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Linux Foundation CNPA Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	• 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.

Topic 2	• 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 3	• 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 4	• Continuous Delivery & Platform Engineering: This section measures the skills of Supplier Management Consultants and focuses on continuous integration pipelines, the fundamentals of the CI • CD relationship, and GitOps basics. It also includes knowledge of workflows, incident response in platform engineering, and applying GitOps for application environments.

Linux Foundation Certified Cloud Native Platform Engineering Associate Sample Questions (Q35-Q40):

NEW QUESTION # 35
In a GitOps workflow, how should application environments be managed when promoting an application from staging to production?

- A. Merge changes and let a tool handle the deployment
- B. Manually update the production environment configuration files.
- C. Create a new environment for production each time an application is updated.
- D. Use a tool to package the application and deploy it directly to production.

Answer: A

Explanation:
In GitOps workflows, the source of truth for environments is stored in Git. Promotion from staging to production is managed by merging changes into the production branch or repository. Option A is correct because once changes are merged, the GitOps operator (e.g., Argo CD, Flux) automatically detects the updated desired state in Git and reconciles it with the production environment.
Option B (creating new environments each time) is inefficient and unnecessary. Option C (manual updates) violates GitOps principles of automation and auditability. Option D (direct deployments) reverts to a push- based CI/CD model rather than GitOps' pull-based reconciliation.
By relying on Git as the single source of truth, GitOps ensures version control, auditability, and rollback capabilities. This allows consistent, reproducible promotion between environments while reducing human error.
References:- CNCF GitOps Principles- CNCF Platforms Whitepaper- Cloud Native Platform Engineering Study Guide

NEW QUESTION # 36
What is a key consideration during the setup of a Continuous Integration/Continuous Deployment (CI/CD) pipeline to ensure efficient and reliable software delivery?

- A. Skip the packaging step to save time and reduce complexity.
- B. Using a single development environment for all stages of the pipeline.
- C. Manually approve each build before deployment to maintain control over quality.
- D. Implement automated testing at multiple points in the pipeline.

Answer: D

Explanation:
Automated testing throughout the pipeline is a key enabler of efficient and reliable delivery. Option B is correct because incorporating unit tests, integration tests, and security scans at different pipeline stages ensures that errors are caught early, reducing the risk of faulty code reaching production. This also accelerates delivery by providing fast, consistent feedback to developers.
Option A (single environment) undermines isolation and does not reflect real-world deployment conditions.

Option C (skipping packaging) prevents reproducibility and traceability of builds. Option D (manual approvals) adds delays and reintroduces human bottlenecks, which goes against DevOps and GitOps automation principles.
Automated testing, combined with immutable artifacts and GitOps-driven deployments, aligns with platform engineering's focus on automation, reliability, and developer experience. It reduces cognitive load for teams and enforces quality consistently.
References:- CNCF Platforms Whitepaper- Continuous Delivery Foundation Best Practices- Cloud Native Platform Engineering Study Guide

NEW QUESTION # 37
Which of the following observability pillars provides detailed information about the path a request takes through different services in a distributed system?

- A. Logs
- B. Events
- C. Metrics
- D. Traces

Answer: D

Explanation:
Traces provide end-to-end visibility into how a request flows through multiple services in a distributed system. Option A is correct because tracing captures spans (individual service operations) and stitches them together to form a complete picture of request execution, including latency, bottlenecks, and dependencies.
Option B (logs) provide detailed event records but lack contextual linkage across services. Option C (events) are discrete system occurrences, not correlated request flows. Option D (metrics) provide aggregated numerical data like latency or throughput but cannot show request-level detail across distributed systems.
Tracing is especially critical in microservices architectures where a single request may traverse dozens of services. Tools like OpenTelemetry, Jaeger, and Zipkin are commonly used to implement distributed tracing, which is essential for debugging, performance optimization, and improving reliability.
References:- CNCF Observability Whitepaper- OpenTelemetry CNCF Project Documentation- Cloud Native Platform Engineering Study Guide

NEW QUESTION # 38
In a Kubernetes environment, what is the primary distinction between an Operator and a Helm chart?

- A. Helm charts use Custom Resource Definitions while Operators use static manifests.
- B. Operators are only for deploying applications, while Helm charts manage application resources.
- C. Operators handle ongoing management of custom resources while Helm charts focus on packaging and deployment.
- D. Both Operators and Helm charts are the same, just different names used in the community.

Answer: C

Explanation:
The key distinction is that Helm charts are packaging and deployment tools, while Operators extend Kubernetes controllers to provide ongoing lifecycle management. Option C is correct because Operators continuously reconcile the desired and actual state of custom resources, enabling advanced behaviors like upgrades, scaling, and failover. Helm charts, by contrast, define templates and values for deploying applications but do not actively manage them after deployment.
Option A oversimplifies; Operators do more than deploy, while Helm manages deployment packaging.
Option B is incorrect-Helm does not create CRDs by default; Operators often do. Option D is incorrect because Operators and Helm serve different purposes, though they may complement each other.
Operators are essential for complex workloads (e.g., databases, Kafka) that require ongoing operational knowledge codified into Kubernetes-native controllers. Helm is best suited for standard deployments and reproducibility. Together, they improve Kubernetes extensibility and automation.
References:- CNCF Kubernetes Operator Pattern Documentation- CNCF Platforms Whitepaper- Cloud Native Platform Engineering Study Guide

NEW QUESTION # 39
What is the primary purpose of Kubernetes runtime security?

- A. Manages the access control to the Kubernetes API.
- B. Scans container images before deployment.
- C. Protects workloads against threats during execution.
- D. Encrypts the sensitive data stored in etcd.

Answer: C

Explanation:
The main purpose of Kubernetes runtime security is to protect workloads during execution. Option B is correct because runtime security focuses on monitoring active Pods, containers, and processes to detect and prevent malicious activity such as privilege escalation, anomalous network connections, or unauthorized file access.
Option A (etcd encryption) addresses data at rest, not runtime. Option C (image scanning) occurs pre- deployment, not during execution. Option D (API access control) is enforced through RBAC and IAM, not runtime security.
Runtime security solutions (e.g., Falco, Cilium, or Kyverno) continuously observe system calls, network traffic, and workload behaviors to enforce policies and detect threats in real time. This ensures compliance, strengthens defenses in zero-trust environments, and provides critical protection for cloud native workloads in production.
References:- CNCF Security TAG Guidance- CNCF Platforms Whitepaper- Cloud Native Platform Engineering Study Guide

NEW QUESTION # 40
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