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Linux Foundation PCA Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	• 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 2	• 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 3	• 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 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	• 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.

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Linux Foundation PCA Reliable Exam Guide & PCA Reliable Exam Price

At Pass4sureCert, we strive hard to offer a comprehensive Prometheus Certified Associate Exam (PCA) exam questions preparation material bundle pack. The product available at Pass4sureCert includes Linux Foundation PCA Real Dumps pdf and mock tests (desktop and web-based). Practice exams give an experience of taking the Prometheus Certified Associate Exam (PCA) actual exam.

Linux Foundation Prometheus Certified Associate Exam Sample Questions (Q11-Q16):

NEW QUESTION # 11
Which of the following metrics is unsuitable for a Prometheus setup?

- A. prometheus_engine_query_log_enabled
- B. http_response_total{handler="static/*filepath"}
- C. promhttp_metric_handler_requests_total{code="500"}
- D. user_last_login_timestamp_seconds{email="john.doe@example.com"}

Answer: D

Explanation:
The metric user_last_login_timestamp_seconds{email="john.doe@example.com"} is unsuitable for Prometheus because it includes a high-cardinality label (email). Each unique email address would generate a separate time series, potentially numbering in the millions, which severely impacts Prometheus performance and memory usage.
Prometheus is optimized for low- to medium-cardinality metrics that represent system-wide behavior rather than per-user data. High-cardinality metrics cause data explosion, complicating queries and overwhelming the storage engine.
By contrast, the other metrics-prometheus_engine_query_log_enabled, promhttp_metric_handler_requests_total{code="500"}, and http_response_total{handler="static/*filepath"}-adhere to Prometheus best practices. They represent operational or service-level metrics with limited, manageable label value sets.
Reference:
Extracted and verified from Prometheus documentation - Metric and Label Naming Best Practices, Cardinality Management, and Anti-Patterns for Metric Design sections.

NEW QUESTION # 12
How would you add text from the instance label to the alert's description for the following alert?
alert: InstanceDown
expr: up == 0
for: 5m
labels:
severity: page
annotations:
description: "Instance INSTANCE_NAME_HERE down"

- A. Use $expr.instance instead of INSTANCE_NAME_HERE
- B. Use $labels.instance instead of INSTANCE_NAME_HERE
- C. Use $metric.instance instead of INSTANCE_NAME_HERE
- D. Use $value.instance instead of INSTANCE_NAME_HERE

Answer: B

Explanation:
In Prometheus alerting rules, you can dynamically reference label values in annotations and labels using template variables. Each alert has access to its labels via the variable $labels, which allows direct insertion of label data into alert messages or descriptions.
To include the value of the instance label dynamically in the description, replace the placeholder INSTANCE_NAME_HERE with:

description: "Instance {{$labels.instance}} down"
or equivalently:
description: "Instance $labels.instance down"
Both forms are valid - the first follows Go templating syntax and is the recommended format.
This ensures that when the alert fires, the instance label (e.g., a hostname or IP) is automatically included in the message, producing outputs like:
Instance 192.168.1.15:9100 down
Options B, C, and D are invalid because $value, $expr, and $metric are not recognized context variables in alert templates.
Reference:
Verified from Prometheus documentation - Alerting Rules Configuration, Using Template Variables in Annotations and Labels, and Prometheus Templating Guide (Go Templates and $labels usage) sections.

NEW QUESTION # 13
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. offset sum(node_memory_MemAvailable_bytes[10m])
- D. sum(node_memory_MemAvailable_bytes) offset 10m

Answer: A

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 # 14
How would you name a metric that tracks HTTP request duration?

- A. http.request_latency
- B. http_request_duration
- C. http_request_duration_seconds
- D. request_duration_seconds

Answer: C

Explanation:
According to Prometheus metric naming conventions, a metric name must clearly describe what is being measured and include a unit suffix that specifies the base unit of measurement, following SI standards. For durations, the suffix _seconds is mandatory.
Therefore, the correct and standards-compliant name for a metric tracking HTTP request duration is:
http_request_duration_seconds
This name communicates:
http_request → the subject being measured (HTTP requests),
duration → the aspect being measured (the latency or time taken),
_seconds → the unit of measurement (seconds).
This metric name typically corresponds to a histogram or summary, exposing submetrics such as _count, _sum, and _bucket. These represent the number of observations, total duration, and distribution across time buckets respectively.
Options A, B, and C fail to fully comply with Prometheus naming standards - they either omit the http_ prefix, use invalid separators (dots), or lack the required unit suffix.
Reference:

Verified from Prometheus documentation - Metric and Label Naming Conventions, Instrumentation Best Practices, and Histogram and Summary Metric Naming Patterns.

NEW QUESTION # 15
What is a rule group?

- A. It is a set of rules, split into groups by type.
- B. It is a set of rules that are executed sequentially.
- C. It is the set (the group) of all the rules in a file.
- D. It is a set of rules that are grouped by labels.

Answer: B

Explanation:
In Prometheus, a rule group is a logical collection of recording and alerting rules that are evaluated sequentially at a specified interval. Rule groups are defined in YAML files under the groups: key, with each group containing a name, an interval, and a list of rules.
For example:
groups:
- name: example
interval: 1m
rules:
- record: job:http_inprogress_requests:sum
expr: sum(http_inprogress_requests) by (job)
All rules in a group share the same evaluation schedule and are executed one after another. This ensures deterministic order, especially when one rule depends on another's result.
Reference:
Verified from Prometheus documentation - Rule Configuration, Rule Groups and Evaluation Order, and Recording & Alerting Rules Guide.

NEW QUESTION # 16
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