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If you prepare well in advance, you'll be stress-free on the Prometheus Certified Associate Exam PCA exam day and thus perform well. Candidates can know where they stand by attempting the Linux Foundation PCA practice test. It can save you lots of time and money. The question on the Linux Foundation PCA Practice Test is quite similar to the Linux Foundation PCA questions that get asked on the PCA exam day.

Linux Foundation Prometheus Certified Associate Exam Sample Questions (Q15-Q20):

NEW QUESTION # 15

What does the `rate()` function in PromQL return?

- A. The per-second rate of increase of a counter metric.
- B. The number of samples in a range vector.
- C. The average of all values in a vector.
- D. The total increase of a counter over a range.

Answer: A

Explanation:

The `rate()` function calculates the average per-second rate of increase of a counter over the specified range. It smooths out short-term fluctuations and adjusts for counter resets.

Example:

```
rate(http_requests_total[5m])
```

returns the number of requests per second averaged over the last five minutes. This function is frequently used in dashboards and alerting expressions.

NEW QUESTION # 16

What is metamonitoring?

- A. Metamonitoring is a monitoring that covers 100% of a service.
- B. Metamonitoring is the monitoring of non-IT systems.
- C. Metamonitoring is monitoring social networks for end user complaints about quality of service.
- **D. Metamonitoring is the monitoring of the monitoring infrastructure.**

Answer: D

Explanation:

Metamonitoring refers to monitoring the monitoring system itself-ensuring that Prometheus, Alertmanager, exporters, and dashboards are functioning properly. In other words, it's the observability of your observability stack.

This practice helps detect issues such as:

Prometheus not scraping targets,
Alertmanager being unreachable,
Exporters not exposing data, or
Storage being full or corrupted.

Without metamonitoring, an outage in the monitoring system could go unnoticed, leaving operators blind to actual infrastructure problems. A common approach is to use a secondary Prometheus instance (or external monitoring service) to monitor the health metrics of the primary Prometheus and related components.

Reference:

Verified from Prometheus documentation - Monitoring Prometheus Itself, Operational Best Practices, and Reliability of the Monitoring Infrastructure.

NEW QUESTION # 17

Which PromQL statement returns the sum of all values of the metric `node_memory_MemAvailable_bytes` from 10 minutes ago?

- A. `sum(node_memory_MemAvailable_bytes) offset 10m`
- B. `sum(node_memory_MemAvailable_bytes) setoff 10m`
- **C. `sum(node_memory_MemAvailable_bytes offset 10m)`**
- D. `offset sum(node_memory_MemAvailable_bytes[10m])`

Answer: C

Explanation:

In PromQL, the `offset` modifier allows you to query metrics as they were at a past time relative to the current evaluation. To retrieve the value of `node_memory_MemAvailable_bytes` as it was 10 minutes ago, you place the `offset` keyword inside the aggregation function's argument, not after it.

The correct query is:

`sum(node_memory_MemAvailable_bytes offset 10m)`

This computes the total available memory across all instances, based on data from exactly 10 minutes in the past.

Placing `offset` after the aggregation (as in option B) is syntactically invalid because modifiers apply to instant and range vector selectors, not to complete expressions.

Reference:

Verified from Prometheus documentation - PromQL Evaluation Modifiers: `offset`, Aggregation Operators, and Temporal Query Examples.

NEW QUESTION # 18

What is the best way to expose a timestamp from your application?

- A. With a counter that is increased to the correct value.
- B. With a constant metric of value 1 and the timestamp as label.
- **C. With a gauge that has the timestamp as value.**
- D. With a constant metric of value 1 and the timestamp as metric timestamp.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The correct way to expose a timestamp from an application in Prometheus is to use a gauge metric where the timestamp value (in Unix time, seconds since epoch) is stored as the metric's value. This approach aligns with the Prometheus data model, which discourages embedding timestamps as labels or metadata.

Example:

`app_last_successful_backup_timestamp_seconds 1.696358e+09`

In this example, the gauge represents the timestamp of the last successful backup. The `_seconds` suffix indicates the unit of measurement, making the metric self-descriptive. Prometheus automatically assigns timestamps to scraped samples, so the metric's value is treated purely as data, not as a Prometheus sample time.

Options B and D are incorrect because Prometheus does not allow arbitrary timestamps or labels for time values. Option C is incorrect since counters are monotonically increasing and not suited for discrete timestamp values.

Reference:

Verified from Prometheus documentation - Instrumentation Best Practices (Exposing Timestamps), Gauge Metric Semantics, and Metric Naming Conventions - `_seconds` suffix.

NEW QUESTION # 19

How many metric types does Prometheus text format support?

- A. 0
- B. 1
- C. 2
- D. 3

Answer: A

Explanation:

Prometheus defines four core metric types in its official exposition format, which are: Counter, Gauge, Histogram, and Summary. These types represent the fundamental building blocks for expressing quantitative measurements of system performance, behavior, and state.

A Counter is a cumulative metric that only increases (e.g., number of requests served).

A Gauge represents a value that can go up and down, such as memory usage or temperature.

A Histogram samples observations (e.g., request durations) and counts them in configurable buckets, providing both counts and sum of observed values.

A Summary is similar to a histogram but provides quantile estimation over a sliding time window along with count and sum metrics.

These four types are the only officially supported metric types in the Prometheus text exposition format as defined by the Prometheus data model. Any additional metrics or custom naming conventions are built on top of these core types but do not constitute new types.

Reference:

Extracted and verified from Prometheus official documentation sections on Metric Types and Exposition Formats in the Prometheus study materials.

NEW QUESTION # 20

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