2026 PCA Valid Test Topics - Prometheus Certified Associate Exam Realistic Authorized Pdf Free PDF Quiz

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Linux Foundation PCA Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	• 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.
Topic 2	• 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 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	• 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 5	• 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.

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Linux Foundation Prometheus Certified Associate Exam Sample Questions (Q17-Q22):

NEW QUESTION # 17
Which PromQL expression computes how many requests in total are currently in-flight for the following time series data?
apiserver_current_inflight_requests{instance="1"} 5
apiserver_current_inflight_requests{instance="2"} 7

- A. max(apiserver_current_inflight_requests)
- B. min(apiserver_current_inflight_requests)
- C. sum(apiserver_current_inflight_requests)
- D. sum_over_time(apiserver_current_inflight_requests[10m])

Answer: C

Explanation:
In Prometheus, when you have multiple time series that represent the same type of measurement across different instances, the sum() aggregation operator is used to compute their total value.
Here, each instance (1 and 2) exposes the metric apiserver_current_inflight_requests, indicating the number of active API requests currently being processed.
To find the total number of in-flight requests across all instances, the correct expression is:
sum(apiserver_current_inflight_requests)
This returns 5 + 7 = 12.
min() would return the lowest value (5).
max() would return the highest value (7).
sum_over_time() calculates the cumulative sum over a range vector, not the current value, so it's incorrect here.
Reference:
Verified from Prometheus documentation - Aggregation Operators and Summing Across Dimensions sections.

NEW QUESTION # 18
What does the evaluation_interval parameter in the Prometheus configuration control?

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

Answer: B

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 # 19
What is the name of the official *nix OS kernel metrics exporter?

- A. node_exporter
- B. Prometheus_exporter
- C. os_exporter
- D. metrics_exporter

Answer: A

Explanation:
The official Prometheus exporter for collecting system-level and kernel-related metrics from Linux and other UNIX-like operating systems is the Node Exporter.
The Node Exporter exposes hardware and OS metrics including CPU load, memory usage, disk I/O, network traffic, and kernel statistics. It is designed to provide host-level observability and serves data at the default endpoint :9100/metrics in the standard Prometheus exposition text format.
This exporter is part of the official Prometheus ecosystem and is widely deployed for infrastructure monitoring. None of the other listed options (Prometheus_exporter, metrics_exporter, or os_exporter) are official components of the Prometheus project.
Reference:
Verified from Prometheus documentation - Node Exporter Overview, System Metrics Collection, and Official Exporters List.

NEW QUESTION # 20
Given the metric prometheus_tsdb_lowest_timestamp_seconds, how do you know in which month the lowest timestamp of your Prometheus TSDB belongs?

- A. prometheus_tsdb_lowest_timestamp_seconds % month
- B. format_date(prometheus_tsdb_lowest_timestamp_seconds,"%M")
- C. month(prometheus_tsdb_lowest_timestamp_seconds)
- D. (time() - prometheus_tsdb_lowest_timestamp_seconds) / 86400

Answer: D

Explanation:
The metric prometheus_tsdb_lowest_timestamp_seconds provides the oldest stored sample timestamp in Prometheus's local TSDB (in Unix epoch seconds). To determine the age or approximate date of this timestamp, you compare it with the current time (using time() in PromQL).
The expression:
(time() - prometheus_tsdb_lowest_timestamp_seconds) / 86400
converts the difference between the current time and the oldest timestamp from seconds into days (1 day = 86,400 seconds). This

gives the number of days since the earliest sample was stored, allowing you to infer the time range and approximate month manually. The other options are invalid because PromQL does not support direct date formatting (format_date) or month() extraction functions.
Reference:
Extracted and verified from Prometheus documentation - TSDB Internal Metrics, Time Functions in PromQL, and Using time() for Relative Calculations.

NEW QUESTION # 21
What should you do with counters that have labels?

- A. Instantiate them with their possible label values when creating them so they are exposed with a zero value.
- B. Make sure every counter with labels has an extra counter, aggregated, without labels.
- C. Save their state between application runs so you can restore their last value on startup.
- D. Investigate if you can move their label value inside their metric name to limit the number of labels.

Answer: A

Explanation:
Prometheus counters with labels can cause missing time series in queries if some label combinations have not yet been observed. To ensure visibility and continuity, the recommended best practice is to instantiate counters with all expected label values at application startup, even if their initial value is zero.
This ensures that every possible labeled time series is exported consistently, which helps when dashboards or alerting rules expect the presence of those series. For example, if a counter like http_requests_total{method="POST",status="200"} has not yet received a POST request, initializing it with a zero ensures it is still exposed.
Option A is incorrect - label values should never be encoded into metric names.
Option B adds redundancy and does not solve the initialization issue.
Option D is discouraged; counters should reset naturally upon restart, reflecting Prometheus's ephemeral metric model.
Reference:
Verified from Prometheus documentation - Instrumentation Best Practices, Counters with Labels, and Avoid Missing Time Series by Initializing Metrics.

NEW QUESTION # 22
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