Combining Sentences Using Coordinating Words: Explanation

One common way to connect sentences is by using a link made up of a comma and a coordinating word:

Two sentences:

The ship anchored outside the reef. We went ashore in boats.

Combined sentences (linked with , and):

The ship anchored outside the reef, and we went ashore in boats.

Here are the six main coordinating words. Notice that each of them sets up a different relationship between the sentences it joins:

And  Shows addition or sequence:
     The dancer hobbled offstage, and the curtain quickly descended.

Or   Shows an alternative:
     We can refuse to negotiate, or we can insist upon impossible terms.

But  Shows simple contrast:
     She hates lima beans, but I love them.

Yet  Shows unexpected contrast:
     She hates lima beans, yet she eats them for nutrients.
**For**  Shows for what reason; its function is similar to *because*:
We stopped to take a compass bearing, **for** we were uncertain of our location.

**So**  Shows consequence or result; its function is similar to *therefore*:
We were uncertain of our location, **so** we stopped to take a compass bearing.