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**Databricks Certified Associate Developer for Apache Spark 3.5 - Python**

## Sample Questions (Q29-Q34):

### NEW QUESTION # 29

An application architect has been investigating Spark Connect as a way to modernize existing Spark applications running in their organization.

Which requirement blocks the adoption of Spark Connect in this organization?

- A. Upgradability: the ability to upgrade the Spark applications independently from the Spark driver itself
- B. Debuggability: the ability to perform interactive debugging directly from the application code
- C. Complete Spark API support: the ability to migrate all existing code to Spark Connect without modification, including the RDD APIs
- D. Stability: isolation of application code and dependencies from each other and the Spark driver

**Answer: C**

Explanation:

Spark Connect enables a decoupled client-server architecture, allowing remote clients to run Spark code via gRPC. However, as of Spark 3.5, Spark Connect supports DataFrame and SQL APIs, but not RDD APIs.

Limitation:

Applications that rely heavily on RDD-based transformations or actions cannot be migrated directly to Spark Connect. These APIs require tight driver integration, which Spark Connect intentionally decouples.

Thus, complete Spark API compatibility is not yet achieved - this is the key adoption blocker.

Why the other options are incorrect:

A: Debugging is possible through IDE integration and logs on the client side.

B: Spark Connect actually supports upgradable clients independent of the driver - this is an advantage, not a limitation.

D: Spark Connect provides strong isolation between the client and driver processes.

Reference:

Spark 3.5 Documentation - Spark Connect architecture and supported APIs.

Databricks Exam Guide (June 2025): Section "Using Spark Connect to Deploy Applications" - Spark Connect limitations (no RDD API support).

### NEW QUESTION # 30

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A data engineer is implementing a streaming pipeline with watermarking to handle late-arriving records.

The engineer has written the following code:

```
inputStream\  
.withWatermark("event_time", "10 minutes")\  
.groupBy(window("event_time", "15 minutes"))
```

What happens to data that arrives after the watermark threshold?

- A. Records that arrive later than the watermark threshold (10 minutes) will automatically be included in the aggregation if they fall within the 15-minute window.
- B. Data arriving more than 10 minutes after the latest watermark will still be included in the aggregation but will be placed into the next window.
- C. Any data arriving more than 10 minutes after the watermark threshold will be ignored and not included in the aggregation.
- D. The watermark ensures that late data arriving within 10 minutes of the latest event time will be processed and included in the windowed aggregation.

**Answer: C**

Explanation:

Watermarking in Structured Streaming defines how late a record can arrive based on event time before Spark discards it.

Behavior:

.withWatermark("event\_time", "10 minutes")

This means Spark will keep state for 10 minutes beyond the maximum event time seen so far.

Any data arriving later than 10 minutes after the current watermark is ignored - it will not be included in the aggregation or output.

Why the other options are incorrect:

B: Late data beyond the watermark threshold is not included.

C: Late data is not moved to a new window; it's simply dropped.

D: True for late data within the watermark threshold, not after it.

Reference:

Spark Structured Streaming Guide - withWatermark() behavior and late data handling.

Databricks Exam Guide (June 2025): Section "Structured Streaming" - watermarking and state cleanup behavior.

### NEW QUESTION # 31

A developer wants to refactor some older Spark code to leverage built-in functions introduced in Spark 3.5.0.

The existing code performs array manipulations manually. Which of the following code snippets utilizes new built-in functions in Spark 3.5.0 for array operations?

```
import pyspark.sql.functions as F
min_price = 110.50
result_df = prices_df
    .filter(F.col("spot_price") >= F.lit(min_price)) \
    .agg(F.count(
```



A)

```
result_df = prices_df \
    .withColumn("valid_price", F.when(F.col("spot_price") > F.lit(min_price), 1).otherwise(0))
```

B)

```
result_df = prices_df \
    .agg(F.count_if(F.col("spot_price") >= F.lit(min_price)))
```

C)

```
result_df = prices_df \
    .agg(F.min("spot_price"), F.max("spot_price"))
```

