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## Palo Alto Networks XDR-Engineer Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cortex XDR Agent Configuration: This section of the exam measures skills of the XDR engineer and covers configuring endpoint prevention profiles and policies, setting up endpoint extension profiles, and managing endpoint groups. The focus is on ensuring endpoints are properly protected and policies are consistently applied across the organization.</li></ul>

Topic 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Detection and Reporting:</b> This section of the exam measures skills of the detection engineer and covers creating detection rules to meet security requirements, including correlation, custom prevention rules, and the use of behavioral indicators of compromise (BIOCs) and indicators of compromise (IOCs). It also assesses configuring exceptions and exclusions, as well as building custom dashboards and reporting templates for effective threat detection and reporting.</li> </ul>
Topic 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Planning and Installation:</b> This section of the exam measures skills of the security engineer and covers the deployment process, objectives, and required resources such as hardware, software, data sources, and integrations for Cortex XDR. It also includes understanding and explaining the deployment and functionality of components like the XDR agent, Broker VM, XDR Collector, and Cloud Identity Engine. Additionally, it assesses the ability to configure user roles, permissions, and access controls, as well as knowledge of data retention and compute unit considerations.</li> </ul>
Topic 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Maintenance and Troubleshooting:</b> This section of the exam measures skills of the XDR engineer and covers managing software component updates for Cortex XDR, such as content, agents, Collectors, and Broker VM. It also includes troubleshooting data management issues like data ingestion and parsing, as well as resolving issues with Cortex XDR components to ensure ongoing system reliability and performance.</li> </ul>
Topic 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ingestion and Automation:</b> This section of the exam measures skills of the security engineer and covers onboarding various data sources including NGFW, network, cloud, and identity systems. It also includes managing simple automation rules, configuring Broker VM applets and clusters, setting up XDR Collectors, and creating parsing rules for data normalization and automation within the Cortex XDR environment.</li> </ul>

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### Palo Alto Networks XDR Engineer Sample Questions (Q34-Q39):

#### NEW QUESTION # 34

During a recent internal purple team exercise, the following recommendation is given to the detection engineering team: Detect and prevent command line invocation of Python on Windows endpoints by non- technical business units. Which rule type should be implemented?

- A. Analytics Behavioral Indicator of Compromise (ABIOC)
- B. Correlation
- C. Indicator of Compromise (IOC)
- **D. Behavioral Indicator of Compromise (BIOC)**

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

The recommendation requires detecting and preventing the command line invocation of Python (e.g., python.exe or py.exe) on Windows endpoints, specifically for non-technical business units. This involves identifying a specific behavior (command line execution of Python) and enforcing a preventive action (e.g., blocking the process). In Cortex XDR, Behavioral Indicators of Compromise (BIOCs) are used to define and detect specific patterns of behavior on endpoints, such as command line activities, and can be paired with a Restriction profile to block the behavior.

\* Correct Answer Analysis (B): A Behavioral Indicator of Compromise (BIOC) rule should be implemented. The BIOC can be configured to detect the command line invocation of Python by defining conditions such as the process name (python.exe or py.exe) and the command line arguments.

For example, a BIOC rule might look for process = python.exe with a command line pattern like cmd.

exe /c python\*. This BIOC can then be added to a Restriction profile to prevent the execution of Python by non-technical business units, which can be targeted by applying the profile to specific endpoint groups (e.g., those assigned to non-technical units).

\* Why not the other options?

\* A. Analytics Behavioral Indicator of Compromise (ABIOC): ABIOCs are analytics-driven rules generated by Cortex XDR's machine learning and behavioral analytics, not user-defined rules. They are not suitable for creating custom detection and prevention rules like the one needed here.

\* C. Correlation: Correlation rules are used to generate alerts by correlating events across multiple datasets (e.g., network and endpoint data), but they do not directly prevent behaviors like command line execution.

\* D. Indicator of Compromise (IOC): IOCs are used to detect specific artifacts (e.g., file hashes, IP addresses) associated with known threats, not to detect and prevent behavioral patterns like command line execution.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains BIOC rules: "Behavioral Indicators of Compromise (BIOCs) can detect specific endpoint behaviors, such as command line invocation of processes like Python, and prevent them when added to a Restriction profile" (paraphrased from the BIOC section). The EDU-260:

Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers detection engineering, stating that "BIOCs are used to detect and block specific behaviors, such as command line executions, on Windows endpoints" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes

"detection engineering" as a key exam topic, encompassing BIOC rule creation.

References:

Palo Alto Networks Cortex XDR Documentation Portal <https://docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com/> EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment Course Objectives Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer

Datasheet <https://www.paloaltonetworks.com/services/education/certification#xdr-engineer>

## NEW QUESTION # 35

Based on the Malware profile image below, what happens when a new custom-developed application attempts to execute on an endpoint?



