

AWS SAA-C03 – Ultra-Short Memory Hooks + Phrase Decoder

Goal: Rapid revision to gain 10–15% score improvement by pattern recognition. How to use: Read twice (now + just before exam). Don't overthink — match phrases.

Compute & EC2

Ultra-short memory hooks

- User Data → runs once, first boot, root
- IAM on EC2 → Role only, never keys
- Instance Store → fastest I/O, data lost
- Burst workloads → ASG + On-Demand/Spot
- Steady 24×7 → Reserved Instances
- Spot jobs → Spot Fleet, not single spot

If you see this phrase → pick this service

- "Runs code at launch only" → EC2 User Data
- "No servers to manage" → Lambda
- "Ultra-low latency compute" → EC2
- "Fault-tolerant batch jobs" → Spot Fleet
- "Temporary data, very high IOPS" → Instance Store
- "Baseline + spikes" → RI + ASG (On-Demand/Spot)

Storage (S3 / Hybrid)

Ultra-short memory hooks

- S3 accidental delete → Versioning + MFA Delete
- S3 performance → scale via prefixes, not buckets
- S3 raw data → Glacier Deep Archive
- S3 analytics → Parquet / ORC
- Object Lock → per object version
- Explicit retention beats bucket default

- NFS on-prem → S3 → File Gateway

If you see this phrase → pick this service

- "Accidental deletion protection" → S3 Versioning
- "Compliance retention / WORM" → S3 Object Lock
- "Cheap long-term archive" → Glacier Deep Archive
- "Frequent analytics queries" → Parquet / ORC
- "On-prem NFS to AWS" → Storage Gateway – File
- "Block storage from on-prem" → Volume Gateway
- "Unlimited scale object storage" → S3

File Systems

Ultra-short memory hooks

- Linux shared files → EFS
- Windows / SMB / AD → FSx Windows
- HPC / Lustre → FSx Lustre
- High IOPS + ephemeral → Instance Store

If you see this phrase → pick this service

- "Shared Linux file system" → EFS
- "Windows file shares / DFS / NTFS" → FSx for Windows
- "HPC workloads" → FSx Lustre

Databases

Ultra-short memory hooks

- RDS Multi-AZ → sync, HA, no reads
- Read Replicas → async, scale reads
- Aurora reads → Reader Endpoint
- Aurora global users → Global Database
- Failover < 1 min → pre-provisioned infra

If you see this phrase → pick this service

- "High availability" → **RDS Multi-AZ**
 - "Scale reads" → **Read Replicas**
 - "One writer, many readers" → **Aurora**
 - "Read traffic distribution" → **Aurora Reader Endpoint**
 - "Global users, fast failover" → **Aurora Global Database**
 - "Millisecond reads at scale" → **DynamoDB**
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Networking

Ultra-short memory hooks

- Encryption + low latency → **DX + VPN**
- Private cross-account service → **PrivateLink**
- Multi-VPC hub → **Transit Gateway**
- API Gateway IP filter → **Resource Policy**

If you see this phrase → pick this service

- "Dedicated + encrypted connection" → **Direct Connect + VPN**
 - "Private access to service across accounts" → **PrivateLink**
 - "Many VPCs hub-and-spoke" → **Transit Gateway**
 - "Block/allow IPs for API" → **API Gateway Resource Policy**
 - "DNS-based failover" → **Route 53**
 - "Low latency global users" → **CloudFront**
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IAM & Security

Ultra-short memory hooks

- Least privilege → always
- Privileged users → **MFA**
- Audit IAM → **CloudTrail**
- `aws:SourceIp` → caller IP
- `aws:RequestedRegion` → target region
- **S3 Read-Only** → bucket + bucket/* ARNs

If you see this phrase → pick this service

- "EC2 accessing AWS services" → IAM Role
- "Temporary credentials" → IAM Role
- "Audit API activity" → CloudTrail
- "Restrict API by IP" → Resource Policy
- "Caller IP condition" → aws:SourceIp
- "Restrict region" → aws:RequestedRegion



AI / ML (No ML Team)

Ultra-short memory hooks

- PDF → text → Textract
- Text → sentiment/entities → Comprehend
- Images/video → Rekognition
- No ML ops → avoid SageMaker

If you see this phrase → pick this service

- "Extract text from PDF" → Textract
- "Sentiment / entities from text" → Comprehend
- "Image / face / video analysis" → Rekognition
- "Build/train ML model" → SageMaker



Messaging & Streaming

Ultra-short memory hooks

- Decouple apps → SQS
- Multiple subscribers → SNS
- Ordered + scale → SQS FIFO + GroupId
- Real-time stream → Kinesis

If you see this phrase → pick this service

- "Decouple applications" → SQS
- "Multiple consumers" → SNS
- "Strict ordering" → SQS FIFO
- "Parallel ordered streams" → FIFO + MessageGroupId
- "Distributed streaming" → Kinesis

- “Real-time data ingestion” → **Kinesis**
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Disaster Recovery

Ultra-short memory hooks

- Lowest RTO → Warm / Hot Standby
- Failover ≠ provisioning → pre-create infra
- Minimal cost DR → Backup & Restore

If you see this phrase → pick this service

- “Lowest RTO” → Warm/Hot Standby
 - “Pre-provisioned resources” → Fast failover
 - “Minimal cost DR” → Backup & Restore
 - “Seconds RPO” → Aurora Global Database
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Final Exam Super-Rule

If two answers look right, choose the one that is:

Managed + Serverless + Least Ops + Least Cost + Fastest Recovery

How you should use it now (highest impact)

- Read once tonight
- Read once just before the exam
- Don't analyze — pattern match and move on
- This doc is designed to:
 - Eliminate wrong answers fast
 - Reduce overthinking
 - Boost confidence under time pressure