D)

```
result_df = prices_df \
    .agg(F.count("spot_price").alias("spot_price")) \
    .filter(F.col("spot_price") > F.lit("min_price"))
```

- A. `result_df = prices_df \
 .agg(F.min("spot_price"), F.max("spot_price"))`
- B. `result_df = prices_df \
 .withColumn("valid_price", F.when(F.col("spot_price") > F.lit(min_price), 1).otherwise(0))`
- C. `result_df = prices_df \
 .agg(F.count("spot_price").alias("spot_price")) \
 .filter(F.col("spot_price") > F.lit("min_price"))`
- D. `result_df = prices_df \
 .agg(F.count_if(F.col("spot_price") >= F.lit(min_price)))`

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

The correct answer is B because it uses the new function `count_if`, introduced in Spark 3.5.0, which simplifies conditional counting within aggregations.

\* `F.count_if(condition)` counts the number of rows that meet the specified boolean condition.

\* In this example, it directly counts how many times `spot_price >= min_price` evaluates to true, replacing the older verbose combination of `when/otherwise` and filtering or summing.

Official Spark 3.5.0 documentation notes the addition of `count_if` to simplify this kind of logic:

"Added `count_if` aggregate function to count only the rows where a boolean condition holds (SPARK-43773)."

Why other options are incorrect or outdated:

\* A uses a legacy-style method of adding a flag column (`when().otherwise()`), which is verbose compared to `count_if`.

\* Performs a simple min/max aggregation-useful but unrelated to conditional array operations or the updated functionality.  
\* Incorrectly applies .filter() after .agg() which will cause an error, and misuses string "min\_price" rather than the variable. Therefore, B is the only option leveraging new functionality from Spark 3.5.0 correctly and efficiently.

### NEW QUESTION # 32

Which Spark configuration controls the number of tasks that can run in parallel on the executor?

Options:

- A. spark.task.maxFailures
- B. spark.driver.cores
- C. spark.executor.memory
- D. **spark.executor.cores**

#### Answer: D

Explanation:

spark.executor.cores determines how many concurrent tasks an executor can run.

For example, if set to 4, each executor can run up to 4 tasks in parallel.

Other settings:

spark.task.maxFailures controls task retry logic.

spark.driver.cores is for the driver, not executors.

spark.executor.memory sets memory limits, not task concurrency.

### NEW QUESTION # 33

A Spark DataFrame is cached using the MEMORY\_AND\_DISK storage level, but the DataFrame is too large to fit entirely in memory.

What is the likely behavior when Spark runs out of memory to store the DataFrame?

- A. Spark stores the frequently accessed rows in memory and less frequently accessed rows on disk, utilizing both resources to offer balanced performance.
- B. **Spark will store as much data as possible in memory and spill the rest to disk when memory is full, continuing processing with performance overhead.**
- C. Spark duplicates the DataFrame in both memory and disk. If it doesn't fit in memory, the DataFrame is stored and retrieved from the disk entirely.
- D. Spark splits the DataFrame evenly between memory and disk, ensuring balanced storage utilization.

#### Answer: B

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

When using the MEMORY\_AND\_DISK storage level, Spark attempts to cache as much of the DataFrame in memory as possible. If the DataFrame does not fit entirely in memory, Spark will store the remaining partitions on disk. This allows processing to continue, albeit with a performance overhead due to disk I/O.

As per the Spark documentation:

"MEMORY\_AND\_DISK: It stores partitions that do not fit in memory on disk and keeps the rest in memory.

This can be useful when working with datasets that are larger than the available memory."

- Proficient Blogs: Spark - StorageLevel

This behavior ensures that Spark can handle datasets larger than the available memory by spilling excess data to disk, thus preventing job failures due to memory constraints.

### NEW QUESTION # 34

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Instead, the underlying storage infrastructure instantiates the virtual machine Flexible Associate-Developer-Apache-Spark-3.5 Learning Mode storage based on the contents of the policy, when you tap it or the Play Store shopping bag icon right next to it, you'll return to the previous screen.

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