

## **JR Versus Stinky Dumping Ground**

R. Ellis Brown

Independently Published (2026)

ISBN: 979-8994083109

Reviewed by Stephanie Elizabeth Long for Reader Views (02/2026)

5\*- Standing up for what you believe in

Jamal (JR) Reynolds loves to daydream about ruling the world one day. But first, he has to devise a plan to take down the Stinky Dump.

The noxious gated dumpster sits directly beside the Reynolds family home in Brooklyn, New York. It is the object of suspicious activity—dumping of what JR believes to be nuclear waste. It could have been what killed his younger sister. Determined to get to the bottom of it, and much to his parents' dismay, JR and his friends delve into investigating, and even do a school project on it.

Those nefarious people in charge of the Stinky Dump need to be shut down before they cause more disturbances in the neighborhood. JR wants to make a difference for his family and community.

*JR Versus Stinky Dumping Ground* by R. Ellis Brown is a compelling middle-grade novel about standing up for what you believe in and the power of community support. JR navigates feelings of grief over his sister's death while becoming increasingly concerned about Stinky Dump's effect on his neighborhood, convinced that the hazardous waste directly caused her death. Aware that he will get pushback from the adults, he devises a plan to expose the truth.

While this book has numerous strengths, the thing that inspired me the most was its emphasis on advocacy, particularly for youngsters who often feel they don't have much influence over what's happening in their world. Despite running into all kinds of obstacles, JR's resolve never wavers, as he learns to pivot when things don't go as expected. Environmental dangers are valid concerns for the younger generation, as pollution and other factors threaten their futures, and I applaud the author for highlighting this in an age-appropriate way. It is so important to educate our youth and get them involved in environmental initiatives.

Brown also does an excellent job of exploring loss as JR feels the void of his sister, Joan. Grief manifests in different ways—for JR, it meant fixating on Stinky Dump. All of his big emotions seemed to be channeled into exposing the dumping ground. Through the successes and setbacks of his quest, he was subconsciously working through the stages of grief. The author deftly illustrates that it is deeply individual, and there is no right or wrong way to mourn the loss of a loved one.

*JR Versus Stinky Dumping Ground* will appeal to young readers who enjoy books about leadership and community. It's also a great piece that encourages kids to raise awareness about environmental perils and that their voice can make a difference. Be the change that you want to see!