Coordinating Conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions, or the FANBOYS *(for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so)* are powerful little words that state what the relationship is between two equivalent ideas. In reality, two more coordinators exist: *and so* and *and yet*. Writers frequently use coordinating conjunctions to join two sentences, and at the same time, pack more meaning into their writing.

When a coordinator is used, the follow meanings become incorporated into the sentence:

*For*—expresses a result-cause relationship. I eat as much pumpkin pie as I can [result], *for* I love it more than any other dessert [cause].

*And*—expresses the idea of adding something like what one has just written. His job brought in several thousand dollars a month [one source of money], *and* he received another large sum from an inheritance [a second source].

*Nor*—expresses a relationship like *and*, one of addition, except that *nor* relates negative statements to each other. *Nor* is used infrequently in North American English, so you will probably not have much occasion to use it. Nevertheless, it is a lovely word and does pack a powerful meaning, so you should consciously strive to use it. Notice that when a sentence begins with *nor*, we must reverse the normal subject-verb positions:

John did not like horror movies, *nor* did Mary like violent adventures.

*But*—expresses opposition to two ideas. I love to do all the preparations for Thanksgiving, *but* I really hate the clean-up afterwards.

*Or*—indicates that two ideas are alternatives of equal value. She will have to find a new job, *or* she will continue to be unhappy.

*Yet*—functions as does *but*, expressing opposition between ideas. She got the job she wanted, (and) *yet* she discovered that she hated it.

*So*—expresses a cause-effect relationship. Mergatroid wanted to study medicine, *so* he took many science courses.

Note: In the above examples, *and so* can be substituted for *so* and *and yet* can be substituted for *yet.*