A good ir   er
conversation* about the topic. It can also help the reader see how you will accomplish
the task of explaining your ideas.

Preview — A "map" to how you will support your thesis; the preview should be a
series of brief points appearing in the order in which they will be
elaborated upon later. Avoid including too much information about each
point; save your argument for later.

Significance — An indication of your thesis's importance; your paper's significance is
why it is worth reading, particularly within a broader context.

Context — The broader conversation to which your specific material is related;
the context of your paper can help demonstrate how your paper con-
nects to the larger world.

---

*The "conversation" refers to the idea that every paper, article, editorial, and various other printed thought on a topic acts like a form of communication between the authors of these works (and some people who just "listen" but do not comment). When a writer puts words on paper, they are joining a conversation. Furthermore, just like with a normal conversation, there are correct ways for the author to join the conversation. He/she would not (hopefully) just walk up to a group of people who are deeply involved in a conversation and say something without listening a little bit first. It is the same with written conversation; just replace talking with writing.

Example Introduction

Parents must decide what foods to serve their children, sometimes basing decisions on whether the option is easy to prepare and whether their children will accept the choice. One available option is peanut butter, a food that is relatively simple to serve and traditionally enjoyed by children. However, two varieties of peanut butter are available, so parents who decide to offer their children peanut butter must further choose between creamy and crunchy. Because pieces of peanut can make spreading more difficult and because even those who prefer crunchy can accept creamy, whereas the reverse is not as common, creamy peanut butter is better than crunchy peanut butter.

Discussion

"Parents must decide what foods to serve their children"

Context — Identifies the broad topic (foods) as well as positioning that topic within a real-life situation (parents feeding their children).

Significance — For parents, this situation is meaningful.

"One available option is peanut butter"

Topic — Narrows the topic from broad to specific, from "foods" to "peanut butter."

"Because pieces of peanut can make spreading more difficult and because even those who prefer crunchy can accept creamy, whereas the reverse is not as common."

Preview — Mentions two issues the paper will discuss to "prove" the thesis.

"Creamy peanut butter is better than crunchy peanut butter."

Thesis — Directly states the point of the whole paper.