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Palo Alto Networks Security Operations Professional Sample Questions (Q22-Q27):

NEW QUESTION # 22

A Security Operations Center (SOC) analyst is investigating a suspected lateral movement incident. Cortex XDR has triggered an alert indicating suspicious PowerShell activity originating from a compromised endpoint. The analyst needs to rapidly understand the scope of compromise, specifically identifying other systems the attacker may have accessed using stolen credentials. Which key Cortex XDR elements, in combination, would be most crucial for efficiently tracing the attacker's path and identifying affected assets?

- A. Cloud access logs, SaaS application logs, and endpoint forensic images.
- B. User activity logs (logons, group modifications), Asset inventory, and vulnerability scan results.
- C. File activity logs, DNS queries, and email gateway logs.
- D. Telemetry data from endpoint agents (processes, network connections) and User Behavioral Analytics (UBA) data.
- E. Network connection logs (NetFlow), Firewall logs, and threat intelligence feeds.

Answer: D

Explanation:
To trace lateral movement and identify affected assets, a SOC analyst needs granular insight into both endpoint activity and user behavior. Telemetry data from Cortex XDR agents (processes, network connections, file access) provides the foundational visibility into what happened on the compromised endpoint and how it communicated with other systems. User Behavioral Analytics (UBA) data, powered by Cortex XDR's analytics engine, can highlight anomalous user logons, credential usage patterns (e.g., use of service accounts for interactive logons), and access to unusual resources, which are key indicators of lateral movement using stolen credentials. Options B, C, D, and E provide valuable data but are less directly focused on the immediate task of tracing the attacker's path via credential reuse and identifying compromised systems in the context of lateral movement, especially when considering the integrated capabilities of Cortex XDR.

NEW QUESTION # 23
A critical zero-day vulnerability has been disclosed affecting a custom application. The SOC needs to ingest application-specific audit logs, which are currently being written to local files in a non-standard, multi-line format, into Cortex XSIAM for immediate threat hunting. There's no existing integration for this specific application. Which of the following approaches is the most appropriate for rapid ingestion and subsequent threat hunting within XSIAM, and what is the key challenge to address?

- A. Write a custom script to tail the log file, normalize the multi-line events into single-line JSON, and push them via the XSIAM Ingestion API. The key challenge is developing and maintaining the custom script.
- B. Modify the application to send logs directly to a Syslog server, then configure a Syslog collector in XSIAM. The key challenge is the application modification and the potential for losing context from multi-line events.
- C. Install a Cortex XDRAgent on the application server and configure a Data Collection Profile to monitor the log file. The key challenge is creating a robust XQL parsing rule for the multi-line format.
- D. Use a third-party log forwarder like Filebeat to send the logs to a Kafka topic, then configure Cortex XSIAM to consume from Kafka. The key challenge is setting up and managing the Kafka infrastructure.
- E. Deploy a dedicated Log Collector, configure a Log Profile with a 'File' data source, and use grok patterns within a custom parsing rule to handle the multi-line format. The key challenge is accurately defining complex grok patterns for multi-line events.

Answer: E

Explanation:
For rapid ingestion of local, non-standard, multi-line files without application modification or custom scripting, deploying a dedicated Log Collector is generally the most suitable native XSIAM approach. The Log Collector's 'File' data source type is designed for this. The primary challenge, as correctly identified, is the creation of accurate and robust grok patterns within the custom parsing rule to handle multi-line events and extract relevant fields. While XDR Agent (A) can collect files, its parsing capabilities for highly custom, multi-line formats might be less flexible than a dedicated Log Collector with grok. Syslog (B) often struggles with multi-line events. Custom scripts (C) are powerful but require development time and ongoing maintenance. Kafka (E) introduces significant additional infrastructure for what could be a more direct ingestion. Therefore, D is the most direct and effective XSIAM native solution for this specific challenge.

NEW QUESTION # 24
A Palo Alto Networks security analyst is investigating a suspected advanced persistent threat (APT) campaign targeting the organization. The latest threat intelligence report indicates that the APT group leverages obfuscated PowerShell scripts for lateral movement and Cobalt Strike beacons for C2. Given this context, which of the following Cortex XDR queries, combining process execution, network activity, and threat intelligence insights, would be most effective in identifying compromised endpoints exhibiting

these behaviors?

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.

Answer: D

Explanation:
This question assesses the ability to construct sophisticated Cortex XDR queries leveraging threat intelligence (External Dynamic Lists) and correlating different event types (process and network).
Option E is the most comprehensive and effective: It first identifies suspicious PowerShell executions ('process_name contains "powershell" and command_line contains "-EncodedCommand"). Then, it uses a 'join' (implicitly via 'match_guid' or explicit 'join' on 'host_id' and if available) to correlate these processes with network connections to known Cobalt Strike C2s, which are dynamically updated via an This precisely matches the threat intelligence profile (obfuscated PowerShell + Cobalt Strike C2).
Let's break down why other options are less optimal:
*A: Too generic. While it looks for PowerShell and network connections, it doesn't incorporate specific threat intelligence for Cobalt Strike C2s, nor does it guarantee the network connection is from the PowerShell process.
*B: This syntax is incorrect for combining two filter statements in Cortex XDR directly for a join on 'process_guid' across different event types in a single query. It attempts to filter network connections by process name which isn't always accurate.
*C: Similar to B, the 'join' syntax is problematic for directly correlating events from two separate filtered datasets in a single XDR query in this manner. It also filters = 80 or 443' which are common ports and not specific to Cobalt Strike without the IP context.
*D: Relies on a pre-existing While correlation rules are powerful, the question asks for constructing a query. This option doesn't demonstrate the construction of the query leveraging threat intelligence.

NEW QUESTION # 25
Consider a scenario where a global enterprise utilizes Cortex XDR to protect endpoints across various geographically dispersed regions, each with its own local network infrastructure and varying internet connectivity quality. The security team observes that agents in certain remote offices frequently report as 'Disconnected' or 'Stale' in the Cortex XDR console, leading to gaps in visibility and protection. What combination of Cortex XDR agent management and network configuration strategies would be most effective in mitigating these connectivity issues and ensuring consistent agent health and communication, without significant local infrastructure upgrades?

- A. Distribute a 'proxy.pac' file via GPO/MDM in remote offices, directing agent traffic through a centralized, high-bandwidth proxy server in the corporate data center. Also, disable 'Content Updates' for agents in these regions.
- B. Enable 'Self-Healing' for agents in the security policy to automatically restart services if connectivity is lost, and implement a dedicated VPN tunnel from each remote office directly to the Cortex XDR cloud.
- C. Deploy a Cortex XDR Broker in each remote office that experiences connectivity issues, and configure agents in those offices to communicate with their local Broker instead of directly with the cloud.
- D. Increase the 'Agent Heartbeat Interval' in the security policy to reduce network traffic, and configure local DNS servers in remote offices to prioritize resolution of cortex XDR cloud URLs.
- E. Implement QOS (Quality of Service) policies on local network routers in remote offices to prioritize Cortex XDR agent traffic over other applications, and instruct users to restart their agents daily.

Answer: C

Explanation:
The problem describes agents going 'Disconnected' or 'Stale' due to varying internet connectivity in remote offices, implying network challenges rather than agent misconfiguration. B: Deploy Cortex XDR Broker locally: This is the most effective solution. A Cortex XDR Broker deployed within the remote office network acts as a local proxy and communication hub for agents. Agents communicate over the LAN with the Broker, and the Broker then handles the potentially less reliable WAN link to the Cortex XDR cloud. This significantly reduces the individual agents' reliance on direct cloud connectivity, improving stability and reducing 'disconnected' states. It centralizes and optimizes the outbound communication from the remote site. A: Heartbeat Interval and DNS: Increasing heartbeat interval delays detection of issues. DNS optimization helps with initial resolution but doesn't solve persistent connectivity problems over poor links. C: QOS and daily restarts: QOS might help with prioritization but won't solve underlying network instability. Daily agent restarts are impractical and not a solution to root connectivity problems. D: Centralized proxy and content updates: Forcing agents through a distant centralized proxy might aggravate connectivity issues due to increased latency and potential single point of failure if the central link is saturated. Disabling content updates reduces protection effectiveness. E: Self-

Healing and VPN: Self-healing helps with agent service issues, not network connectivity. A dedicated VPN to the XDR cloud is not a standard or practical solution; XDR connects over public internet via HTTPS. VPNs are typically for private network access, not direct XDR cloud connectivity, and would require significant infrastructure investment.

NEW QUESTION # 26
During a proactive threat hunt, a Palo Alto Networks Security Operations Professional observes a pattern of outbound connections from several internal Linux servers to IP addresses listed on a newly acquired threat intelligence feed as known C2 infrastructure for a sophisticated APT group. The connections are primarily over TCP port 8080 and exhibit very low data transfer volumes, but consistent heartbeat-like communication. Existing security policies do not explicitly block port 8080. Which of the following actions, in conjunction with relevant CLI commands or configurations on a Palo Alto Networks firewall, would be the MOST appropriate immediate response to investigate and contain this potential compromise, assuming the firewall is configured to send logs to an external SIEM and has URL filtering/WildFire enabled?

- A. Update the external dynamic list (EDL) on the Palo Alto Networks firewall with the new C2 IP addresses. Configure a new security policy rule with an 'alert' action for traffic matching the EDL, then review the threat logs for hits. Initiate a WildFire analysis on any suspicious file hashes observed from these connections using wildfire status</code></pre>'.
- B. Given the 'heartbeat-like' communication and low data volume, this suggests command and control. The most effective immediate response should focus on disrupting the C2. Prioritize creating a new security policy at the top of the rulebase to block outbound TCP 8080 traffic from the affected Linux servers to the identified C2 IP addresses. Simultaneously, initiate packet captures for these specific flows and escalate to the incident response team for forensic analysis on the compromised servers. The firewall command to capture might be packet-capture stage firewall match source <src_ip> destination <dest_ip> port 8080 count 1000</code></pre>'.
- C. Configure a custom application signature on the Palo Alto Networks firewall to identify the specific C2 communication protocol based on traffic patterns and payload content. Once identified, create a security policy to block this custom application. Concurrently, use the session all filter destination <C2 command to identify active sessions and terminate them using session id
- D. Immediately create a new security policy to block all outbound traffic on TCP port 8080 from the affected Linux servers. Then, run a packet capture on the firewall for these specific connections using '<pre><code>debug flow basic <src_ip> and analyze the pcap for malicious payloads.
- E. Perform a 'test security policy match' on the Palo Alto Networks firewall to understand why the traffic isn't blocked. Then, enable strict URL filtering profiles on the affected security rules. Finally, configure a new vulnerability protection profile with 'reset-both' for all medium and high severity threats on the relevant security rules, and wait for the firewall to automatically block future connections.

Answer: B

Explanation:
This is a critical C2 indicator. Option D represents the most appropriate immediate response. Blocking the C2 traffic is paramount for containment, and a targeted block specific to the affected servers and C2 IPs on port 8080 is an effective initial step. Simultaneously capturing packets provides crucial evidence for further investigation without disrupting all 8080 traffic. Escalating to the IR team for forensic analysis is also a critical next step. Option A is too broad with the block. Option B is reactive and might not immediately disrupt active C2; EDLs update periodically. Option C is a good long-term solution for detecting the specific application, but signature creation takes time and isn't an immediate containment action. Option E is investigative and reactive, not an immediate containment.

NEW QUESTION # 27
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These applications simply do not scale well Valid Dumps SecOps-Pro Ebook for multienterprise integration, and, when competing against a strong horizontal brand such as Microsoft, the advertising SecOps-Pro Latest Test Prep budget for Word alone would dwarf the entering competitor's total company budget.

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