Why we are learning it this way:

Growing up, you may have added numbers like this:

$$\begin{array}{r} \overset{1}{4}5 \\ +56 \\ \hline 101 \end{array}$$

Your child will learn to add numbers like this in fourth grade. We want to make sure they first understand how our number system works so that when they write it like this, they understand *why* they are doing the steps.

Look at how the way we are learning connects to the way they will learn it later:

$$\begin{array}{r} 45 = 40 + 5 \\ +56 = 50 + 6 \\ \hline 101 = 90 + 11 \end{array} \qquad \longleftrightarrow \qquad \begin{array}{r} \overset{1}{4}5 \\ +56 \\ \hline 101 \end{array}$$

Students add 5 + 6 and 40 + 50 + 10 in both methods, but writing out the numbers by their place values helps students understand *how much the numbers are worth.* This will help prevent mistakes later on when they get to fourth grade and learn a shorter method.

Partnering With Parents in Elementary School Math, Hilary Kreisberg and Matthew L. Beyranevand, p. 85