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Linux Foundation CNPA Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	• Platform APIs and Provisioning Infrastructure: This part of the exam evaluates Procurement Specialists on the use of Kubernetes reconciliation loops, APIs for self-service platforms, and infrastructure provisioning with Kubernetes. It also assesses knowledge of the Kubernetes operator pattern for integration and platform scalability.
Topic 2	• Platform Engineering Core Fundamentals: This section of the exam measures the skills of Supplier Management Consultants and covers essential foundations such as declarative resource management, DevOps practices, application environments, platform architecture, and the core goals of platform engineering. It also includes continuous integration fundamentals, delivery approaches, and GitOps principles.

Topic 3	• Measuring your Platform: This part of the exam assesses Procurement Specialists on how to measure platform efficiency and team productivity. It includes knowledge of applying DORA metrics for platform initiatives and monitoring outcomes to align with organizational goals.
Topic 4	• Platform Observability, Security, and Conformance: This part of the exam evaluates Procurement Specialists on key aspects of observability and security. It includes working with traces, metrics, logs, and events while ensuring secure service communication. Policy engines, Kubernetes security essentials, and protection in CI • CD pipelines are also assessed here.

Linux Foundation Certified Cloud Native Platform Engineering Associate Sample Questions (Q16-Q21):

NEW QUESTION # 16
In a GitOps approach, how should the desired state of a system be managed and integrated?

- A. By using a centralized management tool to push changes immediately to all environments.
- B. As custom Kubernetes resources, stored and applied directly to the system.
- C. By storing it so it is versioned and immutable, and pulled automatically into the system.
- D. By storing it in Git, and manually pushing updates through CI/CD pipelines.

Answer: C

Explanation:
The GitOps model is built on the principle that the desired state of infrastructure and applications must be stored in Git as the single source of truth. Option D is correct because Git provides versioning, immutability, and auditability, while reconciliation controllers (e.g., Argo CD or Flux) pull the desired state into the system continuously. This ensures that actual cluster state always matches the declared Git state.
Option A is partially correct but fails because GitOps eliminates manual push workflows-automation ensures changes are pulled and reconciled. Option B describes Kubernetes CRDs, which may be part of the system but do not embody GitOps on their own. Option C contradicts GitOps principles, which rely on pull- based reconciliation, not centralized push.
Storing desired state in Git provides full traceability, automated rollbacks, and continuous reconciliation, improving reliability and compliance. This makes GitOps a core practice for cloud native platform engineering.
References:- CNCF GitOps Principles- CNCF Platforms Whitepaper- Cloud Native Platform Engineering Study Guide

NEW QUESTION # 17
In a cloud native environment, how do policy engines facilitate a unified approach for teams to consume platform services?

- A. Provides centralized reusable policies to ensure security and compliance.
- B. Enforces service-level agreements (SLAs) across all teams.
- C. Enforces strict compliance policies with security standards.
- D. Integrates with CI/CD pipelines to streamline service provisioning.

Answer: A

Explanation:
Policy engines (such as Open Policy Agent - OPA or Kyverno) play a critical role in enforcing governance, security, and compliance consistently across cloud native platforms. Option D is correct because policy engines provide centralized, reusable policies that can be applied across clusters, services, and environments. This ensures that developers consume platform services in a compliant and secure manner, without needing to manage these controls manually.
Option A is partially correct but too narrow, as policies extend beyond compliance to include operational, security, and cost-control measures. Option B is not the primary function of policy engines, though integration with CI/CD is possible. Option C is incorrect because SLAs are business agreements, not enforced by policy engines directly.
Policy engines enforce guardrails like image signing, RBAC rules, resource quotas, and network policies automatically, reducing cognitive load for developers while giving platform teams confidence in compliance.
This supports the platform engineering principle of combining self-service with governance.
References:- CNCF Platforms Whitepaper- CNCF Security TAG (OPA, Kyverno)- Cloud Native Platform Engineering Study Guide

NEW QUESTION # 18
During a CI/CD pipeline setup, at which stage should the Software Bill of Materials (SBOM) be generated to provide most valuable insights into dependencies?

- A. During the build process.
- B. During testing.
- C. After deployment.
- D. Before committing code.

Answer: A

Explanation:
The most effective stage to generate a Software Bill of Materials (SBOM) is during the build process.
Option C is correct because the build phase is when dependencies are resolved and artifacts (e.g., container images, binaries) are created. Generating an SBOM at this point provides a complete, accurate inventory of all included libraries and components, which is critical for vulnerability scanning, license compliance, and supply chain security.
Option A (testing) is too late to capture all dependencies reliably. Option B (before committing code) cannot provide a full SBOM because builds often introduce additional dependencies. Option D (after deployment) delays insights until production, missing the opportunity to detect and remediate issues early.
Integrating SBOM generation into CI/CD pipelines enables shift-left security, ensuring vulnerabilities are detected early and allowing remediation before artifacts reach production. This aligns with CNCF supply chain security practices and platform engineering goals.
References:- CNCF Supply Chain Security Whitepaper- CNCF Platforms Whitepaper- Cloud Native Platform Engineering Study Guide

NEW QUESTION # 19
In the context of Istio, what is the purpose of PeerAuthentication?

- A. Managing network policies for ingress traffic
- B. Securing service-to-service communication
- C. Monitoring and logging service communication
- D. Defining how traffic is routed between services

Answer: B

Explanation:
In Istio, PeerAuthentication is used to configure how workloads authenticate traffic coming from other services in the mesh. Option C is correct because PeerAuthentication primarily secures service-to-service communication using mutual TLS (mTLS), ensuring encryption in transit and verifying the identity of both communicating parties.
Option A (network policies for ingress traffic) relates to Kubernetes NetworkPolicy, not Istio PeerAuthentication. Option B (traffic routing) is handled by Istio's VirtualService and DestinationRule resources. Option D (monitoring/logging) is part of Istio's telemetry features, not PeerAuthentication.
PeerAuthentication policies define whether mTLS is disabled, permissive, or strict, giving platform teams fine-grained control over how services communicate securely. This aligns with zero-trust security models and ensures compliance with organizational policies without requiring application code changes.
References:- CNCF Service Mesh Whitepaper- Istio Security Documentation- Cloud Native Platform Engineering Study Guide

NEW QUESTION # 20
A platform engineering team needs to provide comprehensive cost visibility for Kubernetes workloads to optimize infrastructure utilization. Which tool is recommended to achieve this goal?

- A. Application performance monitoring tools with limited resource cost tracking.
- B. Kubernetes resource usage metrics paired with cloud provider billing data.
- C. OpenCost for real-time, granular Kubernetes cost allocation and analysis.
- D. Cloud provider cost estimation tools with basic Kubernetes integration.

Answer: C

Explanation:

OpenCost is the CNCF-supported open-source project designed specifically for Kubernetes cost visibility and optimization. Option B is correct because OpenCost provides granular, real-time allocation of Kubernetes costs across namespaces, workloads, and teams. This allows organizations to understand true cost drivers and optimize resource utilization effectively.
Option A (APM tools) may track performance but usually lack deep integration with Kubernetes cost allocation. Option C provides partial visibility but requires complex manual correlation of resource usage with billing data. Option D (cloud provider estimators) typically offer limited or high-level insights and do not map costs down to Kubernetes workloads.
By adopting OpenCost, platform teams can align financial accountability with engineering usage, a practice known as FinOps. This supports sustainable scaling, cost efficiency, and transparency-critical aspects of measuring platform success.
References:- CNCF OpenCost Project- CNCF Platforms Whitepaper- Cloud Native Platform Engineering Study Guide

NEW QUESTION # 21
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