My hometown is famous for several amazing natural features. **First**, it is noted for the Wheaton River, which is very wide and beautiful. On either side of **this river**, which is 175 feet wide, are many willow trees which have long branches that can move gracefully in the wind. In autumn the leaves of **these** trees fall and cover the riverbanks like golden snow. **Second**, on the other side of the town is Wheaton Hill, which is unusual because it is very steep. Even though it is steep, climbing **this** hill is not dangerous, because there are some firm rocks along the sides that can be used as stairs. There are no trees around **this** hill, so it stands clearly against the sky and can be seen from many miles away. **The third amazing feature** is the Big Old Tree. This tree stands two hundred feet tall and is probably about six hundred years old. **These three landmarks** are truly amazing and make my hometown a famous place.

Major Connectors

Look at the words in **bold** font. Do you see how they help guide the reader? For example, consider the words, **First, Second,** and **The third amazing feature.** We can call these words *major connectors.* Major connectors help organize the main parts of your paragraph. This paragraph has three main parts: (1) a part about the Wheaton River, (2) a part about Wheaton Hill, and (3) a part about the Big Old Tree. Another way of saying this is that this paragraph has three **main points** which are indicated by the major connectors. Using such major connectors is an important way of providing coherence in a paragraph.

Minor Connectors

What about the other words in **bold**, such as those appearing in the phrases "**these** trees" and "**this** hill"? We can call these *minor connectors.* Minor connectors provide coherence to a paragraph by connecting sentences *within* each of the main parts of your paragraph. That is, when you write about your main points, you can use minor connectors to link your details to each main point.

Now, look at this paragraph. Can you identify the main points?

Each of the U.S. manned space exploration projects had specific major goals. The Mercury project was designed to test whether or not human beings could survive and function in outer space. The Mercury project tested rockets with the new Mercury space capsule, which could hold one person. The Gemini project was intended to find out whether two people could work in the weightless environment of space. Gemini astronauts took "spacewalks." They floated outside their spacecraft in a spacesuit, connected to it by a tether. Gemini astronauts tried out new flying skills. Some astronauts flew two spacecraft extremely close together; this procedure was called "rendezvous." On some Gemini flights, astronauts physically linked two spacecraft together. Linking, or "space docking," was a major goal of the Gemini program. The Apollo project, with three astronauts, was intended to test spacecraft and skills so that people could actually fly to the Moon and land on it. Performing scientific experiments on the lunar surface and collecting rocks for study on Earth were goals.

Was this paragraph a little confusing to read? Now consider the same paragraph with a few changes:

>Each of the U.S. manned space exploration projects had specific major goals. **<u>For example,</u>** the Mercury project was designed to test whether or not human beings could survive and function in outer space. *In addition,* the Mercury project tested rockets with the new Mercury space capsule, which could hold one person. **<u>As another example</u>,** the Gemini project was intended to find out whether two people could work in the weightless environment of space. *One way of doing this* was by having Gemini astronauts take "spacewalks." *That is,* they floated outside their spacecraft in a spacesuit, connected to it by a tether. Gemini astronauts *also* tried out new flying skills. *For example,* some astronauts flew two spacecraft extremely close together; this procedure was called "rendezvous." On some Gemini flights, astronauts physically linked two spacecraft together. *This linking,* or "space docking," was a major goal of the Gemini program. **<u>Finally</u>,** the Apollo project, with three astronauts, had the goal of testing spacecraft and skills so that people could actually fly to the Moon and land on it. *Other goals included* performing scientific experiments on the lunar surface and collecting rocks for study on Earth.

Do you see which of the connectors above are major and which are minor? The **<u>major</u>** (<u>underlined and in red</u> in the paragraph above) ones are *For example* in the second sentence, which introduces the first supporting point (the Mercury program); *As another example,* which begins the second main point (the Gemini program); and the word *Finally,* which introduces the third and last main point (the Apollo moon program).

As for the **minor** connectors (*italicized and in blue*), we can divide them into three groups. The first group of minor connectors provides coherence for the first main point (the Mercury program). There is only one minor connector in this first group, *In addition,* although it is possible to have more than one, depending on how many details you have to support your first main point.

The second group of minor connectors consists of *That is, also,* and also the phrase *For example* in the sentence, "For example, some astronauts..." Notice that this last minor connector is the <u>same</u> as the major connector at the beginning of the paragraph. However, the function of each is different, depending on the meaning of the sentences.

The third group of minor connectors in this particular paragraph also has one member, which is *Other goals included....*