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PCA Valid Test Syllabus, Exam PCA Introduction

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Linux Foundation PCA Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	• Prometheus Fundamentals: This domain evaluates the knowledge of DevOps Engineers and emphasizes the core architecture and components of Prometheus. It includes topics such as configuration and scraping techniques, limitations of the Prometheus system, data models and labels, and the exposition format used for data collection. The section ensures a solid grasp of how Prometheus functions as a monitoring and alerting toolkit within distributed environments.
Topic 2	• Alerting and Dashboarding: This section of the exam assesses the competencies of Cloud Operations Engineers and focuses on monitoring visualization and alert management. It covers dashboarding basics, alerting rules configuration, and the use of Alertmanager to handle notifications. Candidates also learn the core principles of when, what, and why to trigger alerts, ensuring they can create reliable monitoring dashboards and proactive alerting systems to maintain system stability.
Topic 3	• PromQL: This section of the exam measures the skills of Monitoring Specialists and focuses on Prometheus Query Language (PromQL) concepts. It covers data selection, calculating rates and derivatives, and performing aggregations across time and dimensions. Candidates also study the use of binary operators, histograms, and timestamp metrics to analyze monitoring data effectively, ensuring accurate interpretation of system performance and trends.

Topic 4	• Observability Concepts: This section of the exam measures the skills of Site Reliability Engineers and covers the essential principles of observability used in modern systems. It focuses on understanding metrics, logs, and tracing mechanisms such as spans, as well as the difference between push and pull data collection methods. Candidates also learn about service discovery processes and the fundamentals of defining and maintaining SLOs, SLAs, and SLIs to monitor performance and reliability.
Topic 5	• Instrumentation and Exporters: This domain evaluates the abilities of Software Engineers and addresses the methods for integrating Prometheus into applications. It includes the use of client libraries, the process of instrumenting code, and the proper structuring and naming of metrics. The section also introduces exporters that allow Prometheus to collect metrics from various systems, ensuring efficient and standardized monitoring implementation.

Linux Foundation Prometheus Certified Associate Exam Sample Questions (Q21-Q26):

NEW QUESTION # 21
How do you calculate the average request duration during the last 5 minutes from a histogram or summary called http_request_duration_seconds?

- A. rate(http_request_duration_seconds_sum[5m]) / rate(http_request_duration_seconds_count[5m])
- B. rate(http_request_duration_seconds_total[5m]) / rate(http_request_duration_seconds_average[5m])
- C. rate(http_request_duration_seconds_sum[5m]) / rate(http_request_duration_seconds_average[5m])
- D. rate(http_request_duration_seconds_total[5m]) / rate(http_request_duration_second$_count[5m])

Answer: A

Explanation:
In Prometheus, histograms and summaries expose metrics with _sum and _count suffixes to represent total accumulated values and sample counts, respectively. To compute the average request duration over a given time window (for example, 5 minutes), you divide the rate of increase of _sum by the rate of increase of _count:
\text{Average duration} = \frac{\text{rate(http_request_duration_seconds_sum[5m])}}
{\text{rate(http_request_duration_seconds_count[5m])}} Here,
http_request_duration_seconds_sum represents the total accumulated request time, and
http_request_duration_seconds_count represents the number of requests observed.
By dividing these rates, you obtain the average request duration per request over the specified time range.
Reference:
Extracted and verified from Prometheus documentation - Querying Histograms and Summaries, PromQL Rate Function, and Metric Naming Conventions sections.

NEW QUESTION # 22
What does the evaluation_interval parameter in the Prometheus configuration control?

- A. How often Prometheus compacts the TSDB data blocks.
- B. How often Prometheus scrapes targets.
- C. How often Prometheus evaluates recording and alerting rules.
- D. How often Prometheus sends metrics to remote storage.

Answer: C

Explanation:
The evaluation_interval parameter defines how frequently Prometheus evaluates its recording and alerting rules. It determines the schedule at which the rule engine runs, checking whether alert conditions are met and generating new time series for recording rules.
For example, setting:
global:
evaluation_interval: 30s
means Prometheus evaluates all configured rules every 30 seconds. This setting differs from scrape_interval, which controls how often Prometheus collects data from targets.
Having a proper evaluation interval ensures alerting latency is balanced with system performance.

