upset. My aunt doesn't know what to tell her children about bullying and racism when the President-elect is known for doing that. This year's election has negative effects not only on adults but also on children because they might think it's okay to bully someone because the President is doing it. I feel disgusted because I want my nieces and cousins to grow up in a country where the President is an example of how to live life and with Trump I can't promise that.
14. I feel betrayed by my own people. I just can't believe how Trump supporters can exist when he has threatened people with every single word and action that has come out of him during his entire campaign. I feel insecure and it makes me angry that there are still some people that keep telling me not to give my opinion about it and to calm down. I have always been a person who does not say anything negative about something that I do not like. I can't silence myself this time. It is so intense the feeling of speaking up and saying what I think and what I feel.

I can't believe there are "Christian" people who are with him, Latinos who are with him, gays, African American, women, and other minorities that support his policies and ideas. I am a Christian and as a Christian I do not agree with homosexual marriage or abortion. Those are the only two things that I agree with, with the party (NOT HIM). One Puerto Rican "Christian" guy who obviously does not feel threatened, but who also ignores people that are scared, told me that he was with Trump because of these two reasons. But I think that these issues are going to still be there if they are legal or not. I believe that God is the only one who can judge people for their own sins, and I am nobody to put away gays or women that abort. It is their decision and it is not my business. It is in God's hands and no one else's. God worries about every single person and not only one group.

I am a sinner and I know God is going to judge me for my sins. In addition, God is a God of love. I don't understand how someone can defend Trump in the name of God when at the end, Trump offends the love of God with every word that comes out of him. I pray for this country and for every single family and individual that is suffering, panicking, and concerned about their future. I pray for God to touch Trump's heart and make him feel and see what the minorities do.

15. My family and I are very upset about this election. Donald Trump intimidates the whole world especially minority people. Everyone is really disappointed. In my opinion, American people voted for him because they wanted a change. They are not ready for a woman to be a president of this country. Actually some people are thinking about going back home. They don't feel safe to stay in this country anymore because Trump is not a president that America needed to have. Last night, I saw on TV that people protested all around the country which means the poor people, the people who depend on social help, and everyone who does not feel safe in this country. I feel like another 9/11 is going to happen in this country because he is still talking about terrorism, and he thinks that all the Muslims are terrorists. I feel so disappointed about this election.
16. I feel very sad for many people and my family. I feel sad for some people I know who are undocumented. He said all those who are undocumented are the cause of many problems in the United States. I feel worried if it's going to be easy to get a job or to afford education because he said he will stop all those things that drain the economy. I also doubt that financial aid is still going to be available. I doubt if there is going to be equality of opportunity and freedom. I feel bad especially about the type of words he used about women like "Miss Piggy" and "nasty woman." And something I feel bad about is the future of this country. I feel that the next president is going to have a great impact on immigrants either now or in the long run.
17. When I first heard about Donald Trump and that he was running for President, I didn't really care about him because I felt that he would never win. I felt that because I lived in a really diverse city. I didn't think about how other states are and the thoughts of the people. Now that the president is Trump, I am speechless. I am not a disabled person, I am not Mexican or African, but still I cried so much when I heard he won. I would never want someone to be the President whose character is overwhelmingly racist, sexist, a womanizer, and awful. I am just scared for other people. I don't want any innocent people to die because of their religion. Why can't he put himself in a Muslim person's position and feel how scared they are? This is the country where people come to find peace. The undocumented people come here because their countries are corrupt. They need to live their life. They come to here to feel safe.
18. America is becoming unsafe right now. Some shootings have happened. Many students worry about their safety in school. Moreover, some immigrant families feel worried about going back at this time. Some American families have the idea to move to other countries like Australia or Canada. For me, I am concerned that international politics will make changes to visas, studying, and jobs. All those factors are getting harder and harder.
19. I feel very sad when I heard that Donald Trump won the election. I expected Hillary to win the election. I was quite sure that Hillary would win. I thought this country would get the first female president. Even though I could not vote, I prayed for God to fulfill what I expected. To be honest, I do not like Trump's attitude and the way he speaks about females. I do not think he deserves to become the president of the USA. He does not have qualities that every president must have, such as public speaking, honesty, and intelligence to feel that every person is the same.