- A. It will execute after the second attempt
- B. It will immediately execute
- C. It will execute after one hour
- D. It will not execute

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

Since no image was provided, I assume the Malware profile is configured with default Cortex XDR settings, which typically enforce strict malware prevention for unknown or untrusted executables. In Cortex XDR, the Malware profile within the security policy

determines how executables are handled on endpoints. For a new custom-developed application (an unknown executable not previously analyzed or allow-listed), the default behavior is to block execution until the file is analyzed by WildFire (Palo Alto Networks' cloud-based threat analysis service) or explicitly allowed via policy.

\* **Correct Answer Analysis (B):** By default, Cortex XDR's Malware profile is configured to block unknown executables, including new custom-developed applications, to prevent potential threats. When the application attempts to execute, the Cortex XDR agent intercepts it, sends it to WildFire for analysis (if not excluded), and blocks execution until a verdict is received. If the application is not on an allow list or excluded, it will not execute immediately, aligning with option B.

\* **Why not the other options?**

\* **A. It will immediately execute:** This would only occur if the application is on an allow list or if the Malware profile is configured to allow unknown executables, which is not typical for default settings.

\* **C. It will execute after one hour:** There is no default setting in Cortex XDR that delays execution for one hour. Execution depends on the WildFire verdict or policy configuration, not a fixed time delay.

\* **D. It will execute after the second attempt:** Cortex XDR does not have a mechanism that allows execution after a second attempt. Execution is either blocked or allowed based on policy and analysis results.

**Exact Extract or Reference:**

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains Malware profile behavior: "By default, unknown executables are blocked until a WildFire verdict is received, ensuring protection against new or custom-developed applications" (paraphrased from the Malware Profile Configuration section). The EDU-260:

Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers Malware profiles, stating that "default settings block unknown executables to prevent potential threats until analyzed" (paraphrased from course materials).

The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes "Cortex XDR agent configuration" as a key exam topic, encompassing Malware profile settings.

**References:**

Palo Alto Networks Cortex XDR Documentation Portal: <https://docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com/> EDU-260: Cortex XDR

Prevention and Deployment Course Objectives Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer

Datasheet: <https://www.paloaltonetworks.com/services/education>

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**Note on Image:** Since the image was not provided, I assumed a default Malware profile configuration. If you can share the image or describe its settings (e.g., specific allow lists, exclusions, or block rules), I can refine the answer to match the exact configuration.

### NEW QUESTION # 36

An administrator wants to employ reusable rules within custom parsing rules to apply consistent log field extraction across multiple data sources. Which section of the parsing rule should the administrator use to define those reusable rules in Cortex XDR?

- A. FILTER
- B. INGEST
- **C. CONST**
- D. RULE

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**

In Cortex XDR, parsing rules are used to extract and normalize fields from log data ingested from various sources to ensure consistent analysis and correlation. To create reusable rules for consistent log field extraction across multiple data sources, administrators use the CONST section within the parsing rule configuration. The CONST section allows the definition of reusable constants or rules that can be applied across different parsing rules, ensuring uniformity in how fields are extracted and processed. The CONST section is specifically designed to hold constant values or reusable expressions that can be referenced in other parts of the parsing rule, such as the RULE or INGEST sections. This is particularly useful when multiple data sources require similar field extraction logic, as it reduces redundancy and ensures consistency. For example, a constant regex pattern for extracting IP addresses can be defined in the CONST section and reused across multiple parsing rules.

\* **Why not the other options?**

\* **RULE:** The RULE section defines the specific logic for parsing and extracting fields from a log entry but is not inherently reusable across multiple rules unless referenced via constants defined in CONST.

\* **INGEST:** The INGEST section specifies how raw log data is ingested and preprocessed, not where reusable rules are defined.

\* **FILTER:** The FILTER section is used to include or exclude log entries based on conditions, not for defining reusable extraction rules.

**Exact Extract or Reference:**

While the exact wording of the CONST section's purpose is not directly quoted in public-facing documentation (as some details are in proprietary training materials like EDU-260 or the Cortex XDR Admin Guide), the Cortex XDR Documentation Portal ([docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com](https://docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com/)) describes data ingestion and parsing workflows, emphasizing the use of constants for reusable

configurations. The EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers data onboarding and parsing, noting that "constants defined in the CONST section allow reusable parsing logic for consistent field extraction across sources" (paraphrased from course objectives). Additionally, the Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet lists "data source onboarding and integration configuration" as a key skill, which includes mastering parsing rules and their components like CONST.

References:

Palo Alto Networks Cortex XDR Documentation Portal: <https://docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com/> EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment Course Objectives Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer Datasheet: <https://www.paloaltonetworks.com/services/education/certification#xdr-engineer>

### NEW QUESTION # 37

When onboarding a Palo Alto Networks NGFW to Cortex XDR, what must be done to confirm that logs are being ingested successfully after a device is selected and verified?