NEW QUESTION # 23
Which of the following signals belongs to symptom-based alerting?

- A. Disk space
- B. API latency
- C. CPU usage
- D. Database availability

Answer: B

Explanation:
Symptom-based alerting focuses on detecting user-visible or service-impacting issues rather than internal resource states. Metrics like API latency, error rates, and availability directly indicate degraded user experience and are therefore the preferred triggers for alerts.
In contrast, resource-based alerts (like CPU usage or disk space) often represent underlying causes, not symptoms. Alerting on them can produce noise and distract from actual service health problems.
For example, high API latency (http_request_duration_seconds) clearly reflects that users are experiencing delays, which is actionable and business-relevant.
This concept aligns with the RED (Rate, Errors, Duration) and USE (Utilization, Saturation, Errors) monitoring models promoted in Prometheus and SRE best practices.
Reference:
Verified from Prometheus documentation - Alerting Best Practices, Symptom vs. Cause Alerting, and RED/USE Monitoring Principles.

NEW QUESTION # 24
What is api_http_requests_total in the following metric?
api_http_requests_total{method="POST", handler="/messages"}

- A. "api_http_requests_total" is a metric type.
- B. "api_http_requests_total" is a metric field.
- C. "api_http_requests_total" is a metric name.
- D. "api_http_requests_total" is a metric label name.

Answer: C

Explanation:
In Prometheus, the part before the curly braces {} represents the metric name. Therefore, in the metric api_http_requests_total{method="POST", handler="/messages"}, the term api_http_requests_total is the metric name. Metric names describe the specific quantity being measured - in this example, the total number of HTTP requests received by an API.
The portion within the braces defines labels, which provide additional dimensions to the metric. Here, method="POST" and handler="/messages" are labels describing request attributes. The metric name should follow Prometheus conventions: lowercase letters, numbers, and underscores only, and ending in _total for counters.
This naming scheme ensures clarity and standardization across instrumented applications. The metric type (e.g., counter, gauge) is declared separately in the exposition format, not within the metric name itself.
Reference:
Verified from Prometheus documentation - Metric and Label Naming, Data Model, and Instrumentation Best Practices sections.

NEW QUESTION # 25
What is considered the best practice when working with alerting notifications?

- A. Make sure to generate alerts on every metric of every component of the stack.
- B. Have as few alerts as possible by alerting only when symptoms might become externally visible.
- C. Have as many alerts as possible to catch minor problems before they become outages.
- D. Minor alerts are as important as major alerts and should be treated with equal care.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The Prometheus alerting philosophy emphasizes signal over noise - meaning alerts should focus only on actionable and user-impacting issues. The best practice is to alert on symptoms that indicate potential or actual user-visible problems, not on every internal metric anomaly.
This approach reduces alert fatigue, avoids desensitizing operators, and ensures high-priority alerts get the attention they deserve. For example, alerting on "service unavailable" or "latency exceeding SLO" is more effective than alerting on "CPU above 80%" or "disk usage increasing," which may not directly affect users.
Option B correctly reflects this principle: keep alerts meaningful, few, and symptom-based. The other options contradict core best practices by promoting excessive or equal-weight alerting, which can overwhelm operations teams.
Reference:
Verified from Prometheus documentation - Alerting Best Practices, Alertmanager Design Philosophy, and Prometheus Monitoring and Reliability Engineering Principles.

NEW QUESTION # 26
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Studying for attending PCA exam pays attention to the method. The good method often can bring the result with half the effort, therefore we in the examination time, and also should know some test-taking skill. The PCA quiz guide on the basis of summarizing the past years, the answers have certain rules can be found, either subjective or objective questions, we can find in the corresponding module of similar things in common. To this end, the PCA Exam Dumps have summarized some types of questions in the qualification examination to help you pass the PCA exam.