Comparable worth, as a standard applied to eliminate inequities in pay, insists that the values of certain tasks performed in dissimilar jobs can be compared. In the last decade, this approach has become a critical social policy issue, as large numbers of private-sector firms and industries as well as federal, state, and local governmental entities have adopted comparable worth policies or begun to consider doing so.  
  
This widespread institutional awareness of comparable worth indicates increased public awareness that pay inequities—that is, situations in which pay is not "fair" because it does not reflect the true value of a job—exist in the labor market. However, the question still remains: have the gains already made in pay equity under comparable worth principles been of a precedent-setting nature or are they mostly transitory, a function of concessions made by employers to misled female employees into believing that they have made long-term pay equity gains?  
  
Comparable worth pay adjustments are indeed precedent-setting. Because of the principles driving them, other mandates that can be applied to reduce or eliminate unjustified pay gaps between male and female workers have not remedied perceived pay inequities satisfactorily for the litigants in cases in which men and women hold different jobs. But whenever comparable worth principles are applied to pay schedules, perceived unjustified pay differences are eliminated. In this sense then, comparable worth is more comprehensive than other mandates, such as the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Neither compares tasks in dissimilar jobs (that is, jobs across occupational categories) in an effort to determine whether or not what is necessary to perform these tasks—know-how, problem-solving, and accountability—can be quantified in terms of its dollar value to the employer. Comparable worth, on the other hand, takes as its premise that certain tasks in dissimilar jobs may require a similar amount of training, effort, and skill; may carry similar responsibility; may be carried on in an environment having a similar impact upon the worker; and may have a similar dollar value to the employer.

1. According to the passage, which of the following is true of comparable worth as a policy?

(A) Comparable worth policy decisions in pay-inequity cases have often failed to satisfy the complaints

(B) Comparable worth policies have been applied to both public-sector and private-sector employee pay schedules

(C) Comparable worth as a policy has come to be widely criticized in the past decade

(D) Many employers have considered comparable worth as a policy but very few have actually adopted id

(E) Early implementations of comparable worth policies resulted in only transitory gains in pay equity

2. Which of the following most accurately states the central purpose of the passage?

(A) To criticize the implementation of a new procedure

(B) To assess the significance of a change in policy

(C) To illustrate how a new standard alters procedures

(D) To explain how a new policy is applied in specific cases

(E) To summarize the changes made to date as a result of social policy

3. According to the passage, comparable worth principles are different in which of the following ways from other mandates intended to reduce or eliminate pay inequities:

(A) Comparable worth principles address changes in the pay schedules of male as well as female workers

(B) Comparable worth principles can be applied to employees in both the public and the private sector

(C) Comparable worth principles emphasize the training and skill of workers

(D) Comparable worth principles require changes in the employer's resource allocation

(E) Comparable worth principles can be used to quantify the value of elements of dissimilar jobs

4. Which of the following best describes an application of the principles of comparable worth as they are described in the passage?

(A) The current pay, rates of increase, and rates of promotion for female mechanics are compared with those of male mechanics.

(B) The training, skills, and job experience of computer programmers in one division of a corporation are compared to those of programmers making more money in another division.

(C) The number of women holding top executive positions in a corporation is compared to the number of women available for promotion to those positions, and both tallies are matched to the tallies for men in the same corporation.

(D) The skills, training, and job responsibilities of the clerks in the township tax assessor's office are compared to those of the much better-paid township engineers.

(E) The working conditions of female workers in a hazardous-materials environment are reviewed and their pay schedules compared to those of all workers in similar environments across the nation.

5. It can be inferred from the passage that application of "other mandates" (see highlighted text) would be unlikely to result in an outcome satisfactory to the female employees in which of the following situations?

I. Males employed as long-distance truck drivers for a furniture company make $3.50 more per hour than do females with comparable job experience employed in the same capacity.

II. Women working in the office of a cement company contend that their jobs are as demanding and valuable as those of the men working in the cement factory, but the women are paid much less per hour.

III. A law firm employs both male and female paralegals with the same educational and career backgrounds, but the starting salary for male paralegals is $5,000 more than for female paralegals.

(A) I only

(B) II only

(C) III only

(D) I and II only

(E) I and III only