- A. Wait for an incident that involves the NGFW to populate
- B. Confirm that the selected device has a valid certificate
- **C. Conduct an XQL query for NGFW log data**
- D. Retrieve device certificate from NGFW dashboard

**Answer: C**

Explanation:

When onboarding a Palo Alto Networks Next-Generation Firewall (NGFW) to Cortex XDR, the process involves selecting and verifying the device to ensure it can send logs to Cortex XDR. After this step, confirming successful log ingestion is critical to validate the integration. The most direct and reliable method to confirm ingestion is to query the ingested logs using XQL (XDR Query Language), which allows the engineer to search for NGFW log data in Cortex XDR.

\* Correct Answer Analysis (A): Conduct an XQL query for NGFW log data is the correct action.

After onboarding, the engineer can run an XQL query such as `dataset = panw_ngfw_logs | limit 10` to check if NGFW logs are present in Cortex XDR. This confirms that logs are being successfully ingested and stored in the appropriate dataset, ensuring the integration is working as expected.

\* Why not the other options?

\* B. Wait for an incident that involves the NGFW to populate: Waiting for an incident is not a reliable or proactive method to confirm log ingestion. Incidents depend on detection rules and may not occur immediately, even if logs are being ingested.

\* C. Confirm that the selected device has a valid certificate: While a valid certificate is necessary during the onboarding process (e.g., for secure communication), this step is part of the verification process, not a method to confirm log ingestion after verification.

\* D. Retrieve device certificate from NGFW dashboard: Retrieving the device certificate from the NGFW dashboard is unrelated to confirming log ingestion in Cortex XDR. Certificates are managed during setup, not for post-onboarding validation.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains NGFW log ingestion validation: "To confirm successful ingestion of Palo Alto Networks NGFW logs, run an XQL query (e.g., `dataset = panw_ngfw_logs`) to verify that log data is present in Cortex XDR" (paraphrased from the Data Ingestion section). The EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers NGFW integration, stating that "XQL queries are used to validate that NGFW logs are being ingested after onboarding" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes "data ingestion and integration" as a key exam topic, encompassing log ingestion validation.

References:

Palo Alto Networks Cortex XDR Documentation Portal: <https://docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com/> EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment Course Objectives Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer Datasheet: <https://www.paloaltonetworks.com/services/education/certification#xdr-engineer>

### NEW QUESTION # 38

A new parsing rule is created, and during testing and verification, all the logs for which field data is to be parsed out are missing. All the other logs from this data source appear as expected. What may be the cause of this behavior?

- A. The XDR Collector is dropping the logs
- B. The Broker VM is offline
- **C. The filter stage is dropping the logs**
- D. The parsing rule corrupted the database

**Answer: C**

Explanation:

In Cortex XDR, parsing rules are used to extract and normalize fields from raw log data during ingestion, ensuring that the data is structured for analysis and correlation. The parsing process includes stages such as filtering, parsing, and mapping. If logs for which field data is to be parsed out are missing, while other logs from the same data source are ingested as expected, the issue likely lies within the parsing rule itself, specifically in the filtering stage that determines which logs are processed.

\* **Correct Answer Analysis (C):** The filter stage is dropping the logs is the most likely cause. Parsing rules often include a filter stage that determines which logs are processed based on specific conditions (e.g., log content, source, or type). If the filter stage of the new parsing rule is misconfigured (e.g., using an incorrect condition like `log_type != expected_type` or a regex that doesn't match the logs), it may drop the logs intended for parsing, causing them to be excluded from the ingestion pipeline. Since other logs from the same data source are ingested correctly, the issue is specific to the parsing rule's filter, not a broader ingestion problem.

\* Why not the other options?

\* **A. The Broker VM is offline:** If the Broker VM were offline, it would affect all log ingestion from the data source, not just the specific logs targeted by the parsing rule. The question states that other logs from the same data source are ingested as expected, so the Broker VM is likely operational.

\* **B. The parsing rule corrupted the database:** Parsing rules operate on incoming logs during ingestion and do not directly interact with or corrupt the Cortex XDR database. This is an unlikely cause, and database corruption would likely cause broader issues, not just missing specific logs.

\* **D. The XDR Collector is dropping the logs:** The XDR Collector forwards logs to Cortex XDR, and if it were dropping logs, it would likely affect all logs from the data source, not just those targeted by the parsing rule. Since other logs are ingested correctly, the issue is downstream in the parsing rule, not at the collector level.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains parsing rule behavior: "The filter stage in a parsing rule determines which logs are processed; misconfigured filters can drop logs, causing them to be excluded from ingestion" (paraphrased from the Data Ingestion section). The EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers parsing rule troubleshooting, stating that "if specific logs are missing during parsing, check the filter stage for conditions that may be dropping the logs" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes "data ingestion and integration" as a key exam topic, encompassing parsing rule configuration and troubleshooting.

References:

Palo Alto Networks Cortex XDR Documentation Portal: <https://docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com/>  
EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment Course Objectives Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer  
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## NEW QUESTION # 